

Pastor
Rev. Kelly Warner

Office Manager
Susan Cramer

Custodian
Tom Chase

Music Ministry
Cathy King

Christian Education

Church Council Chair
Ilah Sisson Walser

Financial Secretary
Cherrie Sanders

Lay Leader
Linda Sheeran

Staff Parish Chair
Joyce Garlock

Treasurer
Lynne Blake

Trustee Chair
Helen Senecal

**Youth Group
Leaders**
Melissa Taylor
Cherrie Sanders

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

The Tidings

December 2019

Ballston Spa United Methodist Church



101 Milton Avenue, Ballston Spa, NY 12020

December Musings

Dear Church Family,

As I watch snow falling outside my window, I find myself looking ahead to our Advent Season. Each year I try to do something new, to reawaken my sense of wonder and joy. I want to savor the birth of Jesus. This year I found my inspiration on a Facebook post, see below. Would you consider joining with me in reading one chapter from Luke each day in December? Do let me know if you will go on this Advent journey with me!

**New
Christmas Tradition**

Beginning December 1st read one chapter
of the book of Luke in the Bible each
evening.

There are 24 chapters.

On Christmas Eve you will have read an
entire account of Jesus's Life and wake up
Christmas morning knowing WHO and
WHY we celebrate!!

One more thing. On Dec. 8 I would love to display several nativity sets in worship, and I would like them to come from your homes. I'm especially looking for any that come from another country or culture. Please let me know if you have one we could display for that one special Sunday.

Pastor Kelly

Mission and Outreach News



Fair Trade Sale

The next Fair Trade sale will be December 15th after worship service just outside the Connections Cafe. Decaf and regular coffee and tea will be offered. Dark chocolate bars will be available. Thanks to all who support this mission ministry.

“Adopt A Family” Mission

We adopted a family for Christmas and all of the wish tags have been taken. Please remember to return your unwrapped gifts with the tags attached by Sunday, December 1. Thank you for helping to make Christmas a little brighter for three children.



Ballston Spa Ecumenical Thanksgiving Bag Ministry

Thank you to all who helped coordinate the Ballston Spa Ecumenical Thanksgiving Bag Ministry and all who gave so generously by filling the bags. This gave many local families an opportunity to enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner with their families.



**FEED THE
HUNGRY**

The Food Pantry

The Food Pantry had 204 families, (428 adults and 178 children) in the past three months.

The Regional Food Bank of Northeast New York in Latham gave a grant of \$2100.00 to be used from November 1, 2019 to June 26, 2020.

The Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts had a food drive and tremendously helped fill our shelves. The Boy Scouts had over 1200 pounds of food and the Cub Scouts brought in over 30 bags of groceries.

Hannaford donated 50 boxes (Help Fight Hunger) to our pantry.

The Elks Club continues to donate bags of food monthly.

Our church congregation and donations from individuals in the community have been generous. All this has helped to keep the Food Pantry open.

It is a true blessing and we are thankful!

Helen Senecal, Chairperson

Upper Room Thrift Shop News

Our Upper Room Thrift Shop continues to grow and thrive. From August 1st to October 31st, we had 318 shoppers and gave \$659.85 back to the Food Pantry.

Our new volunteer is Pam Hannan. She started in October. Welcome Pam!

The Shop has converted from summer to winter apparel. We still keep evening gowns out for holiday parties as well as wedding dresses, which can happen anytime.

We are so blessed by the clothes that are given to us, plus jewelry and linens! We have devoted shoppers who check us out weekly! One customer last week left with nine bags!

Thank you again, to all who participate in this ministry.

Thelma Armer and Melody Babcock, Co-chairpersons.

Church Happenings

Update on Consecration Sunday

Consecration Sunday was November 17th. While we enjoyed a lunch of wraps, macaroni and cheese and salad (as well as some very tasty cookies!), our pledges for the coming year were counted. Thirty-three individuals/families pledged their support of our church. Of those thirty-three there were eight new pledges and eight pledges that were increased from their current pledge. In excess of \$68,000 has been pledged for the

2020 year. Thank you for your generosity! Anyone still wishing to pledge can mail that to the office or put it in a sealed, labeled envelop in our Sunday offering plate. We thank Marion Capasso and Carrie Sheeran for sharing their thoughts leading up to this event.



Mark Your Calendars for the December First Friday Event!

On December 6th there will be activities here at the church to celebrate First Friday. The schedule of events will be:

- 5:30 pm – Crafts and snacks
- 5:30 pm – The High School Orchestra will play in the Fellowship Room
- 6 – 7:30 – A free movie in the sanctuary

We are asking the congregation to provide cookies and other snacks for that evening (it is not necessary that they are homemade, although we welcome it if you are able. Save your baking for the Roast Beef Dinner the next day!). Please place donations on the round table in the fellowship room and thank you in advance for your help!

Poinsettias for the Altar

Orders will be taken for poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary for Christmas. Each poinsettia is \$13.50, and orders must be placed by Sunday, December 15th with checks payable to the Briarwood Flower & Gift Shoppe. Order forms are located on the Missions Table in the back of the sanctuary. Any questions please see Carol Markley after church.



Annual Roast Beef Dinner and Bake Sale

The Annual Roast Beef Dinner and Bake Sale will be held on Saturday, December 7 from 4:00 to 6:30 PM in the Fellowship Room. The dinner will consist of top-round roast beef, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, yams, coleslaw, rolls, a slice of pie and a beverage. Dinners are served family-style. Adults \$13 - Children up to age 16 - Free. All take-outs are \$13. There will be an assortment of baked goods available to purchase. Come enjoy good food and good company!



Christmas Eve Service

Join us for our Christmas Eve service which will be held at 7 pm. It will be a service with the Bell Choir and Voice Choir, scriptures and carols.

Sunday School News

We are been extra busy in Sunday school. We made chili and brownies for the Ballston Spa Veterans Home in October and table favors for the Roast Beef Dinner coming in December. Learning the books of the New Testament is something we are trying to learn also. We will soon be getting ready for our annual Christmas pageant which is set for December 15th during the church service at 10:00am. Please make sure your children plan on coming each week to practice their parts! We hope everyone in the family can come! Don't forget to invite your extended family and friends to this annual heartwarming event.



Youth Group Activities

The Youth Group have an exciting month planned, full of fun, food and fellowship. They will be helping with the community crafts on First Friday (December 6th) and serving hot cocoa outside. They will be inviting people to use our Photo Frame and Reindeer props. On December 20th there will be a gathering where they will play a Christmas Minute to Win It game, do a candle mission project, watch Home Alone 2 and enjoy ice cream sundaes. There is only one question left...can I participate??

Trustees News

Fall is a very busy time of year for the trustees. Here's an overview of some of their work:

- Our outdoor sign, new this year, has had some minor leaks but the company is being contacted for repairs. We appreciate Linda Sheeran being the one to regularly post inspiring messages on the sign for all to see and enjoy.
- Carpet cleaning of the church has been discussed with quotes being requested comparing renting a shampooer and paying our custodian to do the work or hiring a company. When all of the information is compiled a decision will be made.
- A full pew in the back of the church was removed over the summer to accommodate space for the new sound system equipment. That pew was shortened and placed in our downstairs fellowship hall and it will be welcome seating, especially for those who do take out doing our dinners. The full pew in the Connections Café was also made shorter so that it could be safer, and it is a favorite sitting place for many.
- All of the boilers and furnaces in the church's three buildings have been serviced this fall.
- Three bids are being solicited for our snow plowing needs at the church for 2020
- Trustees will be working on creating a list of projects they believe are high priorities, with suggested time frames.
- Fellowship Hall accessibility One engineer has provided schematics that include a new back entrance area, and then an inside ramp 4 feet wide, that would go toward the kitchen. Once 2 others have submitted their proposals, Trustees plan to fill out the required Ministry Priorities form and get it to Church Council for their input. If any group wants funding for a project not included in our 2019 budget, they need to use this form and come before the leadership of Church Council.

Parsonage News

The required, annual fall walk-through of the parsonage found that it was in good shape. There have been problems over this past summer related to the septic system. Odorless Sanitary Services has been contracted to replace the septic system for an estimated cost of \$4800 this November. A birch tree in the backyard will need to be taken down, and in the spring season topsoil and seeding will need to be done.

The garage door also needs to be replaced. Bids are being solicited. Hopefully work will be completed. Our insurance will be used, with the Warner's paying any deductible.

For everyone's awareness there are three people serving on the parsonage team: Joyce Garlock, Mike Cramer, and Kelly Schmidt, who is a trustee liaison. Minor repairs and maintenance needs are overseen by this team. They have a line item in the budget. For larger, costly repairs the oversight of the Trustees is needed. Funding would also come from them, unless Church Council decides otherwise.

Sound System Update

In November Mark Warner shared in worship some important reminders about using our new sound system. Portable microphones need to be manually turned on and placed very close to one's mouth. The gooseneck microphone on the pulpit should never be touched or moved. It has the capacity to convey speech clearly from its position. There is now a microphone on a stand near the altar rail to be used by anyone who needs to make an announcement. Recent difficulties with the pastor's portable microphone should now be resolved!

Sound Solutions, the company that installed our new equipment, hosted a six hour workshop in November. We appreciate that three men from our congregation went to this training: Dave Edwards, Mark Warner and George Wilson. This team of volunteers would be welcome to anyone who would like to learn how to use the system to assist during worship services.



Hello! My name is Pamela Hannan and I am so very pleased to be your newest member at Ballston Spa UMC. Pastor Kelly has invited me to share a little about myself, including my earliest church memory, my favorite bible verse and my favorite hymn. Actually, this is a homecoming for me as I was baptized here on December 19, 1954 by the Rev. Winston Saunders. By pure coincidence, Rev. Saunders came to Shenendehowa UMC in 1979, just in time to be the officiant for my marriage to Ken Hannan. My family lived in

Ballston Spa in the early 1950's, then South Glens Falls for 11 years, then Clifton Park. I lost my parents two years ago just before Christmas. My father had been ill for several months and ultimately died while under Hospice care. Six days later my mother quietly passed away, diagnosed with Broken Heart Syndrome. They are in their final resting place in our family plot in Ballston Spa Village Cemetery.

Ken and I have been married for 40 years and retired together 4 years ago. I was an RN and he was in business management. We have 2 children and 3 grandchildren. Our daughter and son-in-law and their 3 children live south of Watertown, NY, and our son and his wife live in Boston. During the early years of our marriage Ken was transferred quite often. We lived in Rochester, Louisville KY, Hampton NJ, and then ultimately home (for me) to Clifton Park, where we have been since 1990.

Ken and I love to travel, following in the footsteps of my parents who traveled all over the world. We spend our winters now in Arizona and Florida, and when we're home here in the northeast we pick up and go on little getaways all the time. We love the ocean, the mountains, the Finger Lakes, or just spending time with our children and their families. In addition to traveling, I enjoy trying new restaurants, hiking, reading historical novels and doing genealogical research.

My earliest memory of church. That's easy, as it is also a favorite memory of mine overall: I loved sitting next to my mom in church. I was probably 4 years old, and I was just so very impressed that my mother always recited the *Apostles' Creed* from memory. I mean, wow! It was even longer than the Pledge of Allegiance! I remember looking around and beaming, because everyone else was reading it from their hymnals. One time I asked her why we say, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." Without skipping a beat, she replied, "Because Grandpa was Catholic." This seemed to be a perfectly logical explanation to me at the time, and to this day I smile whenever I hear those words. My favorite bible verse has always been *Psalms 121*, and my favorite hymn is *This is My Song*. We sang this at my father's funeral and there wasn't a dry eye in the place. As I told Pastor Kelly, my transferring my membership "back" to Ballston Spa UMC at this point in my life is the right step to take in my life's journey. I feel very much at home and I know that my parents are smiling down on me.

May God Bless each one of you,

Pam Hannan

Congratulations!!

We hope many of you had a chance to congratulate Marion Phillips on her 95th birthday. She turned 95 and has very regular attendance at church. She also gave a wonderful testimony in November about financial stewardship. We are blessed to have Marion as part of our church family.

District News

Help needed following Halloween Floods

This year's Halloween night was one for the books-the entire day consisted of heavy rain. Sadly, the rain resulted in flooding in 11 UNY counties: Cayuga, Chautauqua, Dutchess, Erie, Essex, Hamilton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Oneida, Saratoga, and Warren. The impact of these floods on 800+ homes has been severe:

- An estimated 230 homes have major damage.
- An estimated 70 homes were destroyed or condemned.
- An estimated 20 homes are inaccessible.
- An estimated 160 homes need muck-out and debris removal service.
- An estimated 300 homes have had gas and/or electricity turned off and need utilities service.
- 19 families need temporary housing.

The Upper NY Conference's Volunteers in Mission is currently focusing on the Rome/Utica area and has established a semi-command post with the Red Cross and other agencies to center their planning/dispatch and overnight accommodations. Not only do they have a place to sleep, but also, the Red Cross is providing food and showers as well.

Let's celebrate all of our volunteers and their good work. See Pastor Kelly if you are interested in being trained to assist with disaster relief efforts.

United Methodist Church ad campaign targets the lonely

Nashville, Tennessee - The United Methodist Church has launched the "Not the Only One" advertising campaign to help offer encouragement through community.

Research continues to emphasize people are experiencing a growing sense of loneliness. In fact, nearly half of Americans feel alone or left out, and it's taking a mental and physical toll on them.

"The advertisements target those who identify themselves as spiritual, socially conscious and seeking meaning in their lives, but who are not affiliated with a church. Our surveys show that they are craving meaningful relationships," shares Poonam Patodia-chief marketing officer for United Methodist Communications, the church agency responsible for marketing of the denomination. "We invite them to find love, joy and peace by joining a welcoming community."

Let's be sure that here at Ballston Spa United Methodist Church we are paying attention to those we know who might be experiencing loneliness. Let's invite them to a worship service or one of our many other events, so they can feel our support and love and God's as well.



Mr. Rogers helps us appreciate others

"I believe that appreciation is a holy thing," Fred Rogers said as he opened his 2001 commencement speech at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, "that when we look for what's best in the person we happen to be with at the moment, we're doing what God does. So, in loving and appreciating our neighbor, we're participating in something truly sacred." When we look for what's best in others, "We're doing what God does."

United Methodists can learn from the man in the cardigan who hosted a children's show.



Fred Rogers

Did You Know?

Christmas Day, the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord, was first celebrated on December 25 in Rome sometime between 336 and 354 A.D. A pagan winter solstice festival, the birthday of the unconquered sun, was already celebrated on December 25. Christians adopted that date to celebrate the birth of the Son of God, the sun of righteousness.



- 12/1 Marian Phillips
- 12/1 Sanders, Cherrie
- 12/4 Heffernan, Louisa
- 12/6 Babcock, Melody
- 12/7 Conley, Michael

- 12/10 Keehan, Jean
- 12/10 Lotto, Henry
- 12/10 Lotto, Grace
- 12/15 Fenton, Dan
- 12/15 Harrison, Glenn
- 12/16 LeRoy, Mark
- 12/23 Husselbeck, Kesandra
- 12/25 Groff, Karen
- 12/31 Fenton, Shelley

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



Newsletter Deadline:

The deadline date for the January issue of The Tidings newsletter is December 20th. You may e-mail your article to 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**

**Ballston Spa United Methodist
Church**

101 Milton Avenue
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

Address Service Requested

December Tidings

Church Office Phone

518-885-6886

Office Hours

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

Pastor Kelly Warner

Tuesday – Thursday (all day)

Email

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Web Site

Ballstonspaumchurch.org

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.