

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



As I watched Emmanuel's children sign "*This Little Light of Mine*" on Christmas Eve, I noticed how much taller they are now than the last time I saw them in person. I realized again that ten months is a long time in a child's life span. I am grateful to our Bible Club teachers for continuing to teach and nurture the faith of our children and youth during pandemic.

Time moved strangely in 2020. For some, the days seemed long and full of repetition, something to be endured until it was safe to resume all the activities curtailed by Covid-19. For others, ordinary tasks required more steps – remembering to don a mask before grocery shopping, connecting via technology instead of in-person – and the days felt shorter and stress-filled.

It is perhaps common to think about the passage of time as we turn the calendar on another year. Having observed my tenth anniversary as your pastor and the twenty-fifth anniversary of my ordination in recent months, I am also struck by how quickly the years pass. The year 2020 completely convinced me about the unpredictability of the future, so I am wary about anticipating our next year together with any specificity. And yet, I am looking forward to the year ahead with you. I am anticipating that we will emerge from the long dark tunnel of pandemic with new appreciation for each other and the strength of our fellowship. I am hoping for more than a return to normal. I am hoping for a resumption of some previous ministries with new awareness of why they matter and for the ability to let go of other activities with less guilt about doing so. In the months ahead, as we take stock of what was learned in 2020, I believe that we will recognize our strength and resilience, even if most of our learning was by trial and error. We lost much in 2020, much that should be lamented, but I trust that even in this, God is at work for good. Perhaps one outcome of the last year is that we are better able to make room for a new and different future.

continued...

Neale Donald Walsch has written:

*Yearning for a new way will not produce it.
Only ending the old way can do that.
You cannot hold onto the old,
all the while declaring that you want something new.
The old will defy the new;
The old will deny the new;
The old will decry the new.
There is only one way to bring in the new. You must make room for it.*



Peace,

Kathy

A huge thanks is due to our Advent/Christmas worship design team for all the ways they brought to life the theme “*I Believe Even When. . . Fill the Night with Music and Light*”. Design team members included Jean Burton, Lianne DeMieri, Nancy Horan, Liselle LaFrance, Edith Leet, Marilyn Malone, Nancy Horan, and Jim Wilkerson. Members of the choir put in extra hours to bring us musical videos edited by Bien Baez (video) and David Malone (audio). We thank the children and their families for the filming of “*Let It Shine*” for Christmas Eve and Beth Malone for editing that film. Our youth brought us I Believe statements each Sunday and capped it off on Christmas Eve with a reminder that the light still shines. Thanks to Elisabeth Scheu for weekly video-editing and to Silas Klope and Elisabeth for the Christmas Eve production. If you particularly appreciated one of these elements of worship, please share your gratitude with the appropriate people.



The Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO) originated in the mid-1930s, when American Baptist congregations received a Communion Fellowship Offering on the first Sunday of each month to support retired ministers, missionaries, their widowed spouses and elderly clergy within their churches. In 1977, American Baptist Churches USA launched RMMO to continue this appreciation of God’s service.

In 2021 to honor this tradition and acknowledge the current circumstances, ABCUSA has chosen Hope for Today, Hope for Tomorrow as our theme. This theme encompasses the true strength and dedication of ministers, missionaries and their widowed spouses who have devoted 15 years or more to ABCUSA. We have had wonderful pastors who have given their lives to the service of God. Please support this annual offering in January. You can mail a check to the church earmarked for RMMO or give through the website under special offerings. (AM)



What's Been Happening at Bible Club?

Seventeen children ages 3-12 have been enjoying our weekly Bible Club. We completed our Advent and Christmas sessions and in the month of January will be learning about Jesus' early life. Teachers, Jean Burton, Andrea Carver, Marilyn Malone and Rachel and Pattie Scott are excited to be working with these children. Perhaps you would like to share in this lively ministry, either behind the scenes or up front. Here are some ideas.

- We could use another leader/helper during the Zoom sessions, Sundays at 1:00. This will allow leaders to have some weeks free.
- Technical support is always welcome, creating and managing videos, power points, YouTube resources etc.
- Assembling craft kits to distribute to children. Supplies are simple, and teachers will help collect them. Also people willing to deliver the kits.
- Prayer support – for leaders maneuvering through these uncharted territories and for children living in uncertain times.

The Youth, grades 8-12 also meet for Bible Club on Sundays at 11:15 with Jim Wilkerson, Becca Leet and Michele Williams. They have finished a study of the Beatitudes and will choose a new topic for the winter.

If you would like to know more about Bible Club or volunteer your support, please contact Marilyn Malone at malonehome@aol.com or talk to any of the teachers named above.

For almost fifty years the Capital Area Council of Churches has Celebrated Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. In recognition of this day, the Council sponsors an Interfaith Celebration that aims to remind us of Rev. King's legacy as well as raise scholarship funds for deserving high school seniors.



This year the Council will have a virtual program on January 15th, which means the scholarship fund raising must be done virtually. The MLK Scholarship Interfaith Committee is asking our member churches to donate at least \$100. If your religious institution can give more, please do so. We also want to encourage as many individuals as possible to donate at least \$25 each. Please help CACC raise scholarship money by publicizing this appeal to your congregation.

Use the button below to donate now. Tax-deductible donations can be sent to, CACC at 646 State St., Albany, NY, 12203. Please write "MLK Scholarship" in the memo. Thanking you in advance for supporting.

[Donate To MLK Scholarship](#)

Remember the Food Pantry... *shampoo*

Happy Birthday...

Ellen Corcoran
 Kathy Donley
 Michael Clement
 Rosemary Koonce
 Monica Scheerer
 Lucas Silverman
 Jean Burton
 Samuel Koonce
 Chelah Collins
 Erica Edwards
 Hunter Spann
 Gretchen Scheu
 Veronica Torian
 Sa Kler Moo



3rd
 4th
 11th
 14th
 15th
 15th
 21st
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 26th
 28th
 30th



Dear Ones:

As I tried to say on Christmas Eve, it does not seem possible that I was ordained 25 years ago. That kind of milestone is surely celebrated only by those

who are older and wiser than I.

Thank you for your love gift. I am grateful for the opportunity and privilege of serving among you. -- Kathy D.



Deadline for the February MOSAIC is February 18.

Annual Reports are due!



Food, Fellowship and Fun...Virtually!

The series of relaxed supper get-togethers over Zoom are continuing. Here is the planned theme schedule:

- **Sunday, Jan. 10, 2021, 6:30pm** - Middle eastern favorites: lamb, hummus, falafel, pita, OLIVES!, cucumbers & yogurt, etc.
- **Friday, Jan. 22, 7pm** - Asian food night: Beef with broccoli, raw tuna, tofu in peanut sauce, Hunan eggplant! (hint, order from your favorite take out if you're tired)

REMEMBER – The themes are a chance to try something new or share a recipe for an old favorite. If the theme doesn't float your boat, come anyway with your own menu. You can still chat with friends in Zoom-space. On Zoom, all foods are created equal!



New Directory Coming

Have you moved? Do you have a new email address or phone number? If so, please notify Dorothy at the church office. A church directory is being created and will be available later this month. Thank you.

Snow and Pandemic: No Match for Connecting Congregants and Cookies

COVID 19 may have deprived us of our Christmas Reception in Fellowship Hall, but nothing can keep us from our Christmas goodies. Through the efforts of 13 bakers and seven “angels” who delivered them, packages of cookies were distributed to 58 households representing 113 individuals in the Capital Region. Although double-digit inches of snow slowed deliveries somewhat, eventually all the deliveries were made. “Angels” reported that they were greeted with smiles and exclamations of delight over the home-baked goodies, the chance to say hello and chat a bit at a safe social distance, and even some off-tune renditions of “We Wish You a Merry Christmas.” Thank you to all who made this happy happening possible.



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