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EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH

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Pastoral Ponderings



I often hear the word *legacy* associated with the end of a person's life. It isn't used to refer to their estate or any tangible goods bequeathed to descendants, but rather to the impact of their life, the effect of their decisions and actions on those around them. At my mother's memorial service, I heard a story from her life that was brand new to me. Dave is one of my brother's friends and high school classmates. He drove several miles to attend my Mom's service and to tell this story. Dave did well in school. He was an academic high achiever. His younger brother was not. He arrived at high school with serious deficits in his reading ability. He was reading so far below grade level that he was not going to graduate. Dave said that what he learned from Mrs. Donley brought his reading level up and enabled him to graduate on time with his peers. That accomplishment gave him an entirely new outlook on life and boosted his confidence in a way that Dave says he thinks would never have happened otherwise. Not long ago, he completed a college degree. A big part of my Mom's legacy may be found in the lives of her students.

My Mom always taught at the elementary level, until her elementary school closed. Then she was hired at the high school as a reading specialist. It was there that she met Dave's brother and many others like him. I was away at college by the time she started teaching high school. Having recently been a high school student myself, I could not imagine my mother teaching teenagers. First and second grade were always her favorites, but at her memorial service I came to realize that she must have found some satisfaction and success with those high schoolers too.

The death of loved ones always leads me to reflect on their life. At the passing of my mother, I am reflecting about her life and also my own. I am thinking about how faithful she was to her vocation as a teacher and the many different contexts in which that was expressed across her life. She taught in the USA, Ghana, Saudi Arabia, Uganda and Kenya. Each context required its own adaptations, but I think the biggest change was moving from elementary to high school, a change I wasn't sure she could successfully navigate.

continued...

I think about the changes that have been required of us as individuals and as members of a global community during the last year. I think about the ways that Emmanuel has adapted our ministries to meet emerging needs in times past and about how we are adapting even now. I suspect that when the pandemic is over we will find ourselves once again in a new context requiring creativity and boldness and strong love. The example of those saints who have gone ahead of us helps me to trust that we will faithfully carry Emmanuel's legacy forward – a legacy of lives grounded in the gospel, infused with love, and sustained with hope. Thanks be to God.

Peace,
Kathy



Welcome to Alexandra Bloss!



Emmanuel has a new part time supporting staff member for 2021, Alexandra (Alex) Bloss. Alex is the coordinator of 2021 Palmer Grant and a resource person for Lifelong Faith Formation. The Palmer Grant's purpose is to enhance communications within our community. This would include better options for connecting with our online services and other opportunities that Emmanuel may offer until we can meet in person again. For example, we can offer DVD recordings of the service and even DVD players to those who need them. The grant also has some funds for internet service. Alex will be working on this with any folks who need that support. If you would like that kind of help you can connect with Pastor Kathy, Andrea Carver, Ellen Corcoran, or Tony Malone by email or phone.

Alex will be a resource person for our efforts in Christian Education (faith formation). For example, she will help with our Bible club and adult options. While we do think that at some point in 2021 we will be able to have in person classes again, we still need to look at new and creative ways for us to continually work on our faith .

Alexandra grew up in Clifton Park, NY with her parents and five younger siblings. She went to Shenendehowa and graduated in 2017. She currently attends SUNY Geneseo and will graduate in May 2021 with degrees in biochemistry and mathematics. She is a member of Phi Delta Epsilon Medical Fraternity and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship; she has held leadership roles in both organizations. She has had extensive experience in working with children in camping and helped spearhead the online camp experience that Pathfinder launched last summer. Alex loves to travel, read, and learn. After graduation, she hopes to continue her education in pursuit of medicine. Alex is passionate about people and is excited to get to know the congregation throughout the upcoming year.



**FOCUS Churches
Combined Winter Worship
Sunday, February 7 ~ 10:00 a.m.**

Sermon:

Time to Heal, Time to Serve

by Fred Boehrer,
Executive Director

Hosted on Zoom by Westminster Presbyterian
<https://www.wpcalbany.org/upcoming-events>



From the moment I received the word that my mother was in palliative care through her memorial service and my journey back to Albany, I felt supported by your compassion. Thank you for giving me the time away that I needed. Thank you for your notes and cards of sympathy. Thank you for being for me the caring community of faith that you are for so many others.

-- Pastor Kathy

**Church Office Closed
February 15**

Happy Birthday...

Betty Mallory
Wes Kendall
Bob Hunziker
Becca Leet
David Green
Tim Bray
Cassandra Paul
Samantha Paul
Owen Smith
Gwendolyn Osborne
Gail Hill



1st
5th
6th
15th
16th
18th
18th
18th
18th
21st
28th



**Deadline for March
MOSAIC is February 18.**

**Remember the
Food Pantry...**



feminine hygiene products

Future Church Summit

A Guided Planning Retreat for Becoming the Congregation of Tomorrow **February 26-27, 2021** **Registration Deadline: February 14**

For at least two years, Emmanuel's leadership has been discerning the next thing into which God is calling us. At the annual meeting, we received the recommendation of the Vision Committee which is to explore the model offered by *Fresh Expressions*. Fresh Expressions is an international movement of missionary disciples which cultivates new kinds of church alongside existing congregations to more effectively engage our growing post-Christian culture. We believe God is calling us to join this movement at this time.

Fresh Expressions is offering a retreat for congregations just like ours, congregations who need to know more. **It is a Friday/Saturday retreat, taking place on-line from 7:00-9:00 pm on Friday, February 26 and from 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Saturday, February 27.** There will be informational sessions with recognized missional leaders and break-out times for conversation with other EBC folks.

Who should attend? YOU SHOULD, if

- You want to be directly involved in a new form of church created expressly for the benefit of those who are not yet part of any church,
- You want to support Emmanuel's corporate participation in this exciting, Spirit-led movement, even if you don't think you will have hands-on engagement,
- You want to understand the changes happening in Christianity in our time, especially as those changes have been accelerated by the crises of 2020.

The church has paid one registration fee. We can bring along as many Emmanuelites as desired, but we need to know who is coming in advance. If you will attend or if you have questions, please contact Curtis Klope or Pastor Kathy. You may also sign-up by adding your name to the list at this link:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1c4JfPnGJsyczQYS01_pzm1zjtdVfJ6EP4g6Odp9imo/edit?usp=sharing

More details, including the line-up of speakers and schedule of topics, may be found here
<https://freshexpressionsus.org/futurechurchsummit/>



Please join us for
New York State
Council of Churches
annual statewide
gathering to help
you advocate for
justice during the
2021 Legislative
Session

Highlights include:

- **Faith Based Activism Learnings from the Social Gospel and New Deal Eras**
Dr. Alison Collis Greene, Associate Professor of American Religious History, Candler School of Theology, Emory University and author of No Depression in Heaven, The Great Depression, the New Deal, and the Transformation of Religion in the Delta
- **Tools for Faith Based Organizing**
Alex Tindal Wiesendanger, National Lead Organizer, American Federation of Musicians, Former Lead Organizer, Community Renewal Society in Chicago and Author of Seeds of Justice: Organizing Your Church to Transform the World
- **State Budget Review and Revenue Proposal**
Ron Deutsch, Economic Justice Advocate and Long Time Expert on State Budget
- **Introduction of NY State Council of Churches 2021 State Legislative Asks**
Other issue areas will include: Criminal Justice Reform, Health Care and COVID 19 Crisis, Environmental Justice and Affordable Housing led by policy experts.

Lobby visits will be scheduled for all participants with their state senator and assembly person



If you need some physical exercise. If you need to get out of the house. Maybe a workday at Emmanuel is for you. Not much has been happening in our building over the last eight months, but hopefully that is going to change soon.

In the coming months we expect some construction work to begin in the tower, so we need to move all our worship supplies and banners out of the tower and into another space. We would like to proceed with our plans to move our counting room to the first floor. The pulpit room needs organizing. We have discovered a trove of choral music on the fourth floor that needs organizing (bring a laptop?)

If you can assist in this effort, plan to arrive at the church on **February 20th, at 9am**. We will work in small groups, wearing masks and socially distanced until about noon. Seeing others in-

person and working together can benefit Emmanuel and bring cheer to each of us. Contact Jean Burton with any questions.

Emmanuel Baptist Church
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