

THE MOSAIC

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EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH

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Pastoral Ponderings



It was noisy in fellowship hall during coffee hour last Sunday. Remember the old days when the sounds from children interrupted adult conversation? Remember the pre-covid times when the chatter in fellowship hall competed with the adult class in the parlor? It was noisy like that, and it felt good.

The bulletin for October 2 required 3 pieces of paper, printed front and back. Jim Woodard, our long-time former sexton, used to fold and stuff the bulletins. If a bulletin had more than one insert, he would say “That’s a Times-Union.” Jim would have ranked this bulletin on a par with a newspaper and that feels good.

It feels good to see people we haven’t been able to see in a while and to have off-the-cuff conversations one-on-one without a Zoom screen and a gallery of folks in the midst. It feels good to see an announcement sheet filled on both sides with ministry opportunities and activities.

We might be tempted to say that things are getting back to normal, but I’m resisting saying that. I am rejoicing that this October is different from the last two Octobers for sure. But I want to embrace it with gratitude and intentionality and not take for granted that this is ordinary.

Rev. Dr. Sarah Drummond is the founding dean of Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School. She recently wrote a long note addressed to Normal, asking it not to settle in. She said,

Normal, I’m realizing I don’t want you – my old, familiar version of you – back, for two reasons.

First in your presence, there was so much I didn’t appreciate. I’d see a table of students in our Common Room and just walk by. Now I marvel; I tear up. I even occasionally ask if they mind if I nerd things up by sitting down for a few minutes of informal conversation and laughter. I never knew how much I love to – need to – sing with other people in order to feel close to them. I took for granted how much easier it is to do my job when I can pop into a colleague’s office, grab a student leader in the hall, or see a set of eyes and know that something’s off and in need of attention.

continued...

Second, when we thought you were sticking around forever, we didn't realize the ways in which you privileged some and disadvantaged others. Normal happens to serve me well as an able-bodied, white, straight, educated, and financially secure American.

*When you were gone, I got a tiny taste of what it's like when you go away, causing me to suffer the most modest losses of mobility, resources, and freedom. I'd allowed myself to enjoy the advantages you'd bestowed on me. Your absence woke me up to dimensions of my own life in this society, and more importantly, to the lives of others. I won't be falling asleep in the same way again. ("Yes to 'New,' No to 'Normal'" in *The Christian Citizen*, Sept 27, 2022)*

It feels good to be gathering for worship and coffee hour in person. It feels good to plan activities like Sunday School classes and apple picking outings and small group conversations with a consultant. So good that I want to recognize how special it is.

Some unusual things are happening this fall. We're beginning an urgent congregation-wide discernment process that will help to set a solid course for the future. We're asking you to save the date of November 6 when Elijah Zehyoe from the Alliance of Baptists will be our guest preacher in the morning and presenter in the evening. We're planning a major intergenerational trip in February.

Some not so unusual things are also happening. Or they were not so unusual in pre-Covid times. Keep reading this newsletter for info on weekly worship, educational events and social activities. I hope you will identify some opportunities in which you will participate, not out of duty, not because it is your *normal* October routine, but because you are leaning into the new with gratitude and intention.

In this new seasons, Covid is still a fact of life and there are still vulnerable people among us. We appreciate those who stay connected through Zoom. The new reality which we are embracing includes an awareness of and attention to those relationships as well.



I'm grateful to be on this journey with you as we lean into the Now that is God's new thing.

Peace,

Kathy

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? Isaiah 43:19



The Pastoral Relations Committee will be meeting with Pastor Kathy on October 11. Our main job is to maintain good communication between the congregation and the pastor. The pandemic has changed us as individuals and as a church. We would like to hear from you.

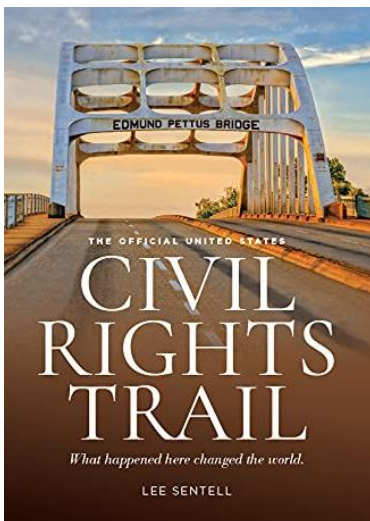
What ministry is the church providing right now that you find most important and meaningful? What ministry is the church not providing right now that you wish we would? What other concerns or affirmations do you have? Please consider these questions and share your answers with a member of the Pastoral Relations Committee which includes Tony Malone, Karen Green, Judy Henningson, Sam Hill, Curtis Klope, Edith Leet, and Michelle Williams or with Pastor Kathy. Your input is very important.



Holy Currencies: Blessings for Sustainable, Missional Ministries

This is the season at Emmanuel when we often reflect on financial stewardship and what we are doing to share and use resources for God's mission in the world. In 2022, we are also engaged in a critical discernment process about our mission priorities in the allocation of resources into the future. For the month of October, worship and preaching will springboard from Eric Law's book *Holy Currencies* which offers a holistic model for stewardship and congregational vitality. We will explore the ways these currencies flow and circulate to form a cycle of blessings at Emmanuel.

October 2	Currency of Relationship John 15:9-17
October 9	Currency of Truth Luke 17:11-19
October 16	Currency of Wellness Deuteronomy 5:12-15 Exodus 23:10-12 Leviticus 25:8-12
October 23	Currency of Money Mark 10:17-31 Philippians 4:10-13
October 30	Currencies of Time, Place & Gracious Leadership Mark 10:42-45



Civil Rights Pilgrimage February 18-24

In February 2023, during the schools' mid-winter break, Emmanuel will take a pilgrimage to significant civil rights sites in Georgia and Alabama. Youth, older children and adults of any age are invited to consider joining us in body or spirit.

We will fly to Atlanta. The remaining travel will require rented passenger vans and a good bit of daily walking. Potential cities to visit include Atlanta, Birmingham, Selma, Montgomery and Tuskegee. Lodging will include a combination of local motels or rental properties and possibly some hosting by Alliance of Baptist Churches.

Leading the trip are Jean Burton, Jim Wilkerson and Pastor Kathy. There is much to do between now and February. **If you are interested in going, please speak with one of us to let us know right away. Please plan to attend an informational meeting on Sunday, October 23 at 9:00 a.m. at church.** For those who wish to join the trip in spirit, if not body, there will be fundraisers and opportunities to express your support. Watch for more information coming soon.

SERVING & THRIVING TOGETHER

ABCNYS REGION OFFERING

"So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest-time, if we do not give up! So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith."

(Galatians 6:9-10)



Over the past two years, our churches have felt weary, yet we have engaged in new ways of sharing the Gospel and serving our communities. Throughout this time, ABCNYS Region staff have provided consistent encouragement, timely updates and worked diligently in person and online to be with our churches and leaders in these critical times. And we've been blessed to hear the stories of our churches serving and thriving in difficult times! Your financial gifts in 2022 will continue the work of providing for "those who belong to the family of believers" called ABCNYS! Every dollar contributed to the Region Offering supports our work, helping churches in pastoral transition, providing timely conversations and tools for ministry challenges, uplifting our youth through ABY, and engaging our churches in mission around NYS and the world alike!

Checks for the region offering may be made to Emmanuel Baptist Church with Region Offering in the memo line. To give at our website, <https://www.emmanuelalbany.net/giving> choose "Special – ABCNYS Regional Offering" from the drop-down menu.

We are seeking your participation in a structured conversation before or after worship on October 30. Emmanuel is engaged in a discernment process that is especially timely as we seek to learn from the experiences of the pandemic. We are seeking to name together our best understanding of our core values and mission priorities. Who is God calling us to be? With whom is God calling us to be in ministry? Our answers to those questions will have implications for how we allocate resources, including the resources of time, money, staff, and building.



To do this work most comprehensively, we have engaged a consultant, Joy Skjegstad. Joy will be here on October 30. We are hoping that everyone will participate in a focus group with Joy. They will be offered before and after worship on October 30 and in a Zoom format in November for those who cannot attend in person. **Please register for a focus group by contacting the church office.**

Joy Skjegstad works with nonprofits and churches throughout the U.S. to help them achieve strategic focus, develop effective community ministry, and present themselves in clear and visionary language. She is the author of several books including: *Real Connections: Ministries to Strengthen Church and Community Relationships* with Heidi Unruh (Judson Press, 2021), *Seven Creative Models for Community Ministry* (Judson Press, 2013), *Winning Grants to Strengthen Your Ministry* (Alban Institute 2007), and *Starting A Nonprofit At Your Church* (Alban Institute 2002). She has more than 30 years of experience starting and growing nonprofit organizations and church-based community ministry programs, including serving as the Executive Director of the Park Avenue Foundation at Park Avenue United Methodist Church and as the founder of the Institute for Ministry Leaders, a university-based training program that builds the management capacity of churches and other ministry organizations. She is wife to Brad, mom to Ethan and Julia, and lives in South Minneapolis



Faith Formation for Children & Youth

Fall classes have resumed and some special fun-filled activities are planned for the next several weeks. Here are the dates that the 9 a.m. classes will be held: October 2 and 16; November 6 and 20; December 4 and 18 Be sure to mark your calendars! Read on about some special activities for all ages...



Apple Picking & Picnic: October 10, 2 to 5 pm

Riverview Orchards: 660 Riverview Rd., Rexford, NY (317-2174)

FREE Hayride... Petting Zoo

Bring a bag lunch and join the fun!

Pick your own apples: \$15 ¼ bushel (10-12 lbs) \$30 ½ bushel (23 lbs.)

Fun for the whole family! If you have questions, contact Andrea Carver.

Halloween Party & Dinner October 28, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

All are invited!



Wear costumes – there will be a costume parade. Also featured: games, crafts and dinner!

To facilitate mea planningl, please let Andrea know how many will attend.

Adult Education Classes, Presentations Slated

Several opportunities for Adult Faith Formation are available in October and November. They include a class in the traditional after-church Sunday School time, a special speaker, and programs of special interest presented online.

Transforming White Privilege is a six-session study adapted from a curriculum suggested by missionaries Dan and Sharon Buttry. Led by Pastor Kathy, they will be held after worship on October 2, 9, 16, 23, and November 13 and 20. The sessions will be 90 minutes long. They will be offered in-person only because the format is interactive and would be difficult to do on Zoom.

Two other programs in October are Zoom events offered by the Alliance of Baptists. Emmanuel recently joined the Alliance and is one of 27 congregations across the United States and Canada that are taking part in THRIVE, a five-year project to strengthen the ability of congregations to become anti-racist.

Knowing the Biblical Story—Being in the Story will be offered on October 11 at 7 p.m.

To register, go to

<https://allianceofbaptistsrg.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIucmoqTgiG93Q6gitUtQGcY04U4nTnOue>.

Environmental Justice is Racial Justice--Faith Communities Respond will be presented on October 20, 1:30-3 p.m. For more information and to register, go to

<https://secure.everyaction.com/VyJ0qNxs8UGCpve7-T1CFw2>

On November 6, Emmanuel will host Rev. Elijah Zehyoue, co-director of the Alliance of Baptists. He will preach at our 10 a.m. worship service and be available for conversation at a potluck lunch to follow. At 7 p.m., he will speak at a program open to the public.



An Adult Faith Formation committee is looking at possibilities for November and December. If you have suggestions or are interested in joining that committee, please contact Pastor Kathy or one of the committee members. They are Mark Chaffin, Jim Ketcham, Edith Leet, Tony Malone, and Kathy Moore.

FOCUS CHURCHES OF ALBANY COMMITMENT TO ANTI-RACISM

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS SEPTEMBER 27, 2022

In line with Micah 6, we are to seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. Instead of being a force for justice, the American church has often reinforced, supported, and enabled systemic racism in America through support of policy and theology contrary to the witness of scripture. Anti-racist work requires recognizing that racism is not simply an issue “out there.” The attitudes and practices of white supremacy linger within even well-intentioned individuals and well-meaning congregations.

Too often we disregard the impact of racism on our Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) brothers and sisters. Too often we prioritize our own comfort over feeling the anxieties common to the experiences of our BIPOC communities. Too often we look away instead of investigating and exposing injustices of society, thus permitting the systems of structural racism—such as segregated housing and schools—to exist. Too often we insulate ourselves from the traumatic experiences caused by these systems. Too often we resist Jesus’ command to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Going forward, FOCUS Churches of Albany commits to broadening our response to systemic injustice towards BIPOC, including in our own programs, policies, staffing, and work as a Board. We commit to becoming a leader in promoting justice, practicing repentance, and embodying racial reconciliation within our church communities and across the city.

Considering this we:

- **Condemn** violence inflicted on BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) communities by law enforcement, city-wide policies, and vigilantes
- **Advocate** for an overhaul of unjust systems, policies and practices including in the following areas: healthcare, housing, immigration, education, voting access, and criminal justice ,legal, and economic systems

Suggested Action Steps for Congregations

The Anti Racism Task Force offers the following suggestions to help congregations move forward:

- Present non-white voices to our congregations on Sunday mornings in the form of guest preachers, interviews, testimonies, worship, music ministry, etc. The goal is to have diverse voices scheduled in worship.
- Develop a relationship with a predominately black congregation and/or black-led congregation and follow their lead on what it might look like to support and be in collaboration with them in ministry. The goal is to have a collaboration articulated by a selected target date.
- Create opportunities for children and youth within this collaborative to engage in ongoing dialogue and education about the issues of prejudice, discrimination, racism, diversity, and equity.
- Develop a joint community service project to address a (health, food insecurity, housing, education, etc.) need identified by the collaboration, drawing on the resources of congregations.

A Note from Maria:

Hello, Church!

We are looking for help with childcare for our daughter. Need is for Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays for December and January, and then Mondays for February onwards. She will be an infant, starting at 5 months. Will pay competitive hourly rate. If interested, please contact me (Maria Townes Covington) at 781-710-7675, also mariacovington354@gmail.com



Musical Concerts Scheduled

Michael Clement and the Emmanuel Choir are planning some special events which you won't want to miss.

Be sure to mark your calendars! Here are the details:

Sunday, November 13:

“Franz Schubert, Fountain of Melody”

A concert of Lieder (songs), choral and piano music by this beloved Viennese master

Performed by the Emmanuel Singers and guest soloists

Directed and accompanied by Michael Clement

2 pm in Emmanuel Baptist Sanctuary



Sunday, December 18:

A concert of Sacred Music for Christmas

Emmanuel Singers will present “Hope!”,

a gospel music inspired cantata by Joel Raney

There will be additional choral and solo selections as well.

Happy Birthday...

Chris Moaton	1 st
Jasmine Smith	6 th
Marilyn Malone	6 th
Warren Burton	6 th
Bien Baez	11 th
Julie Shaw	13 th
Madeline Green	23 rd
Alivia Collins	27 th
Chukwuma Asala	30 th



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



**Deadline for the November MOSAIC:
October 18**

**Remember the
Food Pantry...
deodorant**



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