

So. Otselec Methodist News

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April 2026



I am the resurrection, and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

John 11:25,26

g.o.

Ann Campbell, Editor



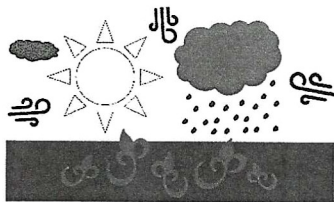
MESSAGE FROM YOUR PASTOR ...

April 2026

But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8 (NRSV)

Happy Easter!



We are in that awkward teenager part of the year, where the world is transitioning to a new stage but not quite ready for full bloom. Just as teenagers go through great mood swings and periods of growth, it seems like the weather is bouncing all over the place as the earth warms up. I wonder, with social and political events bouncing all over the place, where we as a country, as a society, and as individuals are bound to next. To me, it feels very awkward, like we are all trapped by sin and unable to get free.

There is hope for us! Paul described how, while we were sinners, Christ died for us, that through faith in Him we could be reconciled to God and celebrate with hearts filled with God's love rather than remain trapped in sin.

That Jesus died for sinners means that Jesus also died for those we deem our enemies. There is a story that if red ants and black ants are placed together in a jar, they will live peaceably. However, if the jar is shaken, they will attack one another in the belief that the other is now an enemy.



It feels like our society has divided into red and blue over time; we were living relatively peacefully, but now our jar is being shaken so we attack one another. In truth, our enemy is the one shaking the jar: those manipulating our news feeds, government, and societal systems to increase the divide and paranoia currently afflicting our country – and we as individuals are helpless to stop all of it. We need grace.



There is hope for all who believe in Jesus as their Savior: we can expect to be met and filled with the transformative love of God. This is true for our enemies, too: wouldn't it be nice for those persecuting to stop hurting others and to start showing love instead? How about us – have we let the Holy Spirit transform us with the love of God so that we do no harm and only do good?

Through the love of God shown in Jesus and poured out by the Holy Spirit, we can be reconciled with one another. We can start building healthier community relationships and reforming our society with healthier structures. This is all made possible through love for one another and hope for the future: the very things Jesus enabled by His death and resurrection, that we too could die to sin and live eternally in His new life of love instead.

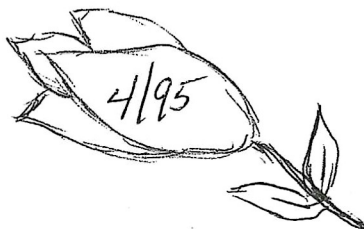
So how do we work toward that future today? We reach out – to God, to our neighbor, and to those in need. We listen to understand what matters to them. We repent of wrongdoing, asking forgiveness and letting them show us grace – this lets them know they have value to share with us. We show love where we can, celebrating God's love, sharing companionship, and lending a helping hand.

Throughout this Easter season and beyond, in the grace of God, let us build stronger community together in the new life of Jesus, filled with the love poured out by the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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."



Reflections

Reflections

On most mornings I awaken to the chiming of my grandfather clock, but on this, the very first day of Spring, my wakeup call came instead, from the dawning sky.

I must have already been almost awake, for the sound, so faint in the distance, could never have roused me from full sleep by itself. When first I noticed, the distant clamor had something of the sound of a far-off pack of beagles in pursuit of an elusive rabbit -- and Nikki must have reached that conclusion in his little dog mind, for he jumped up from where he had been sleeping on the rug and ran to the window where he stood with paws on the sill and ears at attention!

No beagles these!!! The rapidly approaching chorus revealed the identity of its noisy participants as they appeared over the far hill, swept across the valley, and passed almost directly overhead in an undulating Vee formation. Exultant at finally nearing their homeland after so many hundreds of miles in flight, the flock of big Canada geese announced their coming with joyful and continuous noise. What they lacked in musical ability, they more than made up for in sheer exuberance! Their constant chatter seemed to be in perfect cadence with the rapid stroking of their strong wings.

We are blessed during the warmer months with a variety of song-birds whose melodic voices bring us much pleasure, but to the ears of winter-weary Northerners, is there a sweeter sound in all Nature than that of a high-flying flock of geese in early Spring?

Come to think of it, there is another chorus that we welcome with equal joy at about this same time each year... The annual Springtime Evening Concerts, conducted by froggy orchestras of Peepers, sounding forth from every marsh or patch of swamp during April and May, bring another of Nature's Harmonic Wonders to grateful human ears.

Every puddle that was a little too wide to jump across used to be given the title "Polliwog Pond". Perhaps the correct term might be "Tadpole", but to us in that day and age, frog's eggs hatched into Polliwogs. Anyway, Polliwog is certainly a much more apt description of those tiny wiggling beings...

One of the first lessons in Nature was free for the taking by rural kids: A visit in early Spring to any place where there was a little standing water would usually yield a batch of frog eggs. Stuck together in clumps of small transparent spheres, each with a tiny dot in the center, frog eggs were easy to gather. Back at home, the eggs were kept in a bucket or tub and watched for developments. In a few days or maybe a week or so, depending on water temperature, the tiny dot in its see-through case would begin to change. Soon it would be free in the water, becoming a funny-looking, little round ball with a tail. Then a few more days would find the little creature sporting, first back legs, then front legs, while its tail began to shrink. Finally, its babyhood completed, this

full-fledged frog would begin its swamp-land career.

But now, back to where I started this wandering narrative -- on this first morn of Spring, I was appropriately greeted by the happy gabbling of a bunch of homeward-bound geese! (Gabbling? Is that a real word? If not, it should be -- it sounds like what geese do!). Anyway, as the Opening Day of Springtime, it had started right well!

Although by now, the sun had topped the hill to the east, it must have rained a little during the night, for the weeping birch outside the kitchen window was covered with unshed tears. There was no wind for once, not even a slight breeze, and drops of water remained clinging to every branch and twig of the graceful little tree. The early morning rays of sunlight, happy at having completed their ninety-three million mile journey, celebrated the beginning of this new season with the creation of a wonderous display of sparkling jewels amidst the birchtree branches!

And so begins our Spring of 1995! After a winter that was not nearly as ferocious as some predicted, we are thankful for its comparative mildness and happily anticipate the coming of warm weather.

Unlike the fierce winter weather of a year ago, this March has been kind to us. Having entered on the calendar in a pretty much lamb-like fashion, March looks fair to leaving it in a like manner! Which same is very unlike our usual climatic treatment -- but hey, we'll take it!

Welcome, Sweet Springtime, We Greet You with Song!
(Well, those of you who can sing, do -- and those of us who can't, listen gladly!)

George Ortiz

The family of George Ortiz has granted us permission to continue to use his writings for this newsletter.

Georgetown UMC News

Happy Easter and Happy Spring from the Georgetown United Methodist Church!

Greetings from the Neighbors of the North. We are excited to be sharing Easter services. We are having an Easter Vigil service with a garden theme including many hymns and scriptures on Maunday Thursday. Our sanctuary is beautifully decorated with Easter and Spring motifs which makes us smile. We plan to join the Easter Sunrise Service as well.

We are gearing up for Fishing Heritage Day by getting our "fish" ready for the kids fishing pool which is free for all kids to participate in. The surprised looks on their faces is priceless.

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Tom Thorp. He and his parents and siblings attended our church for many years after they moved here from New Jersey. He will be greatly missed in our communities.

We hope you have a wonderful holiday and we look forward to seeing many folks at the upcoming special Easter services as well as at Fishing Heritage Day.

Until next time.....

Happy Easter!

Treasurer's Corner

Happy Spring! I cannot speak for others, but I am a bit tired of the cold and snow! We got a few days of fantastic *warm* weather, but alas it was short lived... but as they say - just wait a few minutes and it will change! ☺ At Bill Bowers funeral service, his son Bill, mentioned 4 points that his Dad always ingrained into his life. 1) Work hard. 2) Lead with a smile. 3) Go above and beyond. 4) Save and live below your means. Think about those 4 points for a minute. Today. It seems like everyone is going about 100 miles a minute, they want more, do things as fast as possible and to find a smile is sometimes impossible! What would happen if we just slowed down a bit, started your day with a smile, when you go to work, you do it well and when you get paid you actually *save* some for that rainy day?! Our world would be so much better off! Now that spring has arrived - let's start our new year with some new beginnings! Even Jesus had to smile at times!

Here is the report for March 2026. Please keep our little church in your prayers.

Ann Campbell
Treas.

<i>Receipts:</i>			<i>Beg Balances:</i>
Envelopes & Pledges	4235.00		Chng: 6106.86
Loose Offerings	244.00		Savings: 8919.52
Interest (Wealth Management)	213.66		
Alaska Trip (Georgetown)	200.00		
Easter flowers	582.00		
	TOTAL	5474.66	Receipts: 5474.66
			Payments: 6096.12
			Balance - 621.46
<i>Payments:</i>			
Minister's Salary	312.00		<i>Ending Balances:</i>
Housing	1670.00		Chng: 5485.40
Cont. Education & Books	0.00		Savings: 8919.52
Treasurer	169.00		
Travel	0.00		
Organist	0.00		
Secretary	0.00		
Tech Support	156.99		
Postage	91.86		Year to Date: + 451.96
Fuel Oil	702.00		
NYSEG	176.13		
Apportionment	1005.11		
Telephone	89.62		
Penny Stone	30.00		
Website	19.00		
Dave Cruikshank (3 snow plows)	120.00		
Defibulator pads	67.06		
Domain Name Services	265.00		
Brotherhood Mutual Ins. Co.	1030.75		
Great America Financial Services (copier)	191.60		
	TOTAL	6096.12	

** This report does *not* reflect the deposit for 3/28/26 AC

Up to the minute...

Easter Bake Sale

Last reminder of our annual Easter bake sale on April 3 at NBT Bank in So. Otselic from 9-? If you need that something special to help you with Easter dinner, or a 'bedtime snack', come down and visit us. Warm fellowship is always available! ☺

Psst Another wonderful bake sale!

If you happen to forget about the bake sale on Friday - do not fret for the Pharsalia ladies will be baking up a storm for their sale on Saturday, the 4th, at the Cincy store! These ladies never disappoint, and their sale will be from 9 to noon, so go to Cincinnatus and support these women and their continuing effort to keep their building safe.

Easter Services..

Come and join us on Easter Sunday to rejoice in the risen Lord! You can join the folks in Georgetown at 9:00 AM OR if you are an early riser come at 7:00 AM at the So. Otselic 'Sonrise' Service that will be followed by a light breakfast. Then So. Otselic will hold their regular service at 10:30 AM. Just sit with us, enjoy the quiet beauty of our fresh flower Easter cross and reflect the goodness of our amazing Lord. All are welcome to attend.

Trustees Report – April 2026

After a long wait, installation of the exterior church basement doors has been completed!

A revised estimate has been received from Willet Stained Glass Studios for restoring all 12 church windows. Their total estimate of \$54,076 is pending an onsite inspection. Jackie Hakes has offered to assist in exploring grant funding and with writing the grant, once the amount is approved. We will be presenting this project to the congregation in the near future.

The Trustees will also be looking for estimates for the painting of the roofs on the Sunshine Shop and the food pantry entrance, purchase and installation of a chair lift to the church basement's food pantry, and retrofitting the lighted church sign with digital sign panels.

All of these projects are only options that are being explored. We have been so blessed in the past to have completed many needed projects by the generosity of our faithful. We do not know what the future holds or what will happen, but we must remain hopeful and continue on.

The ladies of the UMW want to thank the 'brain trust' for getting out all of the tables and chairs for the luncheon for Bill Bowers and for putting them back for us. Just another reminder how the small things in our little church make such a huge difference.

The Sunshine Shop Celebrates 16 Years!

April is a special month to celebrate the Shop, its volunteers, the donors, and the shoppers who frequent the Shop from various locations around central New York! Sixteen years ago, the Sunshine Shop became a reality. The parsonage was transformed from an area of storage and underused space to a vibrant successful store in the South Otselic community. Advertising for all sales, events, and celebrations for the Shop can be found in the Hi Neighbor and the Sherburne News, a Voss sandwich board sign as well as Facebook, the church website, and the church monthly newsletter.

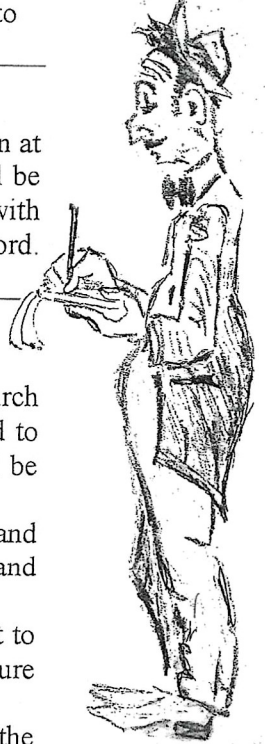
The Sunshine Shop has a steady group of devoted shoppers who travel from as far away as Oneonta, Syracuse, Binghamton, and Cortland and all local areas in between. The committed volunteers keep the Shop open, clean, sort, and greet the customers!

Free books can always be found on the front porch as well as hats, scarves and mittens in the winter.

Proceeds from the sale of items from the Shop provide assistance to folks who need medical assistance or help after a fire, camperships, donations to Veterans, Aunt Mary's House, and UMCOR. The annual summer rummage sale supports the purchase of school supplies for Otselic Valley Central School District students, and the annual fall rummage sale supports the purchase of Christmas dinners and gifts. For the first time, the Sunshine Shop participated in the newly organized Community Collaboration group which supplied both Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners to families within the school district.

Who would have guessed 16 years ago that the Sunshine Shop would be so successful? Thank you to everyone who donates, volunteers, and purchases items from the Shop! Without your commitment the parsonage would be just another empty building looking for a purpose!

So, stop in and celebrate 16 years! Sign up for one of the 2 Aldi gift cards. The drawing will be April 18th at noon and you need not be present to win!



Alleluia - He has risen!

Side notes

Community Lunch!

Free community lunches in the church Fellowship Hall are available every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month from noon to 2pm. Lunch is served at noon followed by a program or fellowship. The menu varies as does the programs. Programs so far have been by Deedrick Bertholf on AI, and 2 speakers from the Area Council on the Aging from Norwich about medicare and medicaid, and programs available in Chenango County for seniors. Future field trips are being planned as the weather becomes warmer!

The 1st and 3rd Thursday were chosen because the Sunshine Shop is open (10 to 4), and on the 3rd Thursday the Care and Share Food Pantry is also open (3 to 6).

Lunches are free and delicious and provided by Apple Creek Country Club. Share your lunchtime with folks and meet new friends or renew a friendship!

Please remember to reserve your spot with Betty at: 315-751-1535.

Dates to remember

April 2 - Luncheon at the church 12 - 2

3 - Good Friday bake sale at NBT Bank 9-?

4 - Pharsalia Hook Bake Sale at Cincy store from 9-noon

5 - Easter Services: 7:00 'Sonrise' Service at So. Otselic UMC
9:00 Regular service at Georgetown UMC
10:30 Regular service at SO. Otselic UMC

16 - Luncheon at the church 12-2

19 - Administration Board after worship service

May 2 - Deadline for newsletter items due

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 (continued from last month)

- F. *Indigenous, Native, and Aboriginal Communities* – the UMC supports the rights of these communities per the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, their sovereign rights, and the value of their cultures; the UMC condemns acts of genocide or forcible seizures against them.
- G. *Migrants, Immigrants, and Refugees* – the UMC affirms the dignity, worth, and rights of migrant and stateless people and urges acts of compassion for these vulnerable populations. The UMC opposes criminalizing, dehumanizing, and inhumane detention of these populations, especially where it separates family members.
- H. *People with Disabilities* – the UMC affirms the full humanity and gifts of people living with disabilities and calls for the elimination of barriers to their full participation in all aspects of society.
- I. *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities* – Because all people are of sacred worth and due basic human rights, the UMC supports equal rights and protections of all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.
- J. *Religious Minorities* – the UMC affirms the rights of religious minorities to worship in peace. No one is to be denigrated or demeaned for belonging to a different faith, because Jesus commanded us to love our neighbors. The UMC opposes religious intolerance or discrimination and calls for responsible media coverage to eliminate mistruths in stereotypes. Individuals are to be free to choose their own faith without coercion.

Love Boldly
Serve Joyfully
Lead Courageously



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





ANNUAL
BAKE SALE

SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2026

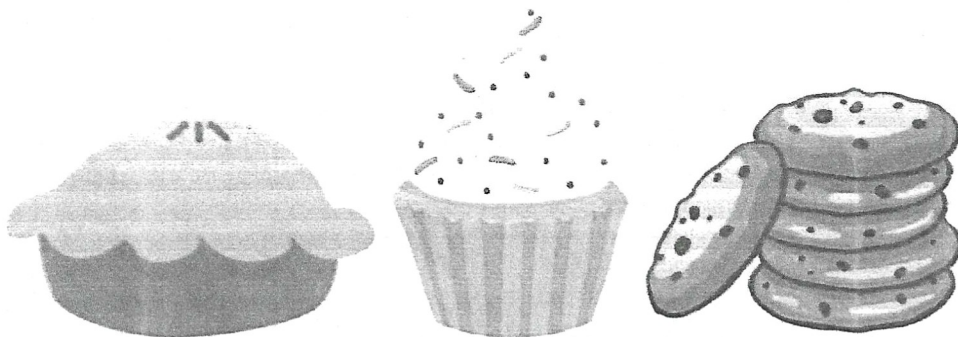
9 A.M. - 12 P.M.

AT CINCINNATUS HOME CENTER

**Get all your homemade
Easter goodies from some
of the best bakers around!**

**Homemade pies, breads and rolls,
Easter cupcakes, cookies & more!**

*All proceeds go to The Pharsalia Hook Church
(The Little White Church) on the corner of Rt. 23 & Billy Brown Rd.*





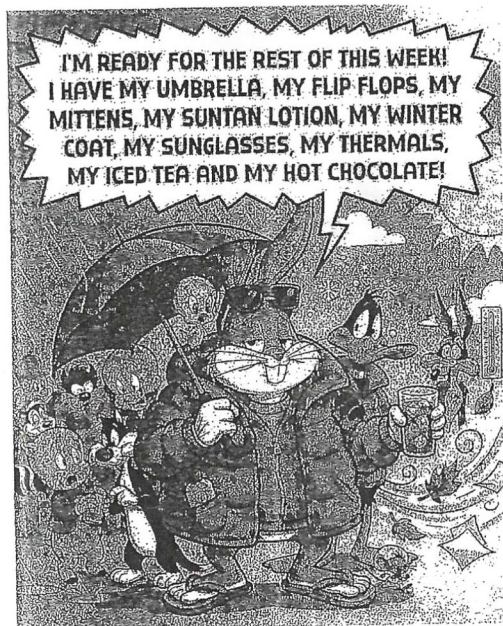
17th Annual Fishing & Heritage Day

This year's Fishing & Heritage Day in South Otselec will be **Saturday, May 16 from 9 am to 4 pm.**

This free community-wide event will include many activities, including fishing clinics at one of the hatchery ponds, along with conservation and historic organizations set up in front of the hatchery; arts, crafts and antiques vendors in the Town Park, live music and food provided by Kandi's Kitchen; the South Otselec Fire Department's chicken BBQ and open house, vintage tractor display in the center of town, along with the Valley Busters 4-H club and the FFA exhibiting small farm animals, games and information; Gladding's vintage rope braiding machine demonstration, and a host of activities at the OVCS public library, including their special art show and the mobile Powerhouse exhibit. The Sunshine Shop will also be open from 9 am to 2 pm.

At the hatchery, representatives from the Oneida Nation will presenting and demonstrate the early Indian game of lacrosse, while students from grade 2nd and up can participate in making a "friendship feather".

The free bus shuttle will again be available all day to take folks to the various locations where events are occurring. So, save the date and plan to enjoy the day with family and friends at South Otselec's largest public event. Rain or shine, we hope to see you there!



*Laziness kills ambition;
Anger kills wisdom;
Fear kills dreams;
Ego kills growth;
Jealousy kills peace;
Doubt kills confidence.*

Now read that from *Right* to *Left*.

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

So. Otselec 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 Otselec 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 Otselec 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): Nikko Baker, Betty Benson, Brent Dodge, Rachel Evans & baby, Kevin Grewe, Angela & Rich Harris, Gary Hart, Sarah Hite, Matt Sheldon, Harvey Stalker, Jim Slocum, Dick Thorp, Jennifer Tibbens, Tom Wolcheck, family of Jacob Debroke, family of Bob Engle, family of Tom Thorp, Georgetown UMC, Iran/US/Israel, Travis Sheldon & Joaquin Garcia & all military personnel

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, Jim Slocum, Normajean 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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