



March 2024

THE BELL TOWER



The First Congregational Church, Spencerport UCC
65 Church Street Spencerport, NY 14559



March 2024 Newsletter

A sabbatical is something very unique in certain professions. Professors—usually after seven years of service, take a sabbatical for a number of reasons. Some write scholarly articles; others write books. Some may travel to explore; while others take classes to delve deeper into their field of study. Regardless of what the reason is, usually, sabbaticals are needed, appreciated, and, obviously, accepted.

Furthermore, churches typically offer pastors a sabbatical, as well, after a handful of years of service. As I was preparing for my sabbatical, I informally (via text messaging and emailing) interviewed other pastors on what they did on their sabbatical. One pastor told me that they traveled to explore the civil right museums of the South—and that it was life changing. Another pastor told me that they accepted and led a lectureship at Harvard Divinity School. I spoke to a pastor in the Genessee Valley Association about three months ago and they said, “I slept a lot my first two weeks on sabbatical. I didn’t realize how exhausted I was.”

From June 2nd, 2024, through September 3rd, 2024, I will be taking a sabbatical to reflect, rest, explore, and travel. First, I will be attending the Joe Engle Preaching Institute at Princeton Theological Seminary as a Joe Engle Fellow. This is a huge honor. I will be studying preaching, ministry, and pastoral theology among some of the most brilliant minds in the field. Second, I am going to study some of the homiletical methods of the Rev. Dr. James Forbes. In 1993 and 1994, James Forbes was named by Ebony Magazine as one of the greatest preachers in the nation. Third, I plan to travel to visit some museums in Washington, DC and in the South. When I return, I think it would be beneficial for us to reflect together about my time away.

Finally, the Board of Religious Services, the Church Council, and I will ensure that the pulpit is filled every Sunday and that there is sufficient coverage.

Should you have any questions about my sabbatical in the meantime, please don’t hesitate to give me a call or send me an email so that we can meet for lunch or a cup of coffee.

With love, gratitude, and a pastor’s heart,

Pastor Michael L. Sloan

March 2024

HOLY WEEK



3/24



3/28



3/29



3/31

Palm Sunday
10 am Service

Maundy Thursday
6:30 pm service
In the Chapel

Good Friday
Ecumenical Service
6:30 pm FCC

Easter Sunday
10 am Service
He Has Risen!

WORSHIP SCHEDULE



COUNCIL AND BOARDS MEETINGS

Tuesday, March 19th
@ 6:30/7:00 PM
HYBRID: IN-PERSON & ZOOM

UPCOMING DATES

- Sunday, March 3rd - Lunch Bunch - Following Worship Service
- Saturday, March 9th – @ 9:30 am: Women's Guild Meeting
- Sunday, April 7th - Lunch Bunch - Following Worship Service
- Saturday, April 13th – @ 9:30 am: Women's Guild Meeting

LENTEN



STUDY GROUP

LENTEN GROUP STUDY 2024

Zoom/Facebook Live

Dates/Times:

Wed., March 6 - 6 p.m.*
Discussion Theme: "Coins" (Book pp. 67-78).

Wed., March 13 - 7p.m.
Discussion Theme: "Shoes" (Book pp. 91-102).

Wed., March 20 - 7 p.m. - Ellen M Kern
Discussion Theme: "Oil" (Book pp. 115-126).

Please contact the office @ (585) 352-3448 or admin@spencerportucc.org if you have any questions.



FINANCE BOARD ZOOM MEETING

Wednesday, March 13th @
7:00 PM Via Zoom

March 2024



ARE YOU A WIDOW? OR, DO YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO IS A WIDOW? NAOMI'S CIRCLE: Naomi's Circle will meet on the following dates through May. The second Thursdays of the month. **Thursdays, March 14th, April 11th, May 9th at 12 Noon.** Naomi's Circle will meet in the Fellowship Hall for a light luncheon and a conversation on widowhood. Please bring a small dish to share. If you have any questions, please contact the office @ (585) 352-3448 or admin@spencerportucc.org The group is open to anyone that is a widow. Members can attend as a support person in the group if needed. Naomi's Circle is dedicated to providing a safe place for widows/widowers to express themselves, freely, about how widowhood has impacted their lives.

SHARE THE LIGHT: ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING (OGHS) SPECIAL MISSION offering of the United Church of Christ involves you in disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. **THE OFFERING DATE IS MARCH 10TH.** When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, you are part of the immediate response and of the long-term recovery.

Through OGHS you engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women's empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response & recovery networks, your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put you in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet immediate needs and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place.

APRIL NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS MARCH 20TH.
If you would like to submit an article for The April Newsletter, please email the church office at admin@spencerportucc.org, By March 20th. Thank you!

Please call or email the office if you would like to include any information, special news, or



to the weekly FlockNote or newsletter. Thank You!



BREAKFAST CLUB



Breakfast Club

MARCH DATES/LOCATIONS

- March 5th – Town & Country (3205 Chili Ave.)
March 12th – Slayton Place (26 Slayton Ave.)
March 19th – Original Steve's Diner (3240 Chili Ave.)
March 26th – Johnny D's (2139 N. Union St.)

March 2024

FEBRUARY MINISTRY SCHEDULE

GREETERS:

- 3 – TBA
10 – TBA
17 – TBA
24 – TBA
31 – TBA

COFFEE HOUR:

- 3 – LUNCH BUNCH
10 – TBA
17 – TBA
24 – Bunny Tubbs
31 – TBA

USHERS:

- 3 – Karen Eysaman
10 – TBA
17 – TBA
24 – TBA
31 – TBA

LAY READERS:

- 3 – Gwendolyn Tappenden
10 – Ellen M Kern
17 – TBA
24 – TBA
31 – TBA

****IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP WITH ANY OF THE WEEKENDS LABELED TBA PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN FELLOWSHIP HALL OR**



OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Friday
9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Pastor: Rev. Michael L. Sloan, D. Min.
Cell: (309) 262-6543
E-mail: pastor@spencerportucc.org

Administrative Assistant: Paula Jackson
Office: (585) 352-3448
E-mail: admin@spencerportucc.org

COMMUNITY

Please join us!

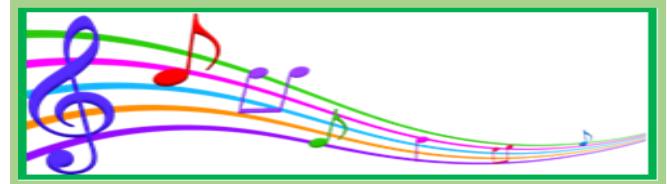
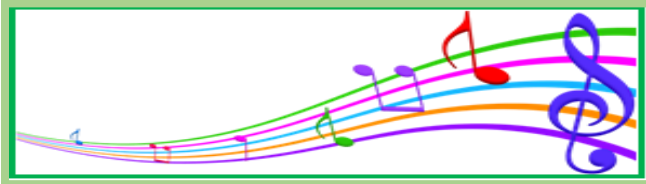
SEM CONGREGATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE NEEDED

We need a Congregational Representative (Lay Person) to represent the First Congregational Church, Spencerport UCC with SEM, Spencerport Ecumenical Ministry. SEM is an ecumenical group in Spencerport made up of Clergy and Non-Clergy to address the needs of the Spencerport Community as a whole. If you would like to represent the First Congregational Church as a Congregational Representative, please contact Pastor Michael or contact the Office.

Thank you!

March 2024

FCC MUSIC MINISTRY



FCC CHOIR PRACTICE'S AND SUNDAY'S IN MARCH

Choir Practices are Thursdays, **March 7th & 21st @ 7:00 pm.**

The Choir will perform during worship service on **Sunday, March 10TH & 24th.**

*The Choir will alternate Sundays with the Praise Band. Rehearsal will be 7 pm the Thursday prior to the Sunday performance and 9 am on the Sunday of performing. *

PRAISE BAND SUNDAY'S IN MARCH

The Praise Band will perform during worship service on Sunday, **March 3rd, 17th & 31st**. The Praise Band will continue to perform every other Sunday alternating with the Choir.

The members of the band include:

Mark Schott, guitar
Mark DiNitto, bass

Doug Schott, drums
Darcy Colby, vocals



FCC BELL CHOIR

The FCC Bell Choir will perform during Easter Service on March 31st, Easter Sunday.

CHRISTIAN ACTION

Donation For Salem

The **Salem Nutrition Center** is one of our major outreach programs.

At present they are serving an average of 1040 meals per month. They have recently asked for our help to fill the “Grab and Go” bags.

The Board of Christian action with your help has offered to collect 1000 small bags of chips by April 1st.

These can be mixed bags of any variety but individual serving bags. Please place them in the fellowship hall in the designated area. Our sincere thanks for your help!

Board of Christian Action

Betty Anne Riley Melanie Ippolito
Carol Schuman Ginny Worden

****TARGET CURRENTLY HAS A SALE ON BIG BOXES OF INDIVIDUAL SERVING CHIPS****

Thank you for your continuing and generous support to the Spencerport Ecumenical Food Shelf.

This month, the following items are especially needed:
Cold Beverages, Coffee, Cocoa, Hot Cereal, Baked Beans, Cooking Beans, Assorted Veggies, Pasta Sauce, Cake and Brownie Mixes, Toothpaste, Kleenex, Toilet Paper, Shampoo and Cleaning products.

A bin is available in the Fellowship Hall to drop off your donations.

If you know of anyone residing in the Spencerport School District, in need of food, they can call 397-0290.

Cash donations can be sent to Tom Olney, Food Shelf Treasurer, 26 Ogden Parma Townline Road, Spencerport, NY 14559. Checks should be made out to the Spencerport Ecumenical Food Shelf.

Questions or concerns: Contact Melanie Ippolito at 352-3891.



MONTHLY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

March 2024

First Congregational Church,
Spencerport UCC
March



*Anniversaries
and Birthdays*

Please wish a
Happy Birthday To:
10th - Wendy Vonhold
15th - Melva Owens (91yrs)
25th - Suz Nichols

Wendy, Melva & Sue, your Church Family Wishes you a very
Happy Birthday!
Gods Blessings!

***Please send Paula your Birthdays and Anniversaries
so, we can celebrate together! (information below) ***



MONTHLY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Let's celebrate each other! We would like to include special dates in The Bell Tower Monthly Newsletter. Please send us your Anniversary or Birthday (without year) to be included in the monthly newsletter, please contact the office at (585) 352- 3448 or Admin@spencerportucc.org.

An Irish Prayer

May God give you...
For every storm, a rainbow,
For every tear, a smile,
For every care, a promise,
And a blessing in each trial.
For every problem life sends,
A faithful friend to share,
For every sigh, a sweet song,
And an answer for each prayer.



PointOfGrace.net

Have a blessed
EASTER

Wishing that
THE LORD
blessed you on
EASTER
and always!



March 2024

NEEDLES MISSION CLUB – OUR AMAZING STORY (so far)

Submitted by Holly Bauer-Mergen

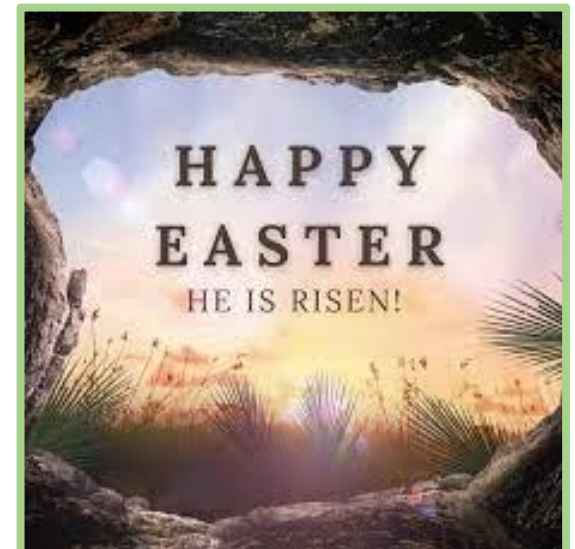
The Needles Mission Club began in 2009. At first, we met as a group once/month and socialized while we knitted (or just chatted), at times giving lessons to newcomers. Sometimes the group saw consistent faces, other times people drifted in and out, and always the group had friends who participated from home. (At times we have mystery contributors, where a knitted square or blanket just appears at church).



Unfortunately, we have lost some of our original gang (though we're still using Elaine Hay's yarn stash). As times evolved, the monthly gatherings ended, and folks did what they could at home. At first, we only had knitters, then crocheters joined us, and sometimes a quilter or sewer would contribute as well (hence the name "Needles" – it doesn't matter what kind). The primary product was always the lap robes/blankets; hats were added in 2020 during the pandemic. (The pandemic lockdown definitely encouraged greater productivity in 2020 and 2021!) I don't think we ever had more than 6 or 7 members at any one time, each contributing in her own way – knitter, crocheter, and sewer (and delivery driver).

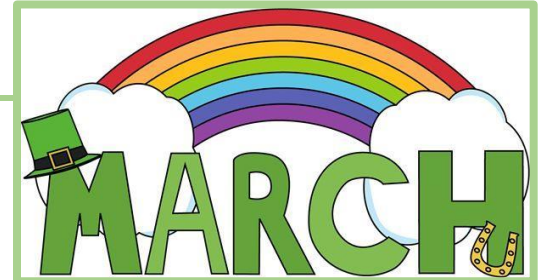
But from our modest group has come amazing things over those 15 years. Since 2009 Needles Mission Club has donated **712 blankets and 141 hats** [plus an assortment of other knitted items, e.g., shawls, baby clothes, baptismal hats, etc.]. Recipients have been primarily the Wilmot Cancer Center, Roswell Cancer Center, and Spencerport dialysis center, but also the Batavia VA, a Girl Scout Gold badge project, and others, as well as individual patients that were church members and family and friends of the church.

I am proud to be affiliated with such an amazing group!



March 2024

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SPENCERPORT UCC
MARCH 2024**



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					Newsletter Online	
Third Sunday in Lent 3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 am-Worship / Praise Band Performing Lunch Bunch Following Worship	6-8 pm Rotary Meeting - Fellowship Hall	9:00 am- Breakfast Club @ Town & Country (3205 Chili Ave.) 7 pm - ALANON	7pm - Lenten Program	3pm - SEM @ OBC 7 pm-Choir Practice		9:30 am - Women's Guild Meeting - Fellowship Hall <i>Women's Guild</i>
Fourth Sunday in Lent 10	11	12	13	14	15	16
9:00 am - Choir Rehearsal 10 am-Worship / Choir Singing	6-8 pm Rotary Meeting - Fellowship Hall	9:00 am- Breakfast Club @ Slayton Place (26 Slayton Place) 7 pm - ALANON	6pm - Lenten Program 7pm-Zoom Finance Board Meeting	Noon - Naomi's Circle 		
Fifth Sunday in Lent 17	18	19	20	21	22	23
10 am-Worship / Praise Band Performing 		9 am- Breakfast Club @ Steve's Original Diner (3240 Chili Ave.) 6:30/7 pm - Council/Boards Meeting 7 pm - ALANON	MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 7pm- Lenten Program	7 pm-Choir Practice		
Palm Sunday 24	25	26	27	Maundy Thursday 28	Good Friday 29	Holy Saturday 30
9:00 am - Choir Rehearsal 10 am-Worship / Choir Singing 		9 am- Breakfast Club @ Johnny D's (2139 N. Union St.) 7 pm - ALANON	7pm - Lenten Program	6:30 pm - Maunday Thursday Service in Chapel *Newsletter Mailed*	6:30 pm - Ecumenical Good Friday Service - FCC	
Easter Sunday 31						
10 am-Worship / Bell Choir / Praise Band Performing						

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
65 Church Street
Spencerport, NY 14559-1311**

WELCOME **March**

Look for the
GOODNESS in everyone
whom you meet today
and every day forward.

Open Your Heart
and become someone
who gives a gift of peace,
joy or hope.. And watch
the ripple effect of
MIRACLES & BLESSINGS
unfold in your life.



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Sunday Worship: 10:00 am
Telephone: (585) 352-3448
Web site: www.spencerportucc.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/SpencerportUCC
Pastor: Rev. Michael Sloan (1-309-262-6543 - cell)
E-mail: pastor@spencerportucc.org**

**Administrative Assistant: Paula Jackson
Office Hours: 9:00 am-2:00 pm – Monday-Friday
E-mail: admin@spencerportucc.org
Music Director: Darcy Colby
E-mail: musicdirector@spencerportucc.org**

Accompanist: Lindsey Williams



March 2024