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**PLEASE notify us of any address changes and/or if you no longer wish to receive this publication.**

# The Tidings

**February 2019****Ballston Spa United Methodist Church****101 Milton Avenue, Ballston Spa, NY 12020**


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## Pastor's Column

Warm Greetings,

As this edition of the February Tidings reaches your home we will have reached one year together with me serving as your pastor. It doesn't seem like that long ago that I turned the pages of your photo directory and wondered who all of you were...just as you likely saw my family's picture on your worship screen one Sunday – and wondered about us! Now we have had numerous times together: sharing joyful worship services, seeing each other during evening ministry meetings, serving together at church dinners, joining together for great mission causes, the list can and does go on from there! I thank God for each one of you, and for the many ways we have served God together and blessed and strengthened one another.

For this month's column I have found a compelling true story; I share it with you so that we might be provoked (in the best sense) to reflect on what is most important in our life together as a church – not only for today, but for our future as well.

There's an old story told about a rabbi living in a Russian city a century ago. Feeling adrift in his life, he found himself wandering out into the chilly winter weather one evening. He walked aimlessly through empty streets. He was so distracted that he mistakenly wandered into a Russian military compound that was off-limits to civilians.

The silence of the dark night was shattered by the bark of a Russian soldier.

"Who are you? And what are you doing here?"

"Excuse me?" replied the rabbi.

"I said, 'Who are you and what are you doing here?!'"

After a brief moment the rabbi, in a gracious tone so as not to provoke the soldier, said "How much do you get paid every day?"

"What does that have to do with you?"

The rabbi, who now seemed very animated, said "I will pay you the equal sum if you will ask me those same two questions every day: Who are you? And what are you doing here?"

*Who are you?*

*What are you doing here?*

Don't those two penetrating questions make a person sum up what matters most? I think we could all benefit in our personal lives if we took the time to truthfully answer them. What's more, I think the church would benefit if we answered these same powerful questions in our life together. We are on this shared journey together, and with God's help – I believe the best is yet to come. Our church's strategic goals in 2019 are to "strengthen our connection" – with one another and in our relationship with God.

Pastor Kelly

## **Mission and Outreach News**

### **First Fridays! #LiveBspa**

We are having another First Friday on February 1st from 5:30 to 8 pm. This will coincide with the town Chocolate Fest. I am asking the congregation to chip in on some of the dipping items needed for the chocolate fountain.

Some items needed are:

Chocolate for the fountain (Only purchase in ACMoore, Michaels or other craft stores grade fountain chocolate), strawberries, apples or bananas -purchased just prior to the event please. Prewash and dry if you plan on bringing the night of the event. Water ruins chocolate in the fountains and causes it to seize! Also needed Pound cake, small pretzel sticks, Oreos, Rice Krispie treats, marshmallows, brownie bites (not cut up brownies please), donut holes.

Please let me know prior to the event if you plan on providing any of the above.

Otherwise stop in on First Friday and enjoy our chocolate fountain! And please invite friends and neighbors. We will have a variety of dipping items and other refreshments. You just pick and enjoy! Our Fair Trade Chocolates, Coffee, Hot Cocoa and Teas will also be available for sale. We will have a regular table of child and adult appropriate activities which will relate to chocolate and Valentine's Day! Hope to see everyone there! Thanks, Karen Groff 518-928-1656

### **Fair Trade**

There will be a sale of Fair Trade products on Sunday, February 17th. We will have coffee (including hazelnut), tea, hot chocolate, and DARK Chocolate bars. We will again be set up near the coat racks just outside of the Connections Café. Prices for some items have increased for 2019.

This is the first price increase since we have started selling fair trade.



### **Regional Food Bank**

On Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup> we will be heading to Latham to sort the abundance of donations at the Regional Food Bank. Dress comfortably, and in layers. Bring a bag lunch to church. We will gather downstairs after Coffee Hour to eat, and then carpool to leave by 12:30. We will stop afterwards at Stewart's for ice cream and fellowship. All ages are strongly encouraged to help. The sign-up sheet will be located on the Mission Table in the Connection Café. Contact: Linda Sheeran – 518-885-1729, or [lsheeran6@gmail.com](mailto:lsheeran6@gmail.com).

### **Veterans & Community Housing Coalition**

#### **Thanks You**

On behalf of the Veterans that receive support from the VetHelp program, we thank you for your very generous donation of \$7,575 from the Falling Leaves 5K event. Your donation validates our mission and gives help to the veterans that we serve.

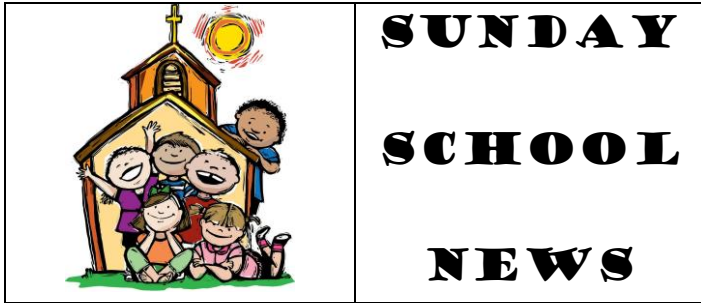
Cheryl Hage-Perez  
Executive Director

Our donation was used toward the purchase of a new van for the lady vets living at Guardian House. See the poster on the bulletin board in the hall by the Connections Café.

### **Ballston Area Clergy Association**

On behalf of the Ballston Area Clergy Association, I would like to thank you for your generous donation of over \$1500 for the year to our Community Assistance Fund. This fund was established in 2009 as an ecumenical witness of God's love and compassion to people in times of financial crisis. Thank you for your part in making this a vital ministry to our community!

Justina Danison  
Administrative Assistant and Bookkeeper  
First Presbyterian Church of Ballston Spa



Happy New Year to our Church families!

The teachers and I had a meeting on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Here are some of the highlights:

We are continuing with the Whirl curriculum but placing an emphasis each week on the following basic skills some of which your children may already know:

- The Lord's Prayer
- John 3:16
- Learning to master looking up the book, chapter and verses in the bible
- Simple church songs

The children and the teachers hope that we can show our skills later in the year. We will also be having you revisit the registration form since they are being updated.

We have the following planned in the next couple months for mission and field trips:

- Red Book Shelf Mission Project until February 10<sup>th</sup>. The RED Bookshelf re-circulates gently-used children's books back into the community where they are made available free for families to own. We will be asking the children (and congregation) to donate books from home.
- On February 10<sup>th</sup> we plan a small trip across the street to our local laundromat to stock the Red Bookshelf located there. Children love to do this and it gives them a feeling of mission in action!
- March 10<sup>th</sup> we are planning an after church field trip to "We Rock the Spectrum" facility in Ballston Spa. This gym provides children with a fun and motivational environment to help them in the areas of strength, movement, sensory processing, communication, positive behavior modification, social interactions, and self-care skills. We will provide transportation, pizza (or allergic alternative lunch, if needed) and a couple of hours play time at the indoor gym. We think this will be a great time of fellowship for the children.

We hope your children will partake in these worthwhile field trips. In order for them to attend, we will need the church's trip release form for each child. We will be providing these and the new registration forms in the future.

We will have more planned as we get closer to April and Easter, but just wanted to give you a glimpse into some planning. Lastly, I want to sincerely thank all of you for allowing us time with your children each Sunday. They are a joy, truly!

Have a healthy, joyful and spirit filled 2019!

Karen Groff

Sunday School Superintendent

### **Sunday School Mission Project**

The Sunday School will be participating in the Red Book Shelf Mission Project until February 10<sup>th</sup>. The Red Bookshelf re-circulates gently-used children's books back into the community where they are made available free for families to own. We will be asking the children (and congregation) to donate books from home. If you would like to participate, please provide new or gently used children's books which are content appropriate and clean in the bin provided under the Sunday School bulletin board.

### **Safe Sanctuary and Church Safety 8 Reasons to Screen Church Staff and Volunteers**

1. Protect the children from abuse or death.
2. Protect the members from injury or death.
3. Protect the Finances and Assets of the Church.
4. Protect the Reputation of Your Church
5. Protect your witness to the world.
6. In some states, you are required to do so by law. Safe Sanctuaries is mandated by the Upper New York Church Conference.
7. Protect your church from lawsuits
8. Protect staff, officers and volunteers from personal lawsuits

### **Church Happenings**

#### **Opening the Gates to Giving**

Struggling (again) to get pledges for your annual budget? Wish your depressing financial reality could improve? Come on February 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in the sanctuary and learn specific strategies well-funded churches use. Proven principles (presented by J. Christopher at the

Bishop's retreat) will be explained. Understand why, when and how people choose to give generously. Many practical resources (print and online) will be provided.

Pastor Kelly will be teaching two classes to laity in our Adirondack District on March 2<sup>nd</sup> from 8:45 am to 2:30 pm at the Saratoga UMC. A total of twenty interesting options are being offered. Please consider attending.

Pastor Kelly will teach the session related to finances right here at our church on February 26<sup>th</sup>. All leaders (plus our Finance Team) are strongly encouraged to attend. This will also be opened up to other nearby local United Methodist churches and those churches who are in our ecumenical Ballston Spa Association.

### **Church-Wide Family Dinner**

Join your church family for dinner February 16<sup>th</sup> in our Fellowship Room. All ages are invited to enjoy ziti, meatballs, salad and dessert. Sign up to come and see what you can bring for this community meal. You won't want to miss the after-dinner entertainment! Hope you will show up and do life together with your church family.

### **5K Thank You Dinner**

The next 5 K Thank You Dinners will be 6 pm, Thursday, February 21<sup>st</sup> at the Pizza Works on Milton Avenue, across from the Post Office. It will be \$11 per person which includes pizza, salad, soda, tax and tip. Sign-ups for the dinner and pizza selections will be available on February 10<sup>th</sup>. No advance payment is required, but we will contact the restaurant on Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> with the number of attendees. Please contact Melody Babcock (518.490.2015) or Stan Lockwood (518.885.1552) with any questions. Thank you to all who participate in these events which show BSUMC's support of our 5K Sponsors.

### **Media Team in Action**

Last fall we assembled a group of people who have an interest in the church's use of all forms of media (Web, Face book, video, audio): Dave Edwards, Khai Gibbs, Karen Groff, Mark Warner, and the pastor. After some preliminary discussion & dreaming, we decided to investigate whether the audio/video experience in the sanctuary could be enhanced.

Recently we had a meeting with a local audio/video consultant who works with many churches in the area; he made a number of recommendations and provided cost estimates for

each system. This information was shared with Church Council at the January meeting. We are currently working to schedule presentations from at least 2 other providers to get the fullest possible picture of what our options are in terms of equipment and cost.

The consultant also made some suggestions about how we could improve our sound quality in the short term, which have been implemented and seem to us to have some benefit. He also pointed out that the lavalier microphone currently in use is operating on a frequency which is now reserved by law for emergency vehicles, so we have discontinued use of that mike effective immediately.

We'll keep the congregation posted on our progress, but if there are questions in the meantime, please feel free to direct them to any of the team members listed above.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Rummage and Bake Sale**

It's only February, but it's time to start thinking of cleaning things out and the Winter Rummage Sale is a great place to donate those items! We will accept house wares, small furniture items, clothes, linens, toys (in decent condition), games, puzzles, books, sporting goods, etc.

Please remember, NO electronics, TVs, computers, car seats, big furniture or mattresses. Items must be clean and in decent shape.

We will start accepting items Wednesday, February 27 from 4 – 8 PM in the Fellowship Room. If you have any questions you may contact Melody Babcock, Debbie Thompson, Janet or George Mallette.

### **District News**

Forty-six years – that is how long the debate on human sexuality has been taking place in the United Methodist Church. The 2016 General Conference gave a specific mandate to the Council of Bishops to lead The United Methodist Church in discerning and proposing a way forward through the present impasse related to human sexuality and the consequent questions about unity and covenant.

A Special session of General Conference will soon be held on February 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis, MO.

Continue to pray for the United Methodist Church as we approach February 23.

Visit <http://bit.ly/SS2019FAQ> to find answers to your questions on the Conference FAQ page. You may also bring your questions to Pastor Kelly or our Lay Leader, Linda Sheeran.

### How to Help Schroon Lake Church

This message comes from Pastor Lynnette Cole.

God has been with Schroon Lake Community Church after a fire on January 2 destroyed the church and parsonage. Thankfully, there were no injuries. Pastor Lynnette and her dog, Lumos Maxima, are OK. Sunday morning services are being held at 9 AM Sundays at the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, one block north of our church until further notice.

We are so thankful for the firefighters and all who assisted the day of the fire. Our church congregation is strong and so blessed for the outpouring of love, support and prayers during this difficult time.

Donations for the Schroon Lake Community Church can be made through our website or checks may be mailed to:

Schroon Lake Community Church  
PO Box 276  
Schroon Lake, NY 12870

Donations for Pastor Lynnette can be made through her GoFundMe page or checks and gift cards can be mailed to:

Skye Farm Camp and Retreat Center  
c/o Pastor Lynnette Cole  
1884 E. Schroon River Rd  
Warrensburg, NY 12885

★HAPPY★  
BIRTHDAY!

- 2/1 Maddy Wilson
- 2/2 Patricia Higgins
- 2/3 Parker Caswell, Joshua Thompson, Jason Greco
- 2/4 A.J. Schmidt, Garret Evans
- 2/6 Peggy Traver
- 2/7 Kathy Haege, T.C. Wolsey
- 2/14 Jeannine Kelley
- 2/16 Eliason Cherrstrom, Taylor Natale
- 2/19 Keith Dickerson
- 2/22 Alexander Duthaler
- 2/23 Nicholas Parlapiano
- 2/29 Jonathan Blake

*Happy Anniversary*

2/15 Frank & Mary Townley

2/17 Jason & Michelle Greco

**Please let the Church Office know if there are any additions and/or corrections.**



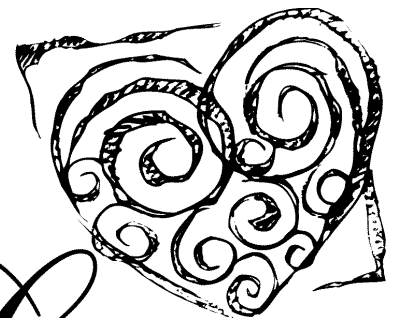
### **Barb Murray – Address Correction**

Barb Murray's address was incorrect last month. Her address is: Gary Clark, Attn: Barb Murray, 505 Sperry Hollow Road, Schenevus, NY 12155. Please sign a card (being passed around today in church) wishing her blessings.

### *Life's Passages...*



Condolences to Cathy and Jerry King on the passing of Peggy King  
7/24/43-1/21/19



*Love*  
One Another

**Newsletter Deadline:**

**The deadline date for the March issue of The Tidings newsletter is February 20<sup>th</sup>. You may e-mail your article to [bsumc@albany.twcbc.com](mailto:bsumc@albany.twcbc.com), drop it off, or mail it to the office. Anyone may submit an article for the newsletter.**



**Sunday Worship 10 AM - Nursery Care Available**  
**Sunday School 10:15 AM**

**Church Office Phone**

518-885-6886

**Office Hours**

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday  
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

**Pastor Kelly Warner**

Tuesday – Thursday (all day)

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**Email**

[bsumc@albany.twcbc.com](mailto:bsumc@albany.twcbc.com)

**Web Site**

[Ballstonspaumchurch.org](http://Ballstonspaumchurch.org)

*“Open Hearts, Open Minds,  
Open Doors.”*