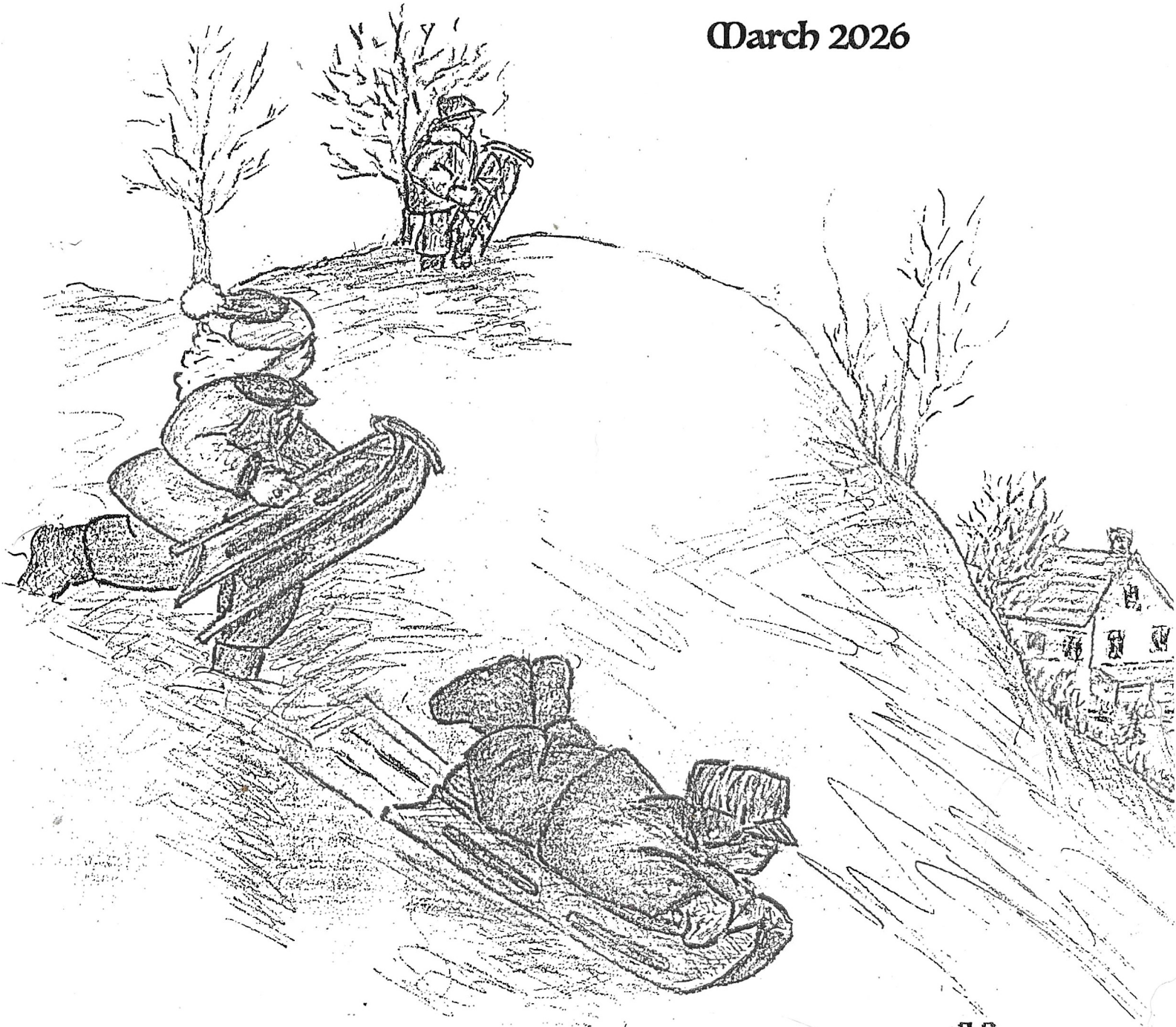


So. Otselec Methodist News

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(church) 315-653-7728
(home) 607-674-9527 ... (cell) 607-371-0431
Email: Melanie@simmonsasylum.com

March 2026



q.o.

Ann Campbell, Editor



MESSAGE FROM YOUR PASTOR ...

March 2026

*I lift up my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*

Psalms 121:1-2 (NRSV)

Happy March!

This is a blustery month, coming in like a lion weatherwise and, given that we are in Lent, possibly spiritually as we wrestle with refocusing on God through our faith practices. It feels like a blustery start for me in other ways too, as the post-Christmas lull is over and planning for Easter events really begins in earnest. Socio-politically, I am not sure there was any lull, as disturbing reports across the country continue.



On my commute over from Sherburne, I noticed the little stream that meanders alongside route 80 between Smyrna and Otselic. During the coldest weather we had this winter, the stream had frozen

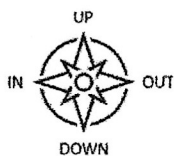


over completely with a blanket of white. Now, there is an uncovered section of running water in the middle of it, growing slightly wider each day. The river is getting busier as the snowmelt swells its flow.



I like to think our spirit opens like that as we proceed throughout Lent. What seemed placid and calm on the surface, breaks open and comes alive as we invite the Holy Spirit to work on our lives. The more we invite the Living Water into us, the more we combine with others, the greater our impact.

Our Lenten series is “Renewed in Mercy.” As we travel on this Lenten journey, we need to keep our focus on God. Perhaps we lift our eyes to the hills, looking for our Creator’s glory to help us. Perhaps we look down to the ground, thinking of our roots and drinking in (with thanks to God)



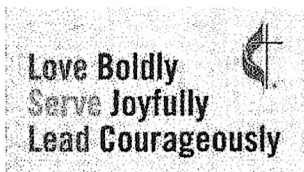
the nutrients our Lord provided for us in our traditions. Perhaps we look within, seeking Jesus’s direction for how we should rethink our life choices and aim for better. Perhaps we look around us, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us in reaching out to others with love. In all cases, we can be renewed in and agents for God’s mercy filling the world.

In whatever direction our immediate actions take us, I pray that the love of God fills you with grace, that by inviting the power of Holy Spirit to help you deal with the chaos, you are transformed with new life in the glory of Jesus.

With love in Christ,
Pastor Melanie



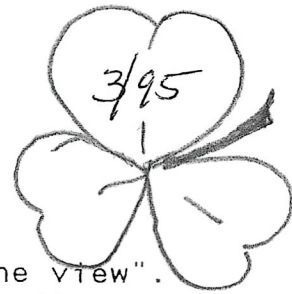
“The mission of the South Otselic United Methodist Church is to worship God, serve Him, each other and our community and to share His love and actions while helping inspire and nurture followers of Christ.”



Our online giving at
<https://www.sotselicumc.org/>
now has a QR code:



Reflections by Jacques



I've been told that "Buena Vista" means "fine view". This would be appropriate in this instance, for it was also the name given to a very large frame building, which from its location at the summit of Roundtop Mountain, looked about for miles in all directions at neighboring peaks and valleys of the Catskill Mountains.

Buena Vista Rest Home, a summer resort operated by my grandmother, was my home for several years in the early 1920's. My memory bank kicked into gear at about the age of three, so these reminiscences must have commenced sometime in 1922. I have some old photos which bear out my memory of Buena Vista as being a very large, white-painted, two-story building -- an impressive structure, with wide front and side porches from which one could enjoy the even more impressive sight of a broad Catskill valley which stretched down the slopes of Roundtop and ascended the rugged heights opposite.

Buena Vista was strictly a summer resort; today's ski centers were still many decades away in the future. The Catskill Mountains in those days were quite isolated in the winter, a time when the bears all hibernated and the natives stayed "to home".

The atmosphere at summer resorts in the early 1920's was nothing at all like the posh facilities of today. There were no golf courses, no tennis courts, not even swimming pools! Recreation consisted for the most part, of sitting in a comfortable rocker on the wide veranda while enjoying the view and the fresh air, or walking about the countryside for the same benefits.

If one were athletically inclined, one could engage in an exciting game of croquet! The more venturesome guests might try fishing or perhaps indulge in discretely studying the "picturesque" natives. The natives in turn, were quite fond of studying the "picturesque" guests...

This then, was the place from which came the earliest recollections of my life. Among those memories are journeys on snowy roads in a horse-drawn cutter to attend silent movie shows in the village down in the valley. Also playing in a snow igloo made by my father, and in an imaginary "cave" under the huge grand piano in the parlor. Several other tid-bits of memory come to mind, but these lines are intended to tell of a "quest", not reminisce.

The pleasant but very brief mountain summers did not recompense for the desolation of long mountain winters, and after a time my family moved on to other endeavors.

During the many years since, I sometimes wondered about the old Buena Vista. After all, for an old wood-frame building to survive seventy or so years of rugged mountain climate was probably too much to expect. The combined perils of decades of mountain winters, storms, even fire, made the odds for survival very unfavorable. I really thought that my old snapshots and brochures were most likely the only remaining traces of the place, and though I remained curious, I doubted that it still existed...

Several years ago, Joan and I were traveling near the Hudson. On impulse, we left our planned route and swung up into the mountains for a quick search, mostly just to satisfy my curiosity. When we figured that we were in the right area, we questioned different people but no one was able to help us. Disappointed, we went on our way convinced that the Buena Vista was no more.

In early 1994, son Mike, who shares my interest in the past, called from North Carolina with a plan. He would come North and together we would conduct a new search using as much time as needed.

So it came about that early on a particularly nice day in May, we set forth on a long-delayed quest. We breakfasted in Oneonta, then continued eastward to the Catskills. Close scrutiny of our map revealed a tiny pinpoint marked Roundtop. Following several winding roads up into the hills, we suddenly came upon a combined General Store and Post Office showing a sign over the door -- Roundtop, N.Y.!

Although they looked closely at the old photos we had with us, neither the Postmaster nor any of the others there, were able to help us. However, we were given directions to the home of a Mr. Whitcomb, an elderly gentleman who was a life-long resident, and "could help us if anybody could".

The directions led us through several more twisting roads, finally placing us in front of a very imposing resort facility. Here we were very graciously received by Mr. Whitcomb and his daughter, who looked at our photos but did not recognise the Buena Vista. They then spent the better part of an hour on the phone trying to track down some information for us, but without success.

Finally, after studying one photo that showed a group of mountains, labeled "Looking west from the balcony", Mr. Whitcomb figured out where that picture must have been taken. Acting on his suggestion, we crossed the valley and continued our search along the road climbing the far slope.

Mike, driving the car and at the same time comparing the photo in his hand with the distant peaks, suddenly stopped! In that same instant, I also called for him to stop. For as he was recognising the mountain scene, I noticed at that exact moment, something familiar about the large building we were about to pass.

A big addition covered part of the front, a new wing extended to the rear, the wooden posts and railing of the porch had been replaced with wrought iron, the lawn was now a parking lot -- but enough of the original building remained to show that the old Buena Vista had survived!

72 years had wrought many changes, but the Buena Vista is still serving summer guests, only now under the name "Glenbrook Farm". Many new neighboring buildings have appeared on the slope below, but the old resort is still "King of the Hill"!

So ended our search for a glimpse into the past. My curiosity is finally satisfied, but I probably have bored you -- if so, I herewith apologize.

George Ortiz

Treasurer's Corner

"Top of the mornin to ye!" No, I am not Irish - not even close but they say everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day! Why not?! It really doesn't hurt anyone and for the most part and it is a lot of fun being part of another culture, if only for a day. I had a very nice experience seeing my daughter's new medical office this past weekend. So much preparation in not only the office, but the furniture, supplies and all the finishing touches of wall hangings, coffee machine and small plants, making it a very comfortable setting to be in. I got to meet with many of her hospital colleagues, friends and doctors that came to congratulate her. One Dr. in particular was there, as he spent hours helping her with supply lists, office needs, medical advice etc. He was and is truly a wonderful man! It is a shame what is happening to our medical profession. Money has become the bottom line and the patients are the ones being hurt by it. Like in many businesses today, it has come down to how much money they can make is the least amount of time. For instance, my daughter was carrying a 1600 patient load and the higher ups are wanting to increase that amount! Just how many patients can one person see in a day and do the patient justice? Not to mention these doctors have real lives outside of medicine. As a parent, I felt my daughter's pain as she wrestled whether to even stay in the medical field at all. After a lot of soul searching, she just decided to bite the bullet and do it on her own. Only God knows the answer to her (and my) prayers, but I pray every day that this new adventure will be a great one.

Anna L Campbell
Treas.

Here is the report for February 2026. Please keep our little church on your prayers.

<i>Receipts:</i>			<i>Beg Balances:</i>
Envelopes & Pledges	3900.00		Chng: 5330.97
Loose Offerings	180.00		Savings: 8919.52
Interest (Wells Fargo)	1539.11		
	TOTAL	5619.11	Receipts: 5619.11
<i>Payments:</i>			Payments: 4843.22
Minister's Salary	312.00		Balance + 775.89
Housing	1670.00		Type equation here.
Treasurer	169.00		<i>Ending Balances:</i>
Travel	0.00		Chng: 6106.86
Organist	0.00		Savings: 8919.52
Secretary	0.00		
Tech Support	156.99		
Postage	45.84		
Fuel Oil	702.00		
NYSEG	197.71		
Apportionment	1005.11		
Telephone	89.12		
Website (2 months)	38.00		Year to Date: +326.42
Copy paper & tape	50.14		
Dave Cruikshank (3 snow plows)	120.00		
Lightwell Ins. Agency of NY, LLC	82.31		
Penny Stone	30.00		
Great America Financial Services (copier)	175.00		
	TOTAL	4843.22	

Up to the minute...

He is Risen!

Come and join us on Sunday April 5th for our Easter celebration! There will be a 'Sonrise' service at So. Otselic at 7:00 followed by a light breakfast. Then Georgetown will hold their Easter service at 9:00 and finally So. Otselic will hold their regular service at 10:30. All are welcome - so come and celebrate the risen Lord!

Easter Bake Sale

Mark your calendars for April 3rd (Good Friday) as we will be holding our annual Easter bake sale at NBT from 9 - 12! If you are running out of time to bake that something special, we will be able help! There should be a wonderful selection for you to choose from and if you have a hankering to bring a baked favorite, we would welcome your delight! See you on the 3rd!

Trustees Report - March 2026

Installation of the exterior church basement doors by Madison Doors and Windows is scheduled for Friday February 27.

We still anticipate a follow up visit by the Willet Stained Glass Studios so a revised estimate can be done for restoring some of the church's stained glass windows. Depending on the scope and expense of the project, possible grant funding may be explored.

The Chenango County Area Agency on Aging donated their refrigerator to the church.

A County fire code inspection of the church and Sunshine Shop is scheduled for Saturday, February 28.

A draft list of potential projects for this year has been provided and discussed at the Administrative Board on Sunday, February 22.

The Sunshine Shop News

Welcome to the \$5 Bag Sale for the month of March! Choose from a great variety of warm clothes and in all sizes for the entire family! Books are plentiful on the front porch and inside for your reading pleasure.

Hours: Thursdays - 10 to 4

Fridays - 10 to 4

Saturdays - 9 to noon

Come and shop and spread the word among friends, family and neighbors about the \$5 Bag Sale during the 6 open days in March. And as always, open by appointment!

Georgetown UMC News

Greetings from the Georgetown United Methodist Church! We are looking forward to continued Lenten worshipping and looking forward to Spring arriving. On the way to work this particular morning, the trees were very sparkly with ice crystals shimmering in the bright sunshine against a clear blue sky. God's beautiful handiwork at its finest!

We are planning our Kidee Fishing Pond again this year at Fishing Heritage Day. We encourage you to bring your children, grandchildren, great -grandchildren, nieces, nephews, great nieces, great nephews, next door neighbor children to enjoy this Free Fishing Pond. We love to see their excited faces when they catch their surprise!

Best wishes for a wonderful Lenten season. Until next time.....

Why come to South Otselic on a Thursday?

1) Thursday Luncheons - Reserve your spot! ... Call Betty: 315-751-1535

Please join us for lunch on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month in the Fellowship Hall! Invite family and friends for a **Free** lunch followed by a program on the 1st Thursday, and on the 3rd Thursday a **Free** lunch followed by fellowship and conversation.

The dates are set and the planned programs are as follows:

March 5: Lunch & Speaker from the Chenango County on Aging

March 19th: Lunch and Conversation

April 2: Lunch and Fire Safety Demonstration and Participation

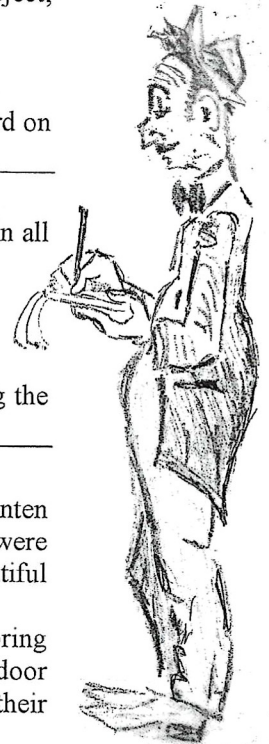
April 16th: Lunch and Conversation

May 7: Lunch and a Surprise

May 21: Lunch and Conversation

2) Sunshine is OPEN! 10 to 4

3) Care & Share Pantry OPEN! 3 to 6pm (3rd Thursday of the month)



May your home always be too small to hold all of your friends.

Side notes

Dates to remember

March 5 - Free lunch from 12-2 at the church

8 - Daylight Savings time change - spring *ahead* 1 hour!

13 - Funeral service for Bill Bowers Sr. at 11:00 - luncheon to follow

18 - Fishing Heritage fund raiser at Gilligan's in Sherburne from 4-8

19 - Free lunch from 12-2 at the church

28 - Deadline for newsletter items due

29 - Palm Sunday

Administrative Board after worship service

April 2 - Free lunch from 12-2 at the church

3 - Good Friday

Bake Sale at the bank from 9-?

5 - Easter - Christ has risen! Georgetown at 9:00 / 'Sonrise' Service at So. Otselic at 7:00 with light breakfast to follow / regular service at 10:30

Easter Flower order update...

When last month's newsletter was printed the next day, I received the order form from our supplier! That was the good news - the bad news was that I had to place the order by March 1st! So, I have added a 'few' more flowers to make up the '6-pack' the supplier needed.... Whew - with that being said, if you would like to place an order, please contact me ASAP, so I can get you on the list. You can leave a message on my phone at 607-674-9355 or by email: deerknoll1948@gmail.com. If you wish to have your flowers in memory of, or in honor of, please leave that information as well. Prices are: lilies \$12 each / tulips, hyacinths & daffodils \$10 each / and mini roses \$10 each. We do not have choices of color when ordering. I thank you in advance.

Ring toss - Ring around the Rose - Ring a ling a ling!

Yes - many ways to look at rings! But in our case, if you had ordered a Christmas wreath from us, please return the metal ring to us as we recycle them to help save on the cost. If you do not have a place to toss the boughs, just return the wreath in a plastic bag and leave it in the choir room and we will take care of it for you! Thank you so much!

Vanilla? Chocolate? Strawberry?

Those 3 words only mean one thing - ice cream! Well, on March 18 there will be a fundraiser for the Fishing Heritage at Gilligan's in Sherburne from 4-8. A percentage of all purchases - food and/or ice cream during that time will go to the group. What better way to end your day than at Gilligan's! (And Gilligan's has many more flavors than the 3 mentioned above!) Hope to see you there!

Spring Cleaning?

☛If you are spring cleaning, and find good, clean used or slightly used items, please consider donating them to the Sunshine Shop for the July Rummage Sale. Items may be left in the church nursery. All proceeds from the summer rummage sale purchase school supplies for OVCS. Thank you!

Funeral Service for Bill Bowers, Sr.

There will be a funeral service for Bill Bowers, Sr. on March 13 at the church starting at 11:00. Jeanne Angell will be doing the eulogy and a luncheon will be provided afterwards. Bill and his family were residents of this valley for many years and Bill was a very respected breeding service technician throughout the valley and beyond. Please feel free to come to the service and luncheon.

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

In 2024, the United Methodist Church General Conference approved revised Social Principles (<https://www.umcjustice.org/documents/124>). We are presenting brief summaries instead of the full text of some of them for your consideration; what action might we take with these in mind?

THE POLITICAL COMMUNITY (continued from last month)

BASIC RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

All individuals are entitled to basic human rights grounded in God's creation and revealed in Jesus's love. The UMC will work to protect those rights within the church and to reform societal structures to ensure everyone can thrive. Rights call forth responsibilities; everyone is to advocate for their own rights and for the rights of the unheard. Governments are to be held responsible for guaranteeing basic human rights; attempts to deny individuals their basic rights or inherent dignity are to be condemned.

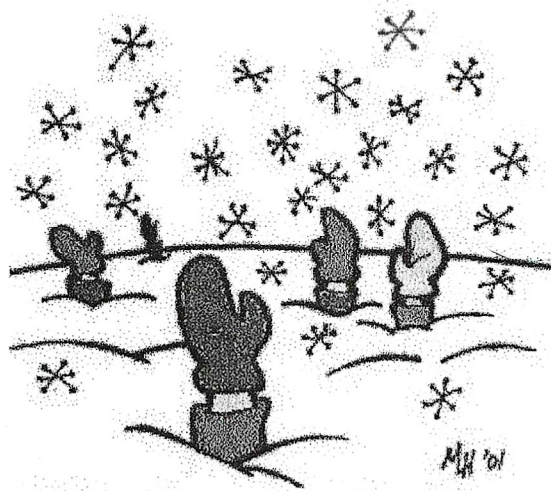
- A. *Health Care* – the UMC views this as a basic right which half the world's population lacks. The UMC supports measures to expand medical treatment, calling on all societal organizations to work cooperatively to ensure every human has access to medical services and treatment.
- B. *Children and Young People* – the UMC calls on church and society to support and advocated for the well-being of all children and young people, condemning destructive practices and holding perpetrators accountable. The UMC urges decision-makers to include young people in the decision-making process.
- C. *Elders and the Aging* – Elders have many gifts to give and should be given opportunities to participate. Elders should be supported and protected against the vulnerabilities-of aging in ways that affirm self-determination.
- D. *Women and Girls* – the UMC affirms equal rights and opportunities for all women and girls, including education, leadership opportunities, and protection of their bodies and reproductive justice. Harassment, abuse, human trafficking, and other forms of gender-based violence are condemned; governing bodies are called to enact policies to ensure women and girls may thrive to the well-being of society.
- E. *Men and Boys* – the UMC affirms equal rights and opportunities for all men and boys, including education, leadership opportunities, and parental rights. Harassment, abuse, human trafficking, and other forms of gender-based violence are condemned; governing bodies are called to enact policies to ensure men and boys may thrive to the well-being of society.

Valley Lenten Ecumenical Services

The Valley Lenten Ecumenical Services are as follows:

March 8 - Cincinnatus United Presbyterian
15 - Cincinnatus Christian Union
22 - Cincinnatus OPLH Catholic
29 - Cincinnatus First Baptist

All the services will be at 4:00 PM.



OK, Show of hands...
Who's tired of snow?

Funny how life works.

As kids, we couldn't wait to get out — to chase something bigger, louder, faster.

We dreamed of freedom, of cities that never slept, of living on our own terms.

But somewhere along the way, those dreams changed.

Now, when we think of home, it's not just a place — it's a feeling.

It's the sound of the screen door creaking shut behind you.

It's the smell of dinner coming from the kitchen.

It's the way the floorboards creaked in that one hallway.

It's laughter echoing from the backyard as the sun went down.

Back then, we thought home was small.

Now we know it was everything.

We'd give anything to walk through that front door again, just to hear Mom call our name or see Dad sitting in his chair.

To be that kid with scraped knees and no worries, just love and safety all around.

Time has a way of showing us that what we were running from was the very thing we'd spend our lives missing.

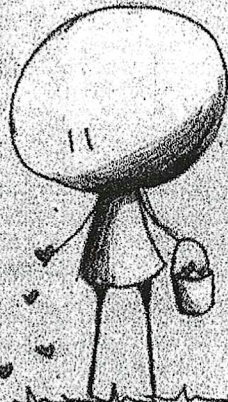
Because home isn't where you live.

It's where your heart learned what love feels like.

And no matter how far you go, part of you never really leaves it.

Life is an echo.
What you send out, comes back.
What you sow, you reap.
What you give, you get.
What you see in others, exists in you.
Remember, life is an echo.
It always gets back to you.
So give goodness.

— ZIG ZIGLAR



I'm never lonely because,
I have four men in my life.
I get up with
CHARLIE HORSE.

I spend the day with
ARTHUR ITIS.

I dine with
WILL POWER.

and I go
to bed with
BEN GAY.



If there is anyone that would like to be added and/or removed on our newsletter mailing list please contact:

So. Otselic Methodist News
Editor: Ann Campbell

(home) 607-674-9355
E-mail: deerknoll1948@gmail.com

Sunday Worship:

10:30 AM
11:30 AM

Worship
Coffee Hour

This Month:

Office hours: Wednesday 11-2
Thursday 1-4
(Bible study from 1-2 ... Sept – June)

Check us out on Facebook:

South Otselic United Methodist Church / The Sunshine Shop

The Sunshine Shop

Contact: Sarah Hite
(home) 315-653-7490
(shop) 315-653-7728
Hours: Thurs: 10 - 4
Fri: 10 - 4
Sat: 9 - noon
(Donations at back porch)

Care & Share Pantry

Contact: Deb Williams
315-653-0040
3rd Thursday: 3:00 – 6:00 PM

"The mission of the South Otselic United Methodist Church is to worship God, serve Him, each other and our community and to share His love in words and actions while helping inspire and nurture followers of Christ"

PRAYER LIST: (Short Term): Rick & Debbie Benson, Henry Campbell, Paul Carson, Nancy Guthrie, Gilbert Harrington, Angela Harris, Gary Hart, Duncan MacKenzie, Brooklyn Marquard, Heidi Moore, Matt Sheldon, Mike Sheldon, Travis Sheldon, Ella Simmons, Ed & Debbie Slocum, David Wentworth, family of Norman Burpee, family of Margaret Chase, family of Lynn Cleary, family of Pat Lawrence (& Sherburne FD), South Otselic NBT, Chenango County bus, Boonville FD & Abundant Life Church, wildfires - TX/OK/KS, family of Jim Moore, East coast - snowstorm, victims - CA avalanche, Gaza, Ukraine, those dealing with severe weather

PRAYER LIST: (Long Term): Jonna Bartlett, Richard Bishop, David Boyer, Paul Carson, Ron Colasudo, Kaity Davis, Doug Evans, Linda Excell, Ted Gargas, Kevin Grewe, Roger Hakes, Chuck Hathaway, Patti Lamandia, Diane MacGregor, Cassandra & Christopher Marquard, Chris Marquard, Maverick Mesko, Aaron Miller, Phil Mudge, Mitch Mullenax, Jenny Naber, Elaine Perkins, John & Carole Roalef, Kate Robinson, Justin Sheldon, Matt & Annette Sheldon, Cathy Silver, Ella Simmons, Normajeane Stark, Kenneth Sullivan, Angela (Graves) Szlamczynski, David Wentworth

Travel mercies for family and friends
Our men and women in the military, World leaders, our country, & the need for peace

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