

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



This week, Edith Leet and I attended a presentation by the sociologists involved with the Churches that Thrive for Racial Justice project. They offered some preliminary findings from a survey and interviews conducted with members of Alliance of Baptists churches last fall. The survey engaged 1157 respondents, which is about 25% of the Alliance database, a strong sample size. The interviews were, on average, 1-hour conversations conducted over Zoom with 4-5 members of each church engaged in the project.

One of the most discouraging things I heard from the interviews was a sense that systemic racism will **never** be dismantled. This was expressed by people of color, many of whom have been active members of their churches for decades. On the other hand, one of the sociologists said that he was pleased to hear about how much was happening in the churches – book studies, seminars, movies, conversation groups – and he was surprised about the growth that people were reporting. He said that he doesn't usually hear mature adults talk about how much they learned that they didn't already know or about points of turning and transformation.

The pandemic started 2 years ago this month. Two years is nothing compared to the hundreds of years that white supremacy has ruled our country and most of our world, but two years of concentrated life experience have power. Through that experience, some of us have come to a better understanding of what it is like to have no control over some aspects of our daily life. We now recognize the presence of an invisible force that weighs on everything from how and when we interact with friends to our behavior at work and school to celebrations of milestones and holidays and how we mourn departed loved ones. We have felt just a smidge of the frustration and anger and possibly even despair that those oppressed by systemic racism have known since birth.

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My heart aches for those who believe that white supremacy is intractable. My heart aches for those who are languishing in so many ways because of the pandemic. I realize, again, that it is good that we don't know the future. If anyone had said that we would have to cope with this prolonged disruption of life for two years, some of us would not have believed it and some of us would have despaired. Life comes to us one day at a time and that is enough.

These days I'm singing a song from South Africa (a country that has known incomparable suffering from both disease and white supremacy). The lyrics simply repeat *Come with me for the journey is long, come with me for the journey is long*. Additional verses include *sing with me, pray with me*, etc. The journey is long, beloved ones, but take heart, because change is happening all around us and we are sharing the journey together.

Peace,
Kathy

PS Join me in singing. You may find *Come with Me for the Journey is Long* at this link <https://youtu.be/f5T7pH1fE4k>. Or just google it.



AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING TO BE RECEIVED IN MARCH

"I will praise you and testify about what you have done."

-- Psalm 22:22

Thanks to America for Christ (AFC) Offering contributions, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) supported communities distressed by the devastation of COVID-19 last year, as the pandemic swept our country and Puerto Rico. They also helped families who lost homes to floods, wildfires and storms, along with children living on the edge because of poverty, and seminarians preparing to devote their lives to sharing the Good News. These are just a few of the ways ABHMS ministers to those in need.

Please help to continue to bring healing and hope to communities, families, children and Jesus' disciples in 2022 by supporting this year's America for Christ Offering.

Envelopes are available. Checks should be made out to Emmanuel Baptist Church (with America for Christ on the memo line). You can also donate online at Emmanuel's home page. Click on Giving, then scroll down to America for Christ.

**AMERICA
FOR CHRIST
OFFERING**

Lent 2022
March 2- April 16

The scriptures for this Lenten season are filled with parables and promises of God's abundant and expansive grace. Jesus as a mother hen, a prodigal son welcomed home, a fig tree nurtured with care and hope, precious oil poured out lovingly and freely, stones shouting out with praise — these sacred texts are brimming with a gospel of grace. We've done nothing to deserve or earn this grace and yet, like water, it spills over.



Full to the Brim is an invitation—into a radically different Lent, into a full life. It's an invitation to be authentically who you are, to counter scarcity and injustice at every turn, to pour out even more grace wherever it is needed. It disrupts the scarcity mentality that capitalism, oppression, or hierarchy can plant inside of us. When we allow ourselves to be filled to the brim with God's lavish love, that love spills over. It reaches beyond ourselves; like water, it rushes and flows, touching everything in its path.

Sunday mornings will include a children's time created and led by our youth. Many of our hymns and anthems will be African-American spirituals which speak to the power of God's sustaining love even in the midst of oppression and injustice. Join opportunities on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for even more exploration of our capacity to give and receive grace. Let us live ever more fully in the expansive life God dreams for us.

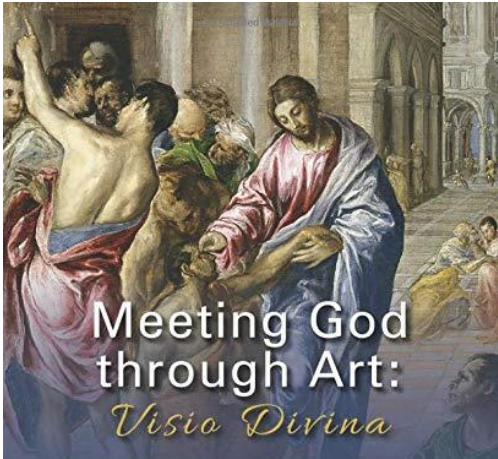
Sunday Mornings

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| March 6 | Lent 1 – Even in the Desert, Luke 4:1-13 |
| March 13 | Lent 2 – Under God's Wing, Luke 13:31-35 |
| March 20 | Lent 3 – You are Worthy, Luke 13:1-9 |
| March 27 | Lent 4 --Prodigal Grace, Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 |
| April 3 | Lent 5 – Brazen Acts of Beauty, John 12:1-8 |
| April 11 | Palm/Passion Sunday – Even the Stones Cry Out, Luke 19:28-40 |



Ash Wednesday
March 2, 6:30 p.m.

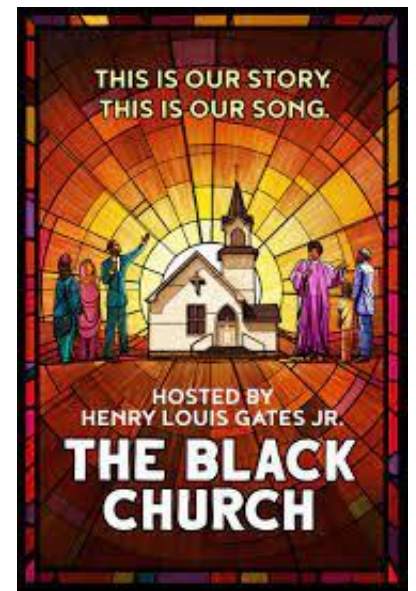
Join us in the sanctuary at 6:30 p.m. in person and on Zoom. The Zoom link is the same one we use for Sunday morning. It will be sent by e-mail on Tuesday and you may find it on the front page of the church website emmanuelalbany.net You may bring the artist's charcoal from your Lenten packet with you to your Zoom space or in-person if you wish to participate in the imposition of ashes from a distance.



Lenten Wednesdays 1:00-2:00 p.m.
March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, April 6, 13

Sessions will include an adaptation of *visio divina*, a practice of spiritual connection through art. As we listen to a scripture passage, we will use various art materials to help us express how we sense God's presence. The point is artistic expression, not necessarily art production, so no special talent or expertise is necessary. Join us and be surprised by the Holy Spirit. Please let Marilyn Malone know if you are interested so that she can arrange art supplies and send you the Zoom link. malonehome@aol.com

“Full to the Brim”
Beyond Sunday Morning
Lenten Tuesdays 7:00 p.m.



- March 8** *The Black Church: This is Our Story, This is Our Song* is a documentary that traces the 400-year-old story of the Black church in America, all the way down to its bedrock role as the site of African American survival and grace, organizing and resilience, thriving and testifying, autonomy and freedom, solidarity and speaking truth to power. Watch it at home for free at pbs.org. Led by Tony Malone
- March 15** *The Black Church: This is Our Story, This is Our Song, Part 2* Watch it at home at pbs.org Join the conversation on Tuesday. Led by Tony Malone
- March 22** Starting with some video clips of Brene Brown, which will we watch together, we will consider the role of shame and vulnerability, courage and forgiveness in the expansive life. Led by Jim Wilkerson
- March 29** A recorded video conversation with Christian artist Makoto Fujimura opens the space for our discussion that explores human creativity, beauty, trauma, the fracturing of community, and how the church is responding to the needs of our time. Led by Kathy Donley
- April 5** Tarana Burke is the originator of the Me Too Movement which raises awareness of sexual abuse and assault. We will listen to pieces of her story in her own voice and consider themes of abuse, prevention and care as well as the power of truth telling. Led by Kathy Moore





Opportunities to be active in the life of Emmanuel

For all those connected to Emmanuel:

You may be aware that the administrative structure at Emmanuel has changed and there are no longer official commissions. EBC has decided to try a new approach where all the folks in the congregation are being invited to be active participants in what Emmanuel is all about. We want less committees but love to have enthusiastic volunteers who have passion and a heart to make a difference in some way. God calls all of us, but in so many different ways!

So in an effort to be organized about what we have done in the past and what people may still want to do, we will regularly publish a list of opportunities. Many are short lived, some are on going. The Executive Team asks you to consider any of the following opportunities and get in touch if you would like to help out. The list is not complete and you may think of something additional that you previously did or that you would like the church to do. Email or call and we will connect you to the activity. The pandemic slowed us down and now we are ready to move ahead and enjoy the grace and opportunities that God gives us.

Thanks so much for being part of Emmanuel,
Anthony Malone M.D., Moderator
on behalf of the Executive Team

Here are some specific areas to consider:

Hospitality and Fellowship related

Contact Ellen Corcoran or EBC if interested

- Set-up/dean-up coffee hour (need 3 or 4 people as back-up)
- Socialize with zoom attendants after worship
- Help with Communion Set-up and clean-up
- Send Cards
- Visitations/personal connections
- Dry-erase Board – birthdays and events
- Potluck dinners
- Receptions

Faith Formation related

Contact Marilyn Malone or EBC if interested

- Teacher support/recruitment
- Book studies
- Movie nights
- Promote Conferences, conventions, etc.
- Safety Plan Compliance
- Library
- Milestone recognitions
- Intergenerational activities
- Retreats
- Team building, social activities for children and adults
- Bible study



continued...

Local Outreach and Evangelism related.
Contact Ruth Pushee or EBC if interested

Posters for Sign boxes
PRIDE Parade and Festival
Advertising in other venues
Digital advertising
Maintain the website/social media
Work on Fresh Expressions

Missions Related

Contact Jan Curtis or EBC if interested

Encourage mission outreach locally, nationally, internationally
Shelter meals
Advocacy/Promotion – e.g. -FOCUS, Labor/Religion Coalition, CACC
Develop benevolence budget (October) _
Administer contingency fund
Collection of material donations – Love kits, missionary supplies, laundry detergent, food for holiday baskets
Coordinate missionary speakers
Letter writing to gov't etc., other offerings

Worship Related

Contact Judy Henningson or EBC if interested

Participate on a worship team
Recruit lay leaders
Participate as a lay leader
Participate in children's role in worship
Tech set up for worship
Prepare monthly communion
Organize communion lay involvement
Organize and notify ushers
Pulpit supply in Pastor's absence
Children's table and clipboard supplies
Music program and Choir
Support Minister of Music
Piano and organ maintenance with building committee
Update Church calendar for worship events
Children's instrumental music



Property and Financial management

Contact Jean Burton or EBC if interested

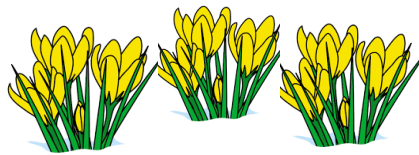
Building use
tenants review
Insurance review
Be on audit team
Investments review

continued...

Organize work days
Participate in work days
Supervise staff - secretary, sexton
Coordinate tasks for building manager
Apply for grants
Monitor building - heat, security, repairs
Recruit additional tenants

Some important planning needs that are coming up:

- Help with lent, Easter events
- Help with lent, Easter events
- Help worship tech team
- Help with faith formation activities
- Be a lay leader
- Organize shelter meals
- Organize shelter love kits
- Participate in church workday when organized



Emmanuel is blessed with several very savvy tech members who have zoomed our worship time into our homes. Now that we are returning to in-person worship, we have taken another step towards inclusion.

A T-coil hearing loop has been installed in the sanctuary and the nursery to allow those with hearing devices to clearly hear the music, prayers, and sermons. Even a caregiver in the nursery can listen in. So anyone with hearing aids, as you enter the sanctuary, check your device to activate the T-coil function.

*Thank
You*

A Note of Thanks

“Rachel and I would like to thank everyone that prayed for us and sent their prayers, thoughts, and cards during this difficult time. We have truly been blessed by this church and we thank you for acknowledging my mother's life. We know that she is safely in our Lord's arms and we will see her again! ‘For we walk by faith, not by sight-yet we are confident and satisfied to be out of the body and at home with the Lord’ (2 Corinthians 5:7-8)”

-- Pattie and Rachel Scott



Anyone who would like to donate a lily to decorate the sanctuary for Easter is welcome to do so now. The cost is \$12.00 per plant. Checks can be sent to the church, paid on line or given to Karen Green.

Also, please include the short form below that includes your name, if you are donating the plant to a church member or keeping it for yourself, and if it's in memory or celebration of someone. Thank you.

- I would like the lily designated in memory/honor of _____
- I would like the plant donated to a church member.
- I would like the plant for myself.

NAME: _____

Happy Birthday...

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Sally Cole | 2 nd |
| Jasmine Osborne | 5 th |
| Jonathan Malone | 10 th |
| Amiya Collins | 11 th |
| Rory Garner | 13 th |
| Lucy Wong | 22 nd |
| Sofia Wah | 29 th |
| Olivia LaBarge | 30 th |



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

Daylight Saving Time begins March 13!



Spring Begins... March 20 !!!



Remember the Food Pantry...

toilet tissue

Emmanuel Baptist Church
275 State St.
Albany, NY 12210