



## Gifts

**M**y youngest, Joseph, asked me if I knew what he wanted for Easter this year... I cringe... The Easter bunny does come to our home and, instead of an abundance of candy (though there is some of that too), chooses to leave some thing in each child's basket. I try and remind my children what Easter is about: resurrection, new life, hope, new beginnings. I am tempted to say it is not about gifts... but, of course, that is what all of those things are.

The truth is so much of our Christian story is about gifts... the gift of love, of forgiveness, of grace... At Christmas we celebrate the gift of Emmanuel, God with us. We celebrate the gift of resurrection and life on Easter morning. And, this Easter season, as we wait for the promised gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, we will be thinking about spiritual gifts.

Spiritual gifts are not to be confused with the fruits of the Spirit, which we are all called to exhibit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Spiritual gifts are abilities that God has given us to use for the common good. Paul writes:

*To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.*  
 1 Corinthians 12: 8-11

There are other gifts too. Have you ever wondered what God has gifted you to do? Who God has gifted you to be?

Members of the church council have already taken spiritual gifts inventory and we hope that you will want to have a picture of what your spiritual gifts are as well. Please talk to Pastor Janet if you are interested. A retreat May 13th-14th at Carondelet Retreat Center in Latham will be a time of worship, fellowship, and reflection as we consider what our spiritual gifts are and what that means. Please sign up and plan to join us!

The truth is I love gifts as much as anyone. And, I look forward to unwrapping some of those gifts that we have been given and that make us who we are and that might shape who we are together as a congregation. **This May, come to worship, where the theme will be "Getting to Know You."**

Grace and Peace, Pastor Nina

### Sunday, May 1st. Spill Out Worship Service.

A brief communion service and then spill out into the community to assist various organizations and agencies. Sign up on the easel located in the Wesley Room during coffee hour. At least as important as questions about what we believe, is the witness to our faith in what we do. Service opportunities include:

- Meal Preparation for Joseph's House & Damien Center at CCUM
- Bethany Center – assist with lunch at Bethany Center
- Literacy Run – Downtown Troy, 10 AM
- CROP Walk/Taum – TAUM/Troy, 1 PM
- Tying Fleece Blanks for Vanderheyden Group Homes for Girls at CCUM
- Yard Spring Clean Up, Vanderheyden Girls' Group Home
- Barker Park Clean Up
- Nursing Home Visit, VanRensselaer Manor
- Nursing Home Visit, Evergreen Common
- Nursing Home Visit, Heritage House

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## Music at Christ Church

Palm Sunday and Easter were this month, making for a busy and wonderful time! Our Festival Choir sang on both those Sundays, while a small Bell Ensemble graced our Easter worship with a couple of selections. iGen did a wonderful Body Worship rendition of "Who am I?" on Palm/Passion Sunday. We had solos and duets this month--thanks so much Kate, Michael, Paul, Alison, etc...all in all, very nice--and I hope I haven't forgotten anyone!

May? We will have some special music and will be preparing for Music Sunday, which will be June 5th. For Music Sunday we are hoping to have another Festival Choir selection, a Bell Choir selection, one or two iGen pieces, hopefully a Bell Ensemble selection and ??? More solos and duets, whether vocal or instrumental, would be nice!

For the groups, please watch our bulletins or email for rehearsal times. If you're interested in singing/playing something special please let me know. Otherwise, I might be giving you a call. We have slots open for special music any of the Sundays in May and would love to have one of more selections every Sunday!

Finally, outside of church times...the next Samba gathering is Sunday, May 1, from 2-3:30pm. I'd imagine there will be another get-together in early June.

Warmly, in Christ, George Garin,  
Minister of Music

## Talent Auction 2011

As of press time, items and services are still being donated. Just a partial list includes:

Lunch with Pastor Nina, mother's helper, babysitting, guitar lessons, several delectables for desserts, plus flavored oils as well as a complete meal.

You can get help with setting up or caring for a garden, bid on dyeing silk or on a wire & bead crochet necklace. There is a private yoga class, a gargoyle tour, a painted portrait, letter-writing help and framed pictures - and more still to be added!

Please come to church on Sunday, May 1st for the unveiling of the complete list.

If you would like to add to the list posted on the office window, please do so. Bidding on items takes place in May and will close on Sunday, June 12th.

## Spaghetti Dinner and March Mission: \$3153.09 raised.

Moving the spaghetti benefit dinner for local agencies to Troy Night Out seems to have resulted in more attendees as well as a lot more take-outs. This year there were 6 agencies as the Roarke Center asked to be included. With some additional donations from the congregation the final tally was:

Bethany Center	\$322.10
Joseph's House	\$735.75
Roarke Center	\$482.43
TAUM	\$412.90
Unity House	\$804.83
YWCA	\$395.08

## Spiritual Gifts inventory & Retreat details

As mentioned by Pastor Nina, all are encouraged to fill out the spiritual gifts questionnaire. The questionnaire considers 22 gifts- not skills you have learned, but God-given gifts you may or may not recognize in yourself: gifts like hospitality and leadership; wisdom and crafting; knowledge and discernment; vision; prayer, mentoring and service; organization, evangelism, encouragement, justice and more. Results will be able first at the retreat on Friday evening or Saturday morning for those coming for the day. The retreat happens just off route 2 between Watervliet and Latham and lasts from dinnertime Friday, May 13th until 4:30 Saturday, May 14th.

We hope you will want to be a part of this 24 hour retreat but even if you cannot, your results will be given to you. Those who can spend some time with us at Carondelet will do further work understanding what the gifts mean. You can attend at no cost, low cost or stay the full 24 hours. A room overnight and 3 meals (Friday dinner plus Saturday breakfast and lunch) costs \$80 and we need to know numbers of those staying by May 6th. You can join us Friday evening for fellowship and worship, then return for Saturday, bringing your own lunch and there is no cost; if you want to spend all day Saturday at Carondelet and have their cafeteria style lunch, the cost is \$15 and we will need to know numbers by May 11th.

## New Coffee Hour Approach for a New Millennium

Hmmm...well actually, the new Millennium started some time ago. Coffee hour procedures? I don't really know how long we've been doing it the same way. I do know we've been having some challenges getting folks to sign up and it does seem that we all (especially newcomers and visitors) enjoy having a cup of coffee, some goodies and time to get to know one another after church.

Together with Brian I've assumed responsibility for coordinating this wonderful ministry of hospitality. Perhaps coffee hour hospitality is also one of your gifts? Check out the upcoming weekend retreat for more information on discerning your own spiritual gifts (a shameless plug for a wonderful time at Carondelet:).

I looked at who signed up since the beginning of the year and realized that if each of those who've signed up over the past 4 months would be willing to be responsible for just three (3) Sundays a year, why we'd be covered. That doesn't seem too daunting, does it? And, Brian and I will be responsible for preparing the coffee/tea and getting the beverage part set-up, so the task is that much easier.

What I've done is divide up folks into four hospitality "ministry teams." In a moment of creative euphoria, I've designated each team with the name of one of the gospels. Four teams=four gospels, why it seems too good to be just a coincidence!

Teams will be assigned to months of the year, so since we are starting in May, Team I (St. Matthew) will minister the Sundays of May. Team II (St. Mark) June, etc. See the office window for the Team Sign Up Sheets.

Here is the most important novelty: I will be assigning specific Sundays to the members of the teams. That's just three Sundays a year for each of you. And, since a third of the year is past, you'll only be assigned two Sundays for the rest of 2011 in order to cover every Sunday of the year.

If you can't make your Sunday, it'll be your responsibility to trade with another member on your team (or tread boldly and go outside your team to trade Sundays). I'll be contacting you either by phone or email and provide you with a hard copy of the new schedule. We're covered until May 15th.

If you're not on one of our teams and would like to join this wonderful ministry of hospitality, let me know or use the time tested system of signing up on the office windowJ

Warmly and hospitably,

George Garin

P.S. And, actually, this approach may not be all that new to Christ Church. Janet tells me she'd used a very similar approach years ago. So, the old comes around again and becomes new, effective and fashionable...sweet!



## Native American Sunday Special Offering

**Lee Kemp**

The Ojibwa (Chippewa) Indians made the first dream catchers. They tied strands in a web around a small round or tear-shaped frame and hung this "dream-catcher" as a charm to protect sleeping children from nightmares. They believed the web would catch the bad dreams. On May 22nd, we will taking a special offering today to help Native Americans make their good dreams come true. With the money from this special offering, we help Native Americans to catch their dreams—dreams of going to seminary to become a pastor, dreams of starting a new church, dreams of reaching out to their neighbors.

When we give to this special offering, we help our Native American friends and neighbors to make their dreams come true. 50% of the contributions will support the Native American ministries in our jurisdiction, 5 of them here in New York. The other 50% will support ministry across the nation, providing money for scholarships and the Native American Urban Initiative.

## Easter Plants

Given By	In Memory or Honor Of
Thila & Harry Bell	Their parents
Sue Blom & Family	Bill Blom
Lowell & Marilyn Blom	Loved ones
Annee Borthwick	Sara, living in Australia
Linda & Mark Campbell	Their mothers, Bette Keyes & Joan Campbell
Curtis & Esther Dunagan	In loving memory of our parents
A Friend	Warren Christian & daughter, Barbara Truax
The Cooper-Smith Memorial	Mr. & Mrs. Frank A. Cooper
Judy Feiden	Henry & Florence Feiden, Harry C. & Harry C. Feiden Jr
Margie Feiden	Fred & Mary Besaw, Catherine Stallmer & Rita Chaszowski
The Guile Family	Marjorie & Marilyn James
Fred & Martha Hess	His parents, Grace & Wendell Hess
“	His brothers, John & Wendell Hess
Sharen, Joel & Emily	In celebration of Easter & the special lives of those who have passed before us.
The Kasius Family	Martha Woodbury
Lee & Roger Kemp	In celebration of our grandson, Peyton Kemp
“	Our dear friend, Marcel Pilette
The Lovegrove Family	George Lovegrove & Loved ones
Alice Rose & Paul Marano	Brenda Joy Marano
“	Celebration of the Troy Community
The MacDonald Family	In Honor of Family and Friends
The Mattoon-Holland Family	Loved ones
Mrs. Thomas Q. McNaughton	Mr. & Mrs. Bruce J. Riggs
“	Miss Thelma J. Riggs
“	Mr. & Mrs. Dennie B. Riggs
“	Mr. & Mrs. Henry Kreiss
“	Miss Helen M. Holmes
“	Mr. I. Hite Riggs
Doris Mooradian	Edward Mooradian
“	Loved ones
Ruth Morant	Maria Morant, with all my love
The Rose Family	Celebration of Easter
Katherine Storms	Thomas Hobbie, MD and Elizabeth Hobbie
Loretta Turner	Mary Turner

### Devotion

**Nancy Burgin**

The sales clerk's response made me stop in my tracks. I'd asked her the usual question, "How are you?" but her answer was anything but usual. "I am blessed", she replied. When I commented on what a pleasant answer that was, she expanded her initial statement. "I am blessed and adored by the Most High God".

What an incredibly positive outlook to have, remembering of course, that everyone else we come into contact with is also "blessed and adored". It seems to me that this lady has learned the important truth of 1 John 4:19, "We love, because He first loved us."

### May Movies

Keep watch for a May showing of "The Queen": it will be a Friday evening and it will be come with fresh, warm scones. The date is uncertain as we will be receiving a copy of Gasland - this is the documentary about hydro-fracturing - and will need to schedule that when it is available to the congregation.

There is also a plan to have a Star Wars weekend, showing the original movies on the big screen in Fellowship Hall probably in June: watch for details in the bulletin and Facebook for all three events: or call the Office to request notification when they are scheduled. Movies and popcorn (or scones!) are free of charge; beverages are available for a small charge.

### Facebook Page

For those of you who use Facebook online...be watching for a new Facebook Page for our church. It seems there are already two out there and they don't necessarily have the same information posted. To consolidate and simplify it is easiest to just create and maintain a brand new page. Be watching for an invitation soon (perhaps even before you see this). The Spire will also be posted on our Facebook page along with highlight from the previous Sunday's services, etc.

Thanks, George Garin

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 <sup>6:30pm</sup> Wshp Planning	3 <sup>6pm</sup> iGen	4 <sup>7pm</sup> Handbells	5 <sup>10:30am</sup> LTQ 2.0 7pm Finance	6	7
8	9 <sup>6:30pm</sup> Wshp Planning	10 <sup>6pm</sup> iGen	11 <sup>7pm</sup> Handbells	12 <sup>10:30am</sup> LTQ 2.0 7pm Trustees	13	14
15	16 <sup>6:30pm</sup> Wshp Planning	17 <sup>6pm</sup> iGen	18 <sup>7pm</sup> Handbells	19 <sup>10:30am</sup> LTQ 2.0 7pm Church Council	20	21
22 <sup>Spire Deadline</sup>	23 <sup>6:30pm</sup> Wshp Planning	24 <sup>6pm</sup> iGen	25 <sup>7pm</sup> Handbells	26 <sup>10:30am</sup> LTQ 2.0	27	28
29	30	31 <sup>6pm</sup> iGen	Regular Sunday Schedule 9.30am: Church School (All ages) 10:30am: Worship 11:30am Coffee fellowship			

### May Birthdays.

1 <sup>st</sup>	Jennifer Barbour	1 <sup>st</sup>	Nancy Burgin	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Roger Kemp	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Ron Burgin
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Grace Horr	4 <sup>th</sup>	David Williams	5 <sup>th</sup>	Ina Neitzel-Richards	8 <sup>th</sup>	Jennifer Berben
13 <sup>th</sup>	Dorcas Rose	16 <sup>th</sup>	Jack O'Hearn	17 <sup>th</sup>	Bob Blackmon	18 <sup>th</sup>	Sophia Ellis
18 <sup>th</sup>	Bruce King	19 <sup>th</sup>	Lauren Valentine	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Timothy MacDonald	25 <sup>th</sup>	Kevin Facticeau
27 <sup>th</sup>	Marje Feiden	28 <sup>th</sup>	Reid Scott	29 <sup>th</sup>	Diane Hedley		

### April Flowers

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Given by the Lovegrove Family in loving memory of George Lovegrove
10 <sup>th</sup>	Given by Lowell & Marilyn Blom in celebration of our children & grandchildren
<b>Palm Sunday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	Given by Roberta Fath TeBordo in loving memory of Elsie Manchester
<b>Easter - 24<sup>th</sup></b>	Easter Plant listing.

### Anniversaries.

11 <sup>th</sup>	Deb and Nick Sopchak
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### Coming up in early June

The annual Spring Concert of the Festival Celebration Choir will be held on Sunday, June 5 (3 p.m.) at St.Pius X Church, Loudonville. 'The Magic of Mendelssohn' includes the cantatas 'Hear My Prayer' and 'Hymn of Praise', with guest soloists and numbers by the Hyperion String Quartet. A poster will be on the bulletin board later in May.

# Christ Church United Methodist

35 State Street, Troy, New York 12180

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## Will this be your last mailed print Spire?

On April 14th we received a letter from the Post Office saying, that as of mid-May, Troy will no longer have a bulk mail center. At Church Council a few hours later, we discussed what that might mean for us and for the newsletter in particular.

Effective with the Summer Spire, due late May/early June, we will no longer be bulk mailing this newsletter. The good news is that those who do get a mail version will get it faster, via a regular first class stamp. The bad news is that those who get down to the church will be asked to pick up their copy at worship, or download from the website, from an emailed pdf (many of you do this already) or by accessing the Christ Church Facebook page. The web and email versions are made more compact for quicker downloading but include all articles; the one real difference is that any graphics may not print as crisply. (If there is ever a photo you would like in higher resolution you can always have one emailed to you.)

We will be conservative in the number of first class items mailed: conserving paper and postage, but if you do not receive a mailed copy and still would like to receive one, a phone call or email will get you back on the list; [janet@christchurchtroy.org](mailto:janet@christchurchtroy.org) / (518) 272-8392. out-of-state friends who use the Spire as their reminder for memorial flowers at holidays will continue to receive their mailed newsletter unchanged unless we hear that an emailed version is adequate. Local nursing home residents and shut-ins will also get their Spire in the mail as usual. Copies will be made available about a week earlier and be ready for the Sunday of the month starting with the September edition.

Thank you for your help and patience as we “tweak” our new system! Thanks, also, to George Garin for taking care of the Spire on Facebook and to David MacDonald for the web availability of the Spire. Janet & Mike Douglass

### Spire Deadline

The deadline for the summer Spire is Sunday, May 22nd.



God intends the church to be a community that embodies love, grace, and justice for all people. As a Reconciling Congregation, we therefore affirm the sacred worth of and welcome persons of any sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, marital status, race, ethnic background, economic condition, and physical or mental ability as full participants in our community of faith. God’s love includes everyone, as does Christ Church United Methodist.

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