# The Lamplighter

April 2012

First United Methodist Church, Amityville, NY





Holy Thursday and Good Friday are challenging days in Holy Week. They are not "feel good" worship experiences.

Our Holy or Maundy Thursday service has two definitive parts: the first during which we break bread for our meal and for the meal of communion. It is a family time, whether that is nuclear family or church family. Recalling the last supper Jesus shared with his followers, we experience both the satisfaction of being together and the dread of facing the reason for our gathering. The second part is communal, experienced mostly in silence. In the sanctuary we follow the custom of "stripping the altar".

An article in *Christian Century* beautifully and hauntingly connects the laying bare of the altar with the practice of Jewish families who reverently undress the body of a deceased loved one, bathe it, and wrap it in a white sheet. Richard Lischer is the author of, "Stripped Bare: Holy Week and the Art of Losing". After describing the removal of crosses, fine linens, paraments, and offering plates he tells the impact it has on him.

"Every time I participate in such a service, I think of Jesus, who on the night of his betrayal laid aside his woven tunic and tied a towel around his waist. He stripped for service. Another Gospel tells us that later 'they stripped him' for mockery and death. The altar stands for Jesus, who in Holy Week enters the last stages of his ritual purification. The altar also stands for those from whom something or someone is being taken away. It stands for us. ...In a church that's filled with people who are being reduced in a hundred different ways—by illness, death, grief, betrayal, depression and economic reversal, whose insurance has lapsed and whose dreams have been foreclosed—Holy Week teaches us all a lesson in losing.

"We are not losers, but we have been reduced, some of us to what feels like our touchstone. On Maundy Thursday we discover that even when everything has been taken away, something remains. The message of Easter, as Paul Tillich said in a sermon, is that the Messiah was 'born in a grave.' Those who skip Thursday and Friday but show up on Easter Sunday are missing the essential truth of the Passion. Thus they also bypass the profound grief that attends Jesus' death. But there's more to it than that. They have also missed one of Jesus' most important lessons before dying. During Holy Week Jesus teaches the art of losing. What Jesus offers this Holy Week is not an escape from loss but a better way of losing. In each Passion account, and especially in the Gospel of John, Jesus suffers humiliation and defeat but does not relinquish his identity as the Son of God. His final cry is addressed to his Father. His divinity is confirmed not by coming down from the cross but by his gestures of love while impaled upon it. "From the cross Jesus draws a world of lost souls to himself. As it turns out, what remains in each of us is not the bravado of mastery but the vulnerability of love.... By God's power some break through the anguish and, in the midst of their own loss, find someone else to help or love. ... Jesus teaches the art of losing. It's one of the reasons why some of us still sit in darkened churches on a Thursday and Friday night."[1]

How much are we willing to lose, how much must be stripped away before we get to the center of ourselves? What remains as Good Friday closes is far more than we can grasp. But maybe sitting in a dim and bare sanctuary on Holy Thursday and facing the cruelty of crucifixion on Good Friday will help us find that center.

[1] Richard Lischer, "Stripped Bare: Holy Week and the Art of Losing", *Christian Century*, March 21 2012, pp 11-12.

#### PASTOR LOUISE

## **CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**

Church World Services (CWS) has many outreach programs to aid those in need and in crisis.

For several years, FUMC has participated in the CWS Blankets Plus for Mother's Day and Father's Day providing blankets and tools to Third World Countries.

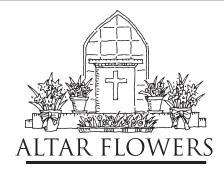
Our UMYF has collected items to assemble for the CWS "Gift of the Heart" Kits. This program includes school kits, hygiene kits, layettes, emergency clean up kits. Assembled kits are shipped to different parts of the world, including places in our own country, to give help and hope in the aftermath of disasters or where war and conflict have devastated communities. The CWS Kit Program is one of the many ways Church World Service shares in a hope-filled tomorrow.

Our support made a difference in the lives of children and families the world over.

In 2011, besides international shipments, CWS responded to those states effected by springs storms and/or flooding, damage by Hurricane Irene and winter storms. Kits were also distributed through the Appalachian Outreach Center, the homeless, economically disadvantaged individuals and families, elderly, migrant farm workers and their families and refugees in California, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, New York.

### UNITED METHODIST WOMEN Joan Kaplan, Chairperson

United Methodist women replaced the American flag in the sanctuary as well as the flags at the Church Attic. Also there is a small flag, to be used in parades, that will be easy to handle and a new matching pole to go along with it. The cost of tilling the garden came from our treasury. We can see how hard Bob Silz, Linda Thompson and Dick Johns, have been toiling away to get the ground ready for planting. I am sure we will have a bumper crop to give to the needy in our area.



A REMINDER: Each Sunday we have two or three bouquets beautifying our Chapel at 8:00 and our Sanctuary at 10 A.M.; a minimum of 104 bouquets. The flowers are given in memory of OR in honor of friends, relatives, birthdays, anniversaries, etc., and are listed in the bulletin on a weekly basis. Cost for one bouquet is \$15.

Would you like to participate by signing up for one or more bouquets on the Sunday(s) of your choice? Just call the Church office (631 264 0152) or me (Barbara La Poma – 631 264 0563) and let us know which week, for whom the bouquet is requested, and whether it is to be in memory or in honor of that person. Please also indicate whether you want to take the bouquet home (if you are coming to Church) – or, if you live out of area, we will see that it is given to a shut-in.

The following spots are still open (as of 4/1) for 2012: 4/1 (2), 4/8 (2), 4/15 (2), 4/22 (2), 4/29 (3) 5/20 (1), 5/27 (3) 6/3 (2), 6/10 (1), 6/24 (1) 7/1 (1), 7/8 (2), 7/15 (1), 7/22 (2), 7/29 (1) 8/5 (2), 8/12 (3), 8/19 (2), 8/26 (2) 9/16 (2), 9/23 (3), 9/30 (1) 10/7 (1), 10/14 (1), 10/21 (2), 10/28 (1) 11/4 (2), 11/11 (2), 11/18 (3), 11/25 (1) 12/2 (2), 12/9 (3), 12/16 (3), 12/30 (3)

Payment (\$15/bouquet) is made by writing a check to First United Methodist Church (indicate flower fund in the memo part) and mailing it either to the Church or directly to me – BARBARA LA POMA -- 174 Ketcham Avenue, Amityville NY 11701.

Thank you in advance for your participation! BARBARA LA POMA



By Linda Thompson, Chair

#### VISION STATEMENT:

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the people of First United Methodist Church of Amityville, NY will

- Witness to Jesus Christ in the world.
- Follow Jesus' teachings through acts of compassion, justice, worship and devotion.

Easter is right around the corner, are you ready? It is hard to believe we are nearing the end of Lent. Our Ash Wednesday services, noon at FUMC and evening at Seaford UMC were well attended. Attendance at the noon service increased over last year, this was the first service at Seaford. Their praise band played for the service, Pastor Louise preached and Robyn directed the anthem. Imposition of ashes and receiving communion helped us begin our Lenten journey spiritually.

The Taizé services are attracting some guests from outside the congregation. If you have not been able to join us please consider attending. It is a quiet time of meditation to bring us closer to God and help us take time for ourselves in our spiritual journey.

As we have done for six year, we will be making palm crosses and filling Easter eggs the day before Palm Sunday, Saturday, March 31 at 10 am. Join us in the parlor for fun and fellowship. Palm Sunday we gather in the Narthex prior to the service in preparation for simulating Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem (chaos and everything that goes with a welcoming parade). The children will distribute palms before the service.

Holy Thursday, April 5, will be in Ireland Hall for a supper of homemade soup and bread. During this time we will have hand washing to symbolize inner cleanliness.After Communion, to recall our ministry as servants, you may choose to have your feet washed. Stripping of the altar in the sanctuary is a stark reminder of events Jesus endured on Good Friday.

The Good Friday service on April 6, 7:30 pm will be a reflection on the sacrifice Jesus made for us.

Our services on Easter Sunday are at 8 am and 10 am

with communion. The 10 am service will be followed by the Easter egg hunt on the front and great lawns. Plans are to fill the floral cross with flowers outside the front doors of the church. We are attempting to get additional flowers again this year, but if you have any to place in the cross do not hesitate to bring them in. Lots of compliments were received last year; people really enjoyed seeing it. Holy Humor Sunday is April 15th. The theme is "Butterflies are Free". Further details will follow.

The handbell festival at the Lutheran Church in Sayville was successful. Eleven handbell choirs participated. There was standing room only for some spectators. The director was demanding but tolerant of inexperience.

Vacation Music Camp will be June 25 thru June 29th from 12:30 to 3:30 pm. If you know of anyone who may be interested please encourage them to contact the church office. This is open to the community.

Pastor Louise is joining a "Volunteer in Mission" (VIM) Peace Project in Belfast, Ireland through the New York Conference. She will not be here for the first Sunday in May, therefore communion will be served on April 29th. I will also be a VIM participant along with Pastor Dick Johns.

We are moving ahead with replacing the bibles in the sanctuary. We have already received some orders. Please consider purchasing one or more in honor of or in memory of a loved one. Payment should accompany the order form; Judy Silz will be happy to accept your order by May 1st.

Meaningful worship varies among people depending on many factors. The Worship Committee is open to your suggestions and ideas. You are invited to speak with me (Linda Thompson) at any time and we will be happy to address your ideas at one of our monthly meetings.

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSISTANTS NEEDED!!!

Due to recent surgery, Cathy Bedell is not able to co-teach with Christine Castellano for the rest of this school year.

Therefore, Christine needs assistance with her class. We are asking our teenagers to volunteer as assistants. If possible, we would like to have 2 people a week. There is a sign-up sheet on the Narthex table.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

## Community Garden at First Church

Submitted by Robert Silz Chair of Church & Society

We are growing! Efforts are underway to plant our community garden on the church's "Great Lawn". Our goal is to share the produce with food pantries and soup kitchens. It is a way to provide healthy food and more security to neighbors in need.

We are cultivating a 20' x 50' area of the Great Lawn and will employ organic gardening techniques leading to sustainable agriculture. We remember Jesus' words, "Feed my sheep", and think of how we may, through our collective prayers and participation in this gardening project, demonstrate our Christianity: bringing hope to the poor, leading lives that mirror the faith, and making clear that our teachings are not abstract and irrelevant to daily living.

We will have a "Blessing of the Garden" on Earth Day, Sunday, April 22 following both the 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. services.

#### How can I help?

The success of our garden will depend on the willingness of many to participate in the hands-on elements needed to keep the garden growing well and to help get the produce to the recipients. We may also set up a produce stand to sell some of the vegetables to help defray the costs involved with the garden.

We are in the initial stage of developing this project and there is much to learn about organic farming. The important consideration is that we keep our eyes on the prize: bringing hope to those in need.

We are fortunate that Pastor Dick Johns has a wealth of experience and success with gardening. I have been working with gardeners at The Garden at St. Mark's in North Bellmore. Their years of experience with this form of gardening and outreach to the community will help us be successful. Through our networking with other churches, we will be a part of the growing presence of Community Sustainable Agriculture on Long Island.

#### A Win-Win Scenario

Those who connect with our project will not only be helping to bring hope to the needy of our community, but it will be a learning experience that encourage families to start organic gardens of their own; perhaps they will donate part of their crop to that of the garden at the church. In this way there is always an opportunity to share our abundance and eliminate wasted produce.

Small Farm Initiative at Hofstra University I will be attending the "Small Farm Summit" at Hofstra University on Saturday, April 14. The summit is open to all who wish to have the opportunity to meet like-minded folks interested in growing, eating and supporting a vibrant local agricultural community.

Some of the 19 Panel Discussions include: Building a Robust Local Food System, Food Justice and Security, Innovative Farming Techniques, and Backyard Growing. Experiential Workshops include: Gardening with Children, Building a Green Wall with Teens, Hydroponic Growing in a Soda Bottle, Seed Saving, Composting, the Healing Power of Food, Cooking demonstrations and more.

Information for registration is available at http://www.smallfarmsummit.com. We are hopeful that this new Organic Farming Initiative at First Church will be a blessing to all.



## PURCHASING PEW BIBLES

The Worship Committee has approved buying a new translation of the Bible to be used in worship. They are \$15 each. Large print bibles are available for \$25.00 each.

Forms are on the Narthex table. Deadline is May 1.

### Thank you from St. Martín of Tours Parísh

We received the following letter dated March 7, 2012:

Dear Friends in Christ:

Thank you for your continued support of St. Martin of Tours Outreach Program. Your generous contribution to our Food Pantry was much appreciated and came at a critical time. After our extensive Thanksgiving and Christmas Assistance Programs our food supplies were quite depleted. Your timely donations helped restock our pantry and meet the continuing needs of the less fortunate in our midst. May you all have a blessed Lent and a joyous Easter!

Peace,

Keith Mainhart Outreach Director

## **OUTREACH UPDATE**

By Joan Stern

We are following up our successful Christmas gift project in conjunction with the Coalition Against Child Abuse and Neglect, by asking our parishioners to participate in the Easter celebration for children, so name. Your gift can take the form of chocolate bunnies, mid-sized Easter baskets, stuffed animals, choices that one would make for their own. Any item, for small children (boys and girls), youngsters or teens, would be welcomed. Your gifts will be so appreciated.

Deadline to bring the gift is Sunday, April 1.

#### **OUTREACH BLANKET AND TOOL PROGRAM**

Please fill out the appropriate section and return this form with your check to the Church Office at 25 Broadway, Amityville, NY 11701. Mother's Day request deadline is May 6. Father's Day request deadline is June 10. Checks should be made payable to First UMC—<u>clearly marked</u> "For Blankets" or "For Tools". Each Blanket or Tools of Hope is \$5.

FOR BLANKETS (As it will appear in our Mother's Day booklet) Name of Donor
In Memory Of
In Honor Of
FOR TOOLS OF HOPE (As it will appear in our Father's Day booklet) Name of Donor
In Memory Of
In Honor Of
TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS ORDERED $x $5.00 =$ AMOUNT ENCLOSED (Please attach a sheet of paper with additional names)



Church Membership

"PRAYERS, PRESENCE, GIFTS, SERVICE, AND WITNESS"

Your Prayers

The Family of Charles Berger (Uncle of Bob Silz) & the Silz Family

Let perpetual light shine upon you.

CHARLES BERGER JUNE 4, 1912 - MARCH. 18, 2012



STEVE BRICE

Each year starts off the same; a great start and then come March, a reality check. In January, it appeared we'd exceed our projected pledge donations by 27%. Now we might only barely exceed and hopefully the trend doesn't continue. Luckily, expenses were minimal this past month, so the remaining bank balance, although steadily decreasing each month, is still sufficient to cover the immediate regular monthly bills.

By Your Presence						
8 am	10 am	Sunday School	Total			
11	64	16	91			
11	42	11	64			
12	57	14	83			
11	41	8	60			
	8 am 11 11 12	8 am         10 am           11         64           11         42           12         57	8 am         10 am         Sunday School           11         64         16           11         42         11           12         57         14			

	Acolytes	Apr. 8: Apr. 29:	(Easter) Emily Korba & Analicia Gonzalez Victoria Castellano & Jameela Tracey			
	Refreshment Schedule	Apr. 1: Apr. 8: Apr 15: Apr. 22: Apr. 29:	Staff Parish Committee (Easter) No Fellowship Intergenerational Event - "Butterflies Are Free" Stewardship Committee Worship Committee			
_	Communion Stewards	Barbara & Gene La Poma, Dorothy Bausch				
	LECTORS	April 8: April 15: April 22:	1 & 8 -Linda Thompson 15, 22, & 29 - Kate Peterson Charlene Jourdan Martha Peterson Tracie Harper Barbara La Poma Margaret Wolter			
	Offering Counters	Apr. 22:	Cathy Taylor & Martha Peterson Arlene DeLand & Charlene Jourdan Margaret Wolter & Nell Rasmussen Jeanne Otis & Charlene Jourdan Jasmine Allen & Joan Kaplan			
	Ushers	-	Danielle Bassaragh, Nick Roloson, Gene La Poma Judy & Bob Silz, Barbara Simpson Dana, Danielle & Horace Bassaragh Natalie & Mike Korba & Doug Allen Dorothy Hyman			
	Junior Ushers	Apr. 15: Apr. 22:	Emily Korba & Ian Pagan Jack Dubyn & Anthony Erdody Derik Gonzalez & Jameer Waterton Jameela Tracey & Robert Castellano			
	Greeters	Apr. 15: Apr. 22:	Barbara & Gene La Poma Tierno Family Dorothy Hyman Margo Martinez Judy & Bob Silz			

By Your Service



## WHERE ARE YOUR RECIPES?

Please take a few minutes to go through your recipe file and find some of your family's favorites to put into the FUMC cookbook.

We would like to make this a very diversified cookbook with lots of new ethnic recipes. Won't you share some of your favorites from your nationality? We have some great recipes from the 1949 FUMC cookbook and the 200th Anniversary Cookbook that we will also be putting in.

You can email your recipe to the church office in a word document. This is a big project. We need to re-type all recipes in a particular format for the publishing company and would like to get the special spring discount. This means we will need your recipes as soon as possible.

#### PLEASE DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DEADLINE: APRIL 15

## UMYF

### **PROJECT: TRAVEL SIZE TOILETRIES**

The youth are collecting travel size toiletries to give to The Inn in Hempstead. The Inn has a soup kitchen and other programs to assist the homeless. A box is in the Narthex for items.



- 6 ANITA ROVERY
- 8 Paul deQuillfeldt Peter Johnson Gail Kaiser
- i i Joseph Ramirez Kianna Ciaramella
- 14 BRUCE JORDAN
- 16 BETTY SMALL
- 17 KATHLEEN DOUGHERTY
- 18 TAYLOR JOHNSON
- 19 Kim Ramirez
- 21 Alan Lush
- 22 Eric Maxson
- 24 Fred Fehleisen
- 25 Arlene DeLand
- BARBARA DEQUILLFELDT 28 Lottie Symington

## HOLY HUMOR

Intergenerational Fellowship Event

#### APRIL 15 FOLLOWING 10 AM SERVICE

### Theme: "Butterflies are Free"

On April 15 we'll be following in the tradition of the "Easter laugh", celebrating God's joke on death. Jesus was not destroyed on the cross. The disciples did not forget everything Jesus had taught them. Christianity was not dead. It was and is alive! We'll be celebrating the transformation of Jesus through his Resurrection.

#### Here's what you need to get ready.

#### WARDROBE:

Sunday dress is fine, but you can also wear colors of your favorite butterfly, or clothing with butterflies on it. Perhaps you can devise a butterfly egg, caterpillar, or pupa to wear.

And don't forget to invite someone who thinks that church is only for long-faced Christians!

Craft, activity and refreshments.

## COMMUNITY LUNCHEON

sponsored by Membership, Nurture, and Evangelism

"To provide a place for noon-time refreshment of body, mind and spirit."

#### Thursday, April 26 12-12:15 - Noonday Prayer 12:15 - 1:00 pm - Lunch served

Volunteers needed to cook, serve and clean up. Sign-up sheet in Narthex.



#### First United Methodist Church 25 Broadway Amityville, NY 11701

Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Louise Stowe-Johns Director of Music Ministry: Robyn Hyland, AGO Secretary: Linda Cohen Sexton: Andres Aguilera Newsletter Editor: Sherri Warta Telephone (631) 264-0152 Fax: (631) 598-3425 AmityUnitedMethodistChurch.org <u>amitychurch@optimum.net</u> Sunday Services: 8 & 10 am Sunday School - 10 am



Dated Church Material

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Habitat for Humanity Bellport and Centerport locations

The goal is 10-15 volunteers each day. The work will be installation of windows, tyvek house wrap, vinyl siding (depending on which day you work.)

Tuesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>; Friday, April 13; Saturday, April 14. The work day is from 8:45am – 3pm. All building materials, tools & safety equipment are provided by Habitat. Please contact me via email if you would like to participate on any of the above dates.

Kathy Schaefer, Director of Partnerships Habitat for Humanity of Suffolk 643 Middle Country Rd, Middle Island NY 11953 631 924 4966 Ext 100 www.habitatsuffolk.org

"We must be willing to take risks with families, knowing full well that some may fail. We must not be paralyzed with the fear of failure. Our primary motivating factors must be faith and love." - Millard Fuller

#### Return Service Requested