MCKOWNVILLE CHURCH NEWS

Love Gou, Follow Jesus and Pass It On!

Spirit Filled, Mission Driven

Volume 8 No. I

Articles for the February Newsletter are due by January 15th.

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20 HAPPY 17 NEW YEAR!

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January, 2017

VOLUME 8 NO.1

MCKOWNVILLE CHURCH NEWS

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Finally we say good bye to the year 2016 and the New Year has come. This past year has been a quite different and strange year for many people personally and globally. Oxford Dictionary of Great Briton chose the word, "**post-truth**" as the word of 2016 and this evidently tells how turbulent and twisted the past year was. Perhaps one of the most frequently heard word in the past year was "**unprecedented.**" Of course, every year is new and weird to some degree, but last year was weirder than any other in many accounts.

The world is desperately looking for calm and comfort and cer-

tainty, but we instead hear of bad news and see mad things stir our ordinary lives here and there. Very few people would disagree that the life in our world has been uncertain, unstable, unsettled, and unpredictable unlike our deep desire and hunger for peace and security. Unlike optimism and rosy expectation on humanity and the future, our planet seems to headed in the opposite direction, and uncertainty and unpredictability will define our lives in spite of all the knowledge and information flooding every aspect of our lives.

But Christians do not dwell in that gloomy, glum reality and future. We Christians stay hopeful and optimistic about the future all the time, and this confidence comes from our faith in God who came to us as a baby two thousand years ago. Christmas is the day God became human and this tiding is the source of hope and foundation of Christian life and ministry.

Next year's sermon theme is "**Faith Wins**" and the biblical verse is "**We walk by faith, not by sight**" (2 Corinthians 5:7). I believe Christian faith can be defined as "walking with Jesus' life" if we understand faith as relationship, not dogma or doctrine or ethics alone. And faith can be best expressed not by head but by hand. Faith in action is real, living faith, as John the apostle indicates in his letter of the Bible.

We at McKownville church are at an important juncture in 2017. God gives us New Year as an opportunity to make a giant step forward and it will depend on how we respond to his calling and leading.

January 20-22, eight of us will have a trip to a church in Florida to experience a very successful church in person. Learning directly from a church which is so vital and solidly growing in their ministries is very important for our church. Our church leadership decided to send seven people to Grace United Methodist Church in Florida for this conference (one more person will be sent through the support from the Albany District). I believe and pray that this trip can be an opportunity to redefine and revitalize our ministries in our church. The hosting church of the conference has been, in particular, known for its passion and strength for recovery-focused ministry (the poor, addicted, and marginalized) and other key ministries.

God's vision and plan for us will be materialized only through our oneness in passion for Christ and concerted efforts to be faithful to his last command, making disciples of Christ. His love and grace overflow in us.



By Charlie Yang

Learn more about this special trip on page 5.

Better to Receive??

By this time, all the gifts have been opened. And as we've always heard, it's better to give than receive. Let's look back in time for a moment...*did we think that way as children? We're we concerned about giving gifts more than receiving?* Well, I know that I'll be the first to stand guilty as charged as a young kid, getting Christmas gifts at a young aged was the most exciting time of the year. Those years were fun, and filled with enjoying a pile of presents for a full week while school was in recess.

As we get older, things change. We start to earn a little money on our own, and save a little for buying gifts for our family. We begin to listen to family members about what they'd like for Christmas, and we break out of our comfort zones and begin blazing trails to the malls, hard-ware stores and sporting goods shops in search of gifts for those close to us.

There is a time when we start to realize the joy and happiness in giving. It may not seem quite that way when we're battling for parking spots, waiting in long lines, and sometimes wandering aimlessly though stores we've never even been in before; but when it's all said and done, it's all worth it to watch the looks on the faces of mom and dad when their opening up gifts given to them from their children.

Yes, it's true, over time, we change, we mature, we see things from a different perspective. We want to see the joy in other's faces, as we remember the joy in our hearts when we were children receiving gifts. It becomes a privilege to be able to offer gifts to others. Sometimes it's our family members that glow with the response we had hoped to see, other times it's friends, and sometimes strangers. But all in all, it is the season of giving, and learning the joy of giving can make the season's spirit come alive.

But what about the thought of *receiving* being better than giving?? Does that sound selfish? Is it what we sometimes feel when we finally get that special gift we've been waiting for??

Well, maybe there is a time when it really is better to receive than give. After all, Christmas in its purest form is truly about receiving. It's about receiving the gift of Jesus, given to us by our Father in Heaven. There's no greater gift to receive than the love of the Holy Spirit brought to us on the first Christmas night through the birth of Jesus. Yes, Christmas is a wonderful time of the year, and giving gifts to our loved ones may make us feel wonderful, but nothing compares to receiving the greatest gift of all, the love of our Lord, the everlasting gift that we can receive over and over, and give freely to all.

Enjoy receiving the wonderful Gift God gave to the world, enjoy the love of Jesus through the Christmas season, and into the New Year.

God bless all for a happy, healthy, and safe Christmas and New Year,



Dom Perfetti



The following is an excerpt from an interesting article by Laurens Glass, originally published on December 31, 2014, from the website of the United Methodist Church. I encourage you to find the rest of the article online at:

http://www.umc.org/resources/beyond-new-years-resolutions-there-are-faithful-ones

New Year's Resolutions have always been a very pass/fail sort of test for me. I set myself up to forgo chocolate and lo and behold, two weeks into the New Year, I find myself munching nonchalantly on fudge. In the immortal words of comedian Steve Martin, "I forgot." But worse, one slip up and I feel like I have failed. I can't go back to "the day before the fudge" so what's the point? My record is no longer perfect.

But that is the whole point from a spiritual perspective. We're not perfect. But we are improving.

Resolving to be more spiritual is not a hard date to keep or a hard bar to leap over. It's a daily resetting of your mind and soul. It's trying again when you "fail" and knowing that you can never fail if you're trying. It is...grace. Here a few ideas for growing spiritually and for spurring you to think of your own.

1. Count to 10—Your mother was right — or, maybe it was my mother — but anyway, counting to 10 is an age-old axiom for a reason. Our first reactions to things may be influenced by how stressed we are at the moment....

2. Breathe—But I am! Right? Breathing is an involuntary response of the body. One that happens regardless of whether we're aware of it. But breathing can become shallow or quick when we are anxious or stressed — and that is when we need oxygen the most....

3. Think positive thoughts—I read that human beings think three or four negative thoughts to every positive one. My friends admit to beating themselves up for their shortcomings or worrying to the point of distraction about the future....

4. Love (and forgive) yourself—One of my favorite Bible verses ever, but one that has taken years for me to comprehend is "love your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27, among others)....

5. Love one another (and forgive the ones you can't forgive)—Such a simple directive. Such a beautiful philosophy. Did He really mean the ones we disagree with, too?! Learning to love in the manner Christ intended is more of a lifetime goal than an immediate accomplishment....

6. Pray - right where you are—I tend to agree with writer Anne Lamott that prayers are usually "Thank you! Thank you!" or "Help me! Help me! Help me!" But as I grew spiritually, I began to pray for other people when I myself was hurting. It's been a powerful practice that has changed my perspective about what others go through and how many blessings I actually have....

7. Be grateful - and be joyful—I woke up one morning when all I wanted to do was cry, and I heard clearly in my head: This is the day that the Lord hath made. I will rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24) So, I played "Happy" by Pharrell Williams, instead....

8. Think of the other fellow—That is what my mother used to say. "And you'll feel better."? When I was little, I thought doing things for others was about, well, others. It was the right and proper thing to do, but I wasn't sure it was necessarily fun. But as an adult, I realized it did far more for me than it ever did for anyone I ever helped....

You don't have to master all spiritual practices this week or even this year. But you can earnestly strive to be more spiritual at any point in time. It is an on-going practice. A resolution you can re-make daily.... Happy New Year.



Leadership trip to Grace United Methodist Church

At the November 2016 meeting of Leadership Council, Pastor Charlie told us the obvious: many churches are struggling and we are struggling. A few are growing, and we need to learn from them why and how. These days, most church growth is among the "independent" churches, but a few denominational congregations are growing. One such is within our own Methodist family. Grace United Methodist Church, Cape Coral, Florida (near Fort Myers), pastored by Rev. Jorge Acevedo, has experienced strong growth in recent years (weekly worship increasing from 400 to 2700, from 2 services on 1 campus to 10 services on 5 campuses). How can they grow when we are stagnant? We should visit to see for ourselves why they are dynamic and growing.

An opportunity to do this is available through our Conference. Vital Congregations, a part of the global Methodist Church, on behalf of Upper New York Conference, has put together a package trip to Grace Church. On the week-end January 20-21-22 (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) a program by Grace Church "Grace in Action" will explain how they build healthy teams, establish clear focus, develop fruitful strategies and structures, and get better at making disciples of Jesus. We will take advantage of this opportunity by sending a team. A team approach is better than an individual approach. A team will see more, hear more, interact more than an individual. Our team will include pastor Charlie along with leaders from Leadership Council, Worship, Education, and Youth.

This is a time to invest in the future of McKownville United Methodist Church. Without investment, our pastoral appointment likely will go from full to part-time, and part-time is very difficult to turn around. This trip has a purpose and a team is a support network that can come back and say "How do we apply it here". We as a church have invited team members to go and to learn on our behalf. These others who were chosen include Paul Krekeler, Mary Neitzel, Pat Beauregard, Kim Keane, Angela Stott. Please pray for them. When they return, we should, as a church, learn from them and use those ideas that will make us grow.

Enthusiastic discussion of the Council led to unanimous approval of a motion that McKownville Church pay up to \$1000 per person for five to seven people to attend this stimulating program.

Tune in to the March Newsletter for a progress report!



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STON PRAYERS AND SEND-OFF

The Mission of Peace is a yearly journey of discovery and Shalom to nations in our global community sponsored by the Northeast Jurisdictional Council on Youth Ministries of the United Methodist Church. Each year, every Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in the Northeastern Jurisdiction may select youth to share in this experience. On each MOP, participants worship in churches, meet youth in churches and civic organizations and share with people who have a similar longing for Peace and understanding. These times have been the high points of each MOP experience. The 2017 Mission of Peace will be traveling to Nicaragua. Arthur Stott and Emily Burns were both chosen as participants on this team.

The MOP is a life changing experience! It is a journey which leads each participant to discover God's Spirit at work in the world. It is an experience of God's extended family. It is a journey of discovering God's Shalom. It is primarily a people to people experience in which we learn from our hosts how they live as disciples of Jesus Christ in their country. It is a mission which has brought us closer to God's hoped for community where all are sisters and brothers.

Each year the Youth who represent the Annual Conferences of the United Methodist Church in the Northeastern Jurisdiction must raise the money which supports their MOP. In the spirit of Shalom, the Jurisdictional and Conference Councils on Youth Ministries humbly ask each church, UMW unit, UMM unit, UMYF, and individuals for prayerful consideration of a monetary gift to the Conference MOP participants.

Arthur and Emily have worked to fundraise for this trip by hosting dinners. but their major source of funding has been through Pumpkin Patch Scholarship, which you all support. Thank you. Please join us today in prayer as ANISSION O we send these youth off in Mission.

Vicaragua

YOUTH NEWS

<u>Guilderland Youth Group</u> is an open gathering of youth in grades 8-12 We meet to relate, to be social, to empower young people as world-changing disciples of Jesus Christ, to nurture faith development, and to equip young leaders. We meet 3-4 times per month for FUN, SERVICE, LEARNING and WORSHIP experiences. If you are looking for a group of young people to GO and DO – this is for you!!!

You can find contact information and more information about our youth ministries on our website at www.mckownvillechurch.org

Friday, January 6th – Friday, January 6th – Guilderland Youth Group will be hosting a District Wide

Jello Olympics

Youth Groups from all over our area will be coming to our church to participate in this fun, exciting game night! Plan to bring your friends. Cost is \$5 per person and a non perishable food item for the food pantry.

Participate in fun, silly, messy games all using Jello! You CAN"T miss this one!



Photo courtesy of Jim Bowen.



SPECIAL THANK YOU

The staff here at McKownville United Methodist Church would like to extend a huge thank you for our very generous Christmas gifts.





Adult Study Jan 8/9 through Jan 22/23. Three Simple Rules for Christian Living

This small-group study by Jeanne Torrence Finley is based on Rueben P. Job's book Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living. Six sessions provide extended reflection for adults on three principles of Christian life: **do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God**. Each rule has a session to help you understand the rule and a session to help you explore ways to practice the rule. Three Simple Rules for Christian Living includes a DVD that contains excerpts from an interview with Bishop Rueben Job.

Beginning Jan 29/30 <u>Grace</u>

We talk as though we understand the term. The bank gives us a *grace* period. The seedy politician falls from *grace*. Musicians speak of a *grace* note. We describe an

actress as gracious, a dancer as graceful. We use the word for hospitals, baby girls, kings, and premeal prayers. We talk as though we know what grace means.

But do we really understand it? Have we settled for wimpy grace? It politely occupies a phrase in a hymn, fits nicely on a church sign. Never causes trouble or demands a response. When asked, "Do you believe in grace?" who could say no?

Max Lucado asks a deeper question: Have you been changed by grace? Shaped by grace? Strengthened by grace? Emboldened by grace? Softened by grace? Snatched by the nape of your neck and shaken to your senses by grace?

God's grace has a drenching about it. A wildness about it. A white-water, riptide, turn-you-upsidedownness about it. Grace comes after you. It rewires you. From insecure to God secure. From regret riddled to better-because-of-it. From afraid to die to ready to fly.

Grace is the voice that calls us to change and then gives us the power to pull it off.

Let's make certain grace gets you.

Cornerstone Campus Ministry Winter Break Mission Trip

January 8-14, 2017

You Can Help Make a Difference! On January 8, a group of 18 members of UAlbany Cornerstone students will be traveling to Baton Rouge to work with Presbyterian Disaster Response and Rebuilding Together to address the needs of those impacted by flooding in the area. The cost per student is approximately \$800. Each student is asked to contribute \$200 toward the cost and the balance is covered by fund-raisers and donations from congregations and individual members. If you would like to "adopt a student" for the trip, please make your check payable to "Protestant Campus Ministry" and mail to Rev. Sandy Damhof, Chapel House-UAlbany, 1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222. Suggested "adoption fee" is \$250 but any amount is welcome!



Greeters/Ushers Coordinator

We are still looking for someone to take over the position of Greeters/Ushers coordinator. Please contact Pauline Martin for details about the job. blundyp379@aol.com



Mission Oppertunities

Guilderland Food Pantry Needs:

- juice
- rice
- canned meats such as
- salmon, chicken, tuna
- canned potatoes
- ♥ soup
- chili
- canned fruit
- tomato products
- whole wheat pasta
- spaghetti sauce
- ♥ coffee, tea, cocoa
- pancake mix
- v syrup
- honey
- corn oil
- cereal
- all personal care items
- all paper products such as
- kleenex, toilet paper and paper
- towel
- cleaning products

Capital City Rescue Mission Code BLUE in Effect

November 15, 2016 - March 15, 2017

We're in the midst of another "Code Blue" season with the Mission partnering with HATAS & others in the 7th annual outreach to transport & shelter the homeless in extreme winter conditions. If the temperature drops to 20 degrees or less or there is at least 6 inches of snow, all sanctions/restrictions are lifted so no one is left out in the elements.

Our hope is to prevent unnecessary threats to life and health among the homeless population. Please pray for all those participating in and utilizing Code Blue.

If you'd like to help keep the homeless off the streets, **DONATE TODAY!**

https://capitalcityrescuemission.com/ways-to-give/online-giving/

Thank you!

Try out AmazonSmile!

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What is AmazonSmile?

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon that lets customers enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping features as on Amazon.com. The difference is that when customers shop on AmazonSmile (<u>smile.amazon.com</u>), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the charitable organizations selected by customers.

How does AmazonSmile work?

When first visiting AmazonSmile, you will be prompted to select a charitable organization. You must search for the Mission's legal name, **CAPITAL CITY GOSPEL MISSION**. Once selected you may browse and shop. For eligible purchases at AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to our local Rescue Mission.

"Serving God isn't in the future, it's right now."

-Mark Hall, Casting Crowns Lead Singer and 25-year veteran youth pastor

CONCERT

Friday, February 17th, 2017, 7PM



Limited Tickets Available!

Special Pricing!

Only \$30.00 per ticket! (Tickets are in Section X; Rows 2-5)

Reserve your tickets today!

Registration deadline: January 31st

Return the registration form and payment below to:

St. Matthew's Church

25 Mountainview St.

Voorheesville, NY 12186

Make checks payable to: St. Matthew's Church.

Paid Reservations Accepted Only.

Transportation is yours to arrange.

Questions? Call 765-2805 Ext: 14 or email Peggy McQuade: <u>st.mattswelcome@gmail.com</u>			
Name:	Phone: (home) (cell)		
Address:			
Email Address:			
# Tickets@ \$30	Dea Total Payment:		

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JANUARY DUTIES CALENDAR			
DATE	<u>GREETERS/</u> <u>USHERS</u>	LAY WORSHIP LEADER	
January 1	Elizabeth Mensah, Pauline Martin	Praise	
January 8	Darcianne Leizer, Tricia Stott	Todd Nemic	
January 15	Alan Longshore, Delores Campbell	Kimberly Keane	
January 22	Ildra and Carl Morse	Paul Cullen	
January 29	Teri and Paul Scoville	Cathy Wells	
Greeters & Ushers Coordinator: Looking for a new volunteer!! Coffee Hour Coordinator: Chris Steffens - 608-5300 Lay Worship Leader Coordinator: Nancy Rutenber - 456-0412 * Please note that Greeters and Ushers duties are now combined. JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS			
Anniversaries	Birthdays		
12 – Ken & Jennifer Gr	2 – Beth Be 2 – Karen Te 5 – Daniel D 7 – Vera Lu 7 – Pauline 7 – Kathryn 11 – Patti Kr 11 – Joshua 13 – Marty M 15 – Alexand 16 – Bob Co 16 – Cathy C 18 – Ricky E	2 – Beth Berger 2 – Karen Tedesco	

JANUARY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Contemporary Praise Service 11:00 am (One Service)	Cub Scouts 6:30 pm Adult Forum 7:00 pm	Living Resources 9:30 am A.A. 4:30 pm Yoga 6:00 pm	Yoga 10:00 am Yoga 5:30 pm Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm	TOT Hill Gang 9:30 am Al-Anon 12:00 pm Yoga 5:30 pm	UMC District Event 4:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous 6:00 pm	A.A. 7:00 am
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Contemporary Praise Service 9:30 am Traditional Worship Service 11:00 am Adult Forum 9:30 a.m.	Cub Scouts 6:30 pm Adult Forum 7:00 pm	Living Resources 9:30 am A.A. 4:30 pm Yoga 6:00 pm	Yoga 10:00 am Yoga 5:30 pm Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm	TOT Hill Gang 9:30 am Al-Anon 12:00 pm Yoga 5:30 pm	Narcotics Anonymous 6:00 pm	A.A. 7:00 am
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Contemporary Praise Service 9:30 am Traditional Worship Service 11:00 am Adult Forum 9:30 a.m.	Cub Scouts 6:30 pm Adult Forum 7:00 pm Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Living Resources 9:30 am A.A. 4:30 pm Yoga 6:00 pm	Yoga 10:00 am Yoga 5:30 pm Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm	TOT Hill Gang 9:30 am Al-Anon 12:00 pm American Sewing Guild 12:30 pm Yoga 5:30 pm	Narcotics Anonymous 6:00 pm	A.A. 7:00 am
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Contemporary Praise Service 9:30 am Traditional Worship Service 11:00 am Adult Forum 9:30 a.m.	Cub Scouts 6:30 pm Adult Forum 7:00 pm	Living Resources 9:30 am A.A. 4:30 pm Yoga 6:00 pm	Yoga 10:00 am Yoga 5:30 pm Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm	TOT Hill Gang 9:30 am Al-Anon 12:00 pm Yoga 5:30 pm	Narcotics Anonymous 6:00 pm	A.A. 7:00 am
29	30	31				
Contemporary Praise Service 9:30 am Traditional Worship Service 11:00 am	Cub Scouts 6:30 pm Adult Forum 7:00 pm	Living Resources 9:30 am A.A. 4:30 pm Yoga 6:00 pm	11:00am—W 2:45 pm—Pr	aise nday School /orship raise Team	<u>days</u> 4:00pm—Quin 4:30pm—Wesl 5:45pm—New 6:30pm—High	ey Ringers Song
Adult Forum 9:30 a.m.			I	Rehearsal		

HAPPY NEW YEAR

A prayer for the new year:

What shall I ask for the coming year What shall my watchword be What should thou do for me, dear Lord What can I do for thee?

Lord, I would ask for a holy year Spent in thy perfect will Help me to walk in thy very steps Help me to please thee still.

Lord, I would ask for a trustful year Give me thy faith divine Taking my full inheritance Making thy fullness mine!

Lord, I would ask for a year of love O let me love thee best Give me the love that faileth not Beneath the hardest test. Lord, I would ask for a year of prayer Teach me to walk with thee Breathe in my heart the Spirit's prayer Pray thou thy prayer in me!

Lord, I would ask for the dying world Stretch forth thy mighty hand Thy truth proclaim, thy power display This year in every land.

Lord, I would ask for a year of joy Thy peace, thy joy divine Springing undimmed through all the days Be thy days of shade or shine.

Lord, I ask for a year of hope Looking for thee to come And hastening on that year of years That brings us home to you.





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Ministry and Team Leaders of the McKownville United Methodist Church

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