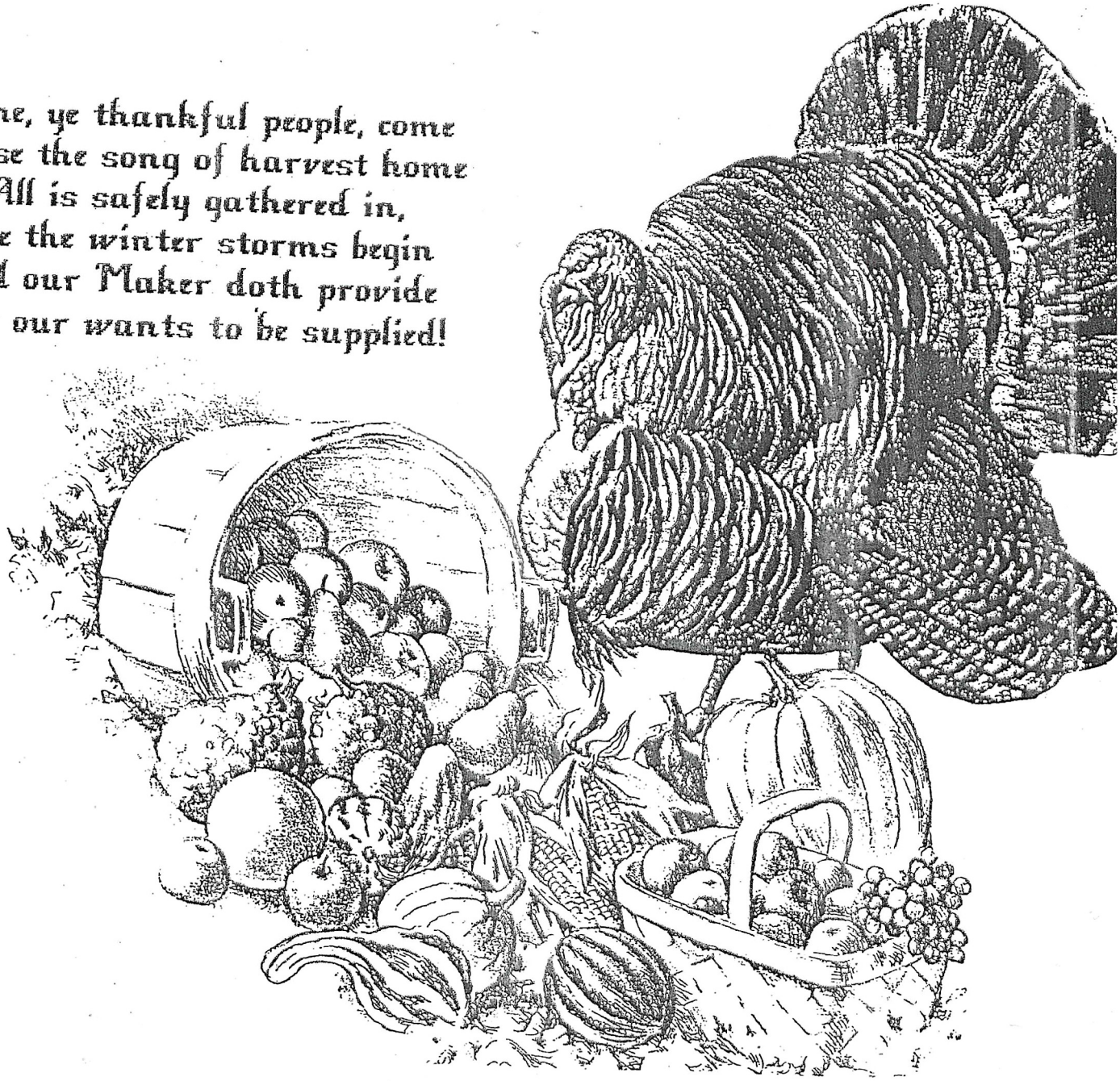
So. Otselic Methodist News

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

==========

November 2026

Come, ye thankful people, come
Raise the song of harvest home
All is safely gathered in,
Ere the winter storms begin
God our Maker doth provide
For our wants to be supplied!



==========

Ann Campbell, Editor

MESSAGE FROM YOUR PASTOR ...

November 2026

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. *Matthew 25:1a (NRSVue)*

Happy Thanksgiving!

Every year at about this time, we end Daylight Savings Time and push the clocks back an hour. The days are getting shorter, and then we cut back on an hour of evening sunshine. It may feel like we are giving up on our days sooner. The flip side of this is that morning people get a bit more sunshine to start the day – and given how much of a struggle getting going can be, that extra sun being early matters for the days of the darkest season.





I heard someone say once that the early morning can heal you, if you let it. I can say with certainty that the Lord will heal your soul, if you let Christ in. What better way to start the day than taking time early to invite the Holy Spirit to help you get going and live the day in God's love?

With the start of November, I plan to go vote on Tuesday. Election time is always a bit turmoiled and this year is particularly full of angst for many people. It feels like a darker time before things get brighter, and we have no idea how long or short the dark season may be. What we do know is that Jesus will walk with us through it.

With Thanksgiving coming up, we turn to thanking God for the many blessings we have received. Even with increased prices on everything, we still have many choices about what food to eat and various other amenities. We are not currently dealing with bombs dropping on our communities as Ukraine and Palestine have had to bear; our homes remain a place of refuge. We may complain about challenges, but we are indeed blessed.



Our worship series this month, "It Will Be Like This," delves into Jesus's description of the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 25. We are reminded that the faithful plan and work in anticipation of the Lord's return, wanting to put their best self forward when the time comes. Those who care try to strengthen the relationship; those who are more careless about it do not put in any effort. The Lord sees this and rewards the caring hearts of those who truly love the Lord.

As we seek the Lord and remember all of the blessings we have, how about we give love to our neighbors as freely as we have received it from God, that all may come to know the Good News of salvation in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit and live in blessed holiness.

May the grace of God, the love of Jesus, and the peace of the Holy Spirit keep you always.

With love in Christ,
Pastor Melanie

Love Boldly
Serve Joyfully
Lead Courageously

"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

"The Leaves of Brown came Tumbling Down". Wasn't that the first line of a song many years ago? If it was, that's all I remember. Then there was that song from my first grade memories (1926) that started off "Come little leaves, said the wind one day" -- again, that's all I can remember.

But I do remember what fate befell the fallen leaves every October back in our old home town... In those less regimented days the Autumn air across the countryside was annually scented with a fragrance drifting from the many piles of leaves burning at the curbsides of every street in every village.

A few days ago, while driving through town, I suddenly noticed the aroma of burning leaves. There, on a side street, was a home-owner using this old-fashioned method to dispose of his worn-out leaves. I won't say in which town this happened because I don't want to get anyone excited -- and I did enjoy an unexpected remembrance...

And this brought some new thoughts to mind of other scents, fragrances, and just plain smells, that we oft-times find ourselves enjoying. Some of these are seasonal, as were burning leaves. The early summer fragrance of new-mown hay is one that immediately comes to mind. This delightful scent follows from meadow to hay-loft where it deepens into the pungent, sweet, aroma of curing hay.

Grass that never becomes hay, but instead graces the front lawn back at the farmhouse, wafts a somewhat gentler perfume from the newly-mowed lawn through windows opened in welcome to warm Spring air. Spring air, which also carries the scent of blooming roses and lilacs, especially lilacs!

As Summer advances with its hot, dry weather, a sudden thunder shower may, for a short time, cool things off while dispensing its own peculiar scent. Rain striking sun-baked pavement produces a steamy mist that fills the air with wonderful freshness.

I remember, many years ago, landing at LaGuardia Airport in New York City after spending some fourteen months in northern Newfoundland. A rain shower had apparently just ended and the water was still running off the concrete paving. As I left the exit hatch of the Army transport plane, I entered a warm, pleasantly moist atmosphere much different from the foggy, chilled one I had been in for over a year.

Summer months always saw some time spent in camping. We had a favorite spot in a place we called Hemlock Hollow, a dip between two forested hills that was isolated and rugged enough to satisfy our youthful feeling of adventure. The thing I remember most about that camping was the hemlock tree perfume that one inhaled with every breath. Probably there were also other conifers adding to the ambience of an evergreen forest, but more than sixty years has dimmed the specifics.

Here in central New York we are far from any oceanside beach or wharf but anyone who has visited such places has experienced an entirely different kind of atmosphere. The

smells connected with the seaside are very different from those found inland. Breezes reaching land after crossing miles of salty water carry with them, not only the scent of the ocean, but also that of tidewater marshes where low and high tides produce a distinctive aroma of salty air, muddy flats, and yes, fish. Possibly one has to have different tastes from others to appreciate these maritime perfumes, but it is something that I miss here in our upstate locale.

But then, I probably am a bit peculiar because I also like the airs about a well-kept horse stable -- and old leather, such as a well-oiled old baseball glove, harness, or a leather saddle.

A smell, once common, but now missing from ordinary things, is that of Printer's Ink. Modern printing methods have displaced this former everyday odor. As a lifelong devotee of the comic sheets, I well remember that acrid, but to me at least, pleasant scent, once associated with the comic section of the Sunday newspaper.

My father used to smoke a pipe, I had an uncle who also smoked a pipe, and in the years since, I've known many men who did likewise. Some of those pipes emitted a very foul odor, but some had a sweet, enticing smell. A good pipe fragrance always seemed to be a pleasant addition to the immediate atmosphere. Now, of course, we know all about the harm done by nicotine and the tobacco industry is in big trouble. So I expect smoking in any form will probably become extinct in a generation or so.

Maybe the most enticing and welcome scents we ever enjoy are those that drift out of the kitchen when the cook is in action. The aroma coming out of that particular room on Thanksgiving day trys everyone's patience until the meal is finally announced.

Another great fragrance from the cook's domain is not as common as it was in the days gone by, but on the other hand, I guess it still is found in a few fortunate households. That fragrance is, of course, the one which accompanies fresh-baked bread. My enjoyment of that one was sadly put on hold for many years due to an unlucky K.P. assignment on my first day in the Army. I was put to work slicing fresh-baked bread by hand. After several hours of this duty, amidst clouds of flour dust in the close quarters of an unventilated room, I was unable to look at any bread for a very long time thereafter!

One more scent and I'll clear the air -- this one is the delightful odor that always fills the interior of a new car!

God generously allotted us five senses, the better to appreciate His World. I wish all of you the best possible revelations experienced from each of the five!

George Ortiz

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

Treasurer's Corner

The fall season is in full swing and before the rain and winds arrived - God painted our hills with brilliant colors of red, oranges and yellows. They were spectacular this year, and there is no doubt that we live in a beautiful area of this Country.

It is also the time for us to be thankful ... thankful for the many things in our everyday lives. I am always thankful for my family, friends, church family and good neighbors. This year I have had the wonderful experience of having my neighbors lookout for me and many jobs that I cannot handle by myself. One does not think about those things until they have to actually face them! My pastures have been bushed hogged, stones have been laid in my barn driveway and this week the plastic will be put on the front of the barn to keep the winter wind out. My heart may be in the right place, but my body is not capable of doing these jobs by myself... I am *so* thankful.

I am also thankful to live in a Country where we can have the freedoms that many in this world do not. Like many of you I have been praying that we can come out of this tumultuous year being kinder, gentler and more understanding. Together we can do great things ... I have to believe that God would want us to work together to build a better tomorrow.... Happy Thanksgiving!!!

Here is the report for October 2026. Please keep our little church in your prayers. Anne F Campbell Pastor.

Receipts:		
Envelopes & Pledges		4374.00
Loose Offerings		300.00
Interest (Wells Fargo)		1217.83
Int on Savings		2.25
Tr fr Ch. Ed.		10000.00
	TOTAL	**15894.08**
Payments:		
Minister's Salary		312.00
Housing		1670.00
Treasurer		169.00
Travel		0.00
Organist		0.00
Secretary		0.00
Tech Support		156.99
Postage		46.90
Fuel Oil		1116.00
NYSEG		127.78
Apportionment		1005.11
Telephone		89.21
US Treasury (FICA - 3rd qtr)		162.03
Penny Stone		30.00
Copy Paper		46.99
So. Otselic Water District		116.00
Great America Financial Services (copier)		175.50
Sidney Federal Credit Union (CD)		10000.00
Website		19.00
	TOTAL	**15242.51**

Beg Balances:
Chng: 4112.84
Savings: 8926.19

Receipts: 15894.08
Payments: 15242.51
Balance 651.57

Ending Balances:
Chng: 4762.16
Savings: 8926.19

Year to Date: -12624.64

Love Boldly
Serve Joyfully
Lead Courageously

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

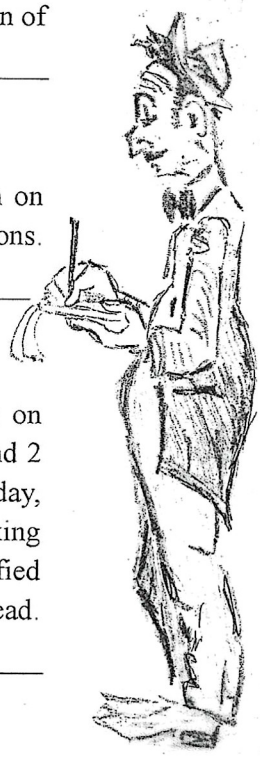
Up to the minute...

Rummage Sale ... *Bake Sale* ... Beef Stew Luncheon

The Sunshine Shop will be holding their annual fall rummage sale on Saturday, November 14 from 9 to 2. There will also be a wonderful assortment of mission baskets available for sale. The UMW ladies will be having a beef stew luncheon or soup and sandwich starting at 11:30. The ladies will also have a bake sale from 9 to ? This sale will be a free will offering with some items specially marked. All the proceeds from the rummage sale and baskets will go towards Holiday dinners for both Thanksgiving and Christmas. So, mark your calendar for November 14th and help us spread our blessings to help others during this season of giving.

Organ Concert

See the information page on an organ concert being offered in Norwich at the First Baptist Church on November 22nd at 4:00. This performance is free, but there will be a collection basket there for donations. Light refreshments will follow.



Calling all Elves!!!

This year we are going to try something new by starting our annual Christmas wreath making on *SATURDAY,* November 21st at 9:00. We are looking for at least 4 elves to be making the wreaths and 2 elves snipping branches. If we do not get all of the orders done on Saturday we will finish up on Monday, November 23rd starting at 9:00. This day is so much fun - we chat, laugh, sing to carols all while making wreaths! You can bring your own lunch, or we can order at Buel's... we have snacks to keep us fortified while enjoying each other's company. If you are interested, let Annie or Suki know, so we can plan ahead. Please come and join the fun! Make sure to bring wire cutters!!! (*Last day to order is: Nov. 22nd.)*

Hanging of the Greens

On Sunday, November 29th we will be having our annual Hanging of the Greens! This is fun a fun filled service with everyone taking part in decorating the Sanctuary in preparation of our Savior's birth! After all of the hard work we will then sit down to our annual Thanksgiving dinner! The UMW will provide the turkey, potatoes, gravy and stuffing. A dish to pass will round out our meal. This is open to everyone, so come and join us as we begin the Advent season by gathering together to count our blessings.

Community Luncheons

Please remember for those readers living close by, that a free lunch is served at the UMC Fellowship Hall the 1st and 3rd Thursdays (November 5th and 19th) of each month. The menu varies but is always generous and delicious. Lunch is served at noon with a program sometimes following.

If you have a talent or a special interest to share, please let me know. Programs in the past have included: field trip to the South Otselic Culture Center, Old School Wool and Weaving, Longhorns, Breast Cancer Awareness, Bee Keeping, and Chenango County on the Aging.

Also, RSVP please for lunch so the chefs know how much to prepare. Sarah: 315-653-7490 ... leave a message. Thank you.

East Pharsalia Happenings...

The women of East Pharsalia will be holding a craft fair on December 5 from 9 to 2. There will be plenty of vendors to help you with your last minute Christmas shopping. This event will be at the East Pharsalia Community building. Hope to see you there!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Up to the minute... 2

Sunshine Shop News

The Shop is bulging at the seams with wonderful warm winter clothes for the entire family, from the youngest to the oldest! Come on in and see what is new as the ladies are still unpacking totes with winter clothes. Each one holds a new treasure! We can guarantee you will not be disappointed!

Open the 1st and 3rd weekends (5,6,7 & 19,20,21) in November on Thursday and Friday from 10 to 4, and Saturday mornings from 9 to noon.

The annual Fall Rummage Sale will be NOVEMBER 14 from 9 to 2. All proceeds from the rummage sale will help purchase holiday dinners for local families. Shop and be generous! Your donations support this holiday dinner project. In addition to the rummage sale on Saturday November 14th in the UMC Fellowship Hall, there will be, starting at 11am, the traditional beef stew **luncheon**, plus soup and sandwich available. **Mission baskets** will be available with a great selection of donations! AND, hourly drawings will start at 10am and continue at 11am, 12noon, and 1pm. At 2pm, Mission Baskets winners names will be announced! I almost forgot the ***BAKE SALE*** also!

Did we forget to mention the additional bonus that the ***Sunshine will also be OPEN on November 14th from 9am to 2pm.*** It will be a fun day at the church to shop to your heart's content and to have a delicious lunch!

Everyone at the church thanks you advance for making this one stop shopping and fun event a huge success! Come out for a great day and bring your family and friends!

Georgetown UMC News...

Greetings from the Georgetown United Methodist Church! We have had a busy month. The Laity Sunday went off without a hitch. As expected, Matt had a nice, thoughtful message and Lorraine had an inspiring interactive message complete with an apple for everyone and chocolate! Everything is better with chocolate.

We've been busy with our Samaritan Purse Operation Christmas Child boxes. Besides the individual gifts we selected in each box, we included one of our pens so the recipient knows where they came from, but also a tiny Jesus figurine to show they are loved no matter if they have a hardship. We had fun putting Jesus in a small zipper bag so they didn't get misplaced when looking through their gifts.

We had 33 trick or treaters at our Trunk or Treat. It was a beautiful night even if it was chilly. Lorraine made friends with the neighborhood black cat. So appropriate for Halloween. One little girl came with a beautiful light blue gown with a crown and a long white braid. The best part was her lighted skirt. It was gorgeous. (No prejudice on this author's part!) I asked her if her mother made her gown. Her response was, "No, Amazon got it for me"! What a cutie.

As I write this, we are waiting to depart to Norwich for our annual conference. We anticipate it to go well.

We wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and thank God for all the blessings we've been given.

Until next time.....

Trustees Report - November 2026

The trustees received one estimate on the chair lift for the food pantry and are waiting on other estimates. The church received a nice donation of $20,000.00 and it was voted to invest it into a CD with Sidney Federal Credit Union at a rate of 4.75%. After looking over our current budget they also voted to invest $10,000.00 from the Memorial fund into a CD with Sidney Federal Credit Union at a rate of 4.75%. In January, they are going to work on a grant for the stained-glass windows. Due to the wording of the grant, we are looking at doing only the worst windows first. They continue to look for new grants that may help us with the windows. The 'Brain Trust' continues to clean the church on Thursday mornings, and they always welcome anyone that would like to join them! Suki is done mowing the lawn for the season and we thank her for all the hard work keeping our grounds looking great.

Teacher: How old is your father?
Kid: He is 6 years.
Teacher: What? How is that possible?
Kid: He became a father only when I was born.
(Logic!! Children are quick and always speak their minds.)

Just breathe ... and give thanks to God!

Side notes

Dates to remember

November 14 - Rummage Sale, Bake Sale & Beef Stew Luncheon 9-2

19 - Free luncheon from 12 - 2 at the church

21 - Wreath making 9 - ?

22 - Administrative Board after worship service
Organ Concert - First Baptist Church - Norwich NY at 4:00

23 - Wreath making 9 - ?

26 - Thanksgiving

29 - Hanging of the Greens - Thanksgiving Dinner to follow
Deadline for newsletter items due

December 3 - Free luncheon from 12 - 2 at the church

5 - Craft fair from 9 - 2 at the East Pharsalia Hook Community building

A friend is someone who does things that count but doesn't stop to count them.

Up coming events/services ...

On December 12 at 7:30 PM the East Pharsalia Hook will be holding their annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

On December 20 the So. Otselic UMC will hold "Blue Christmas' Service during the regular service time.

On December 24 the Christmas Eve Service will be at 7:00 PM at the So. Otselic UMC and at 5:00 PM at the Georgetown UMC

Terror on Texas Hill - *recap...*

The head witch has reported that even with the rain on Friday night and cold winds on Saturday night... they had over 600 people file through their trail of thrills and chills! Kandi's Kitchen was there to keep everyone's bellies full and when the weekend was over, they had raised over $6000.00 for the Upstate Golisano's Children's Hospital *plus* a truckload of food for the local pantry! A huge thank you for all the help feeding the workers and for those that donated food and money. We are already thinking about next year - so beware!!!! ... It was reported that Wyatt, Chris & Lori's grandson, would ask the approaching guests, "How many in your group? You might have to sacrifice one or lose one!" Out of the mouths of babes!!!

A Gentle Reminder ...

With the winter approaching we are asking that the children do not sled down the bank in our parking lot. This breaks and/or kills the branches of the shrubs that are growing on the bank. Also, do not park close to the fellowship room/kitchen during the winter months as the snow coming of the roof could damage your vehicle. We appreciate your cooperation.

Teacher: Clyde, your composition on 'My Dog' is exactly the same as your brother's.
Did you copy this?
Clyde: No, sir, it's the same dog.

All gave some ... Some gave all ... Thank you to *ALL* of our Veterans!

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

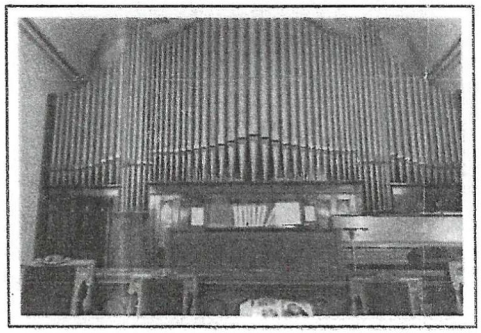
An Organ Concert

presented by James Malcolm Dwyer

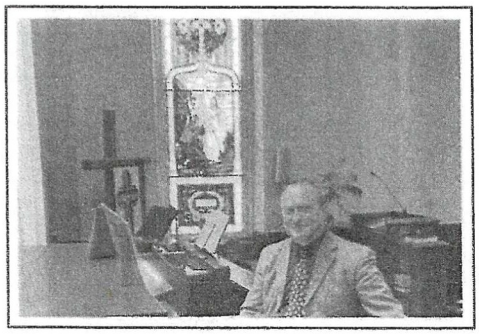
Sunday, November 22, 2026 · 4:00 PM

First Baptist Church · 10 West Park Place, Norwich, NY

Light refreshments to follow · A Free Will Offering will be taken



The Leonard Carlson & Co. pipe organ in our sanctuary, dedicated June 28, 1987



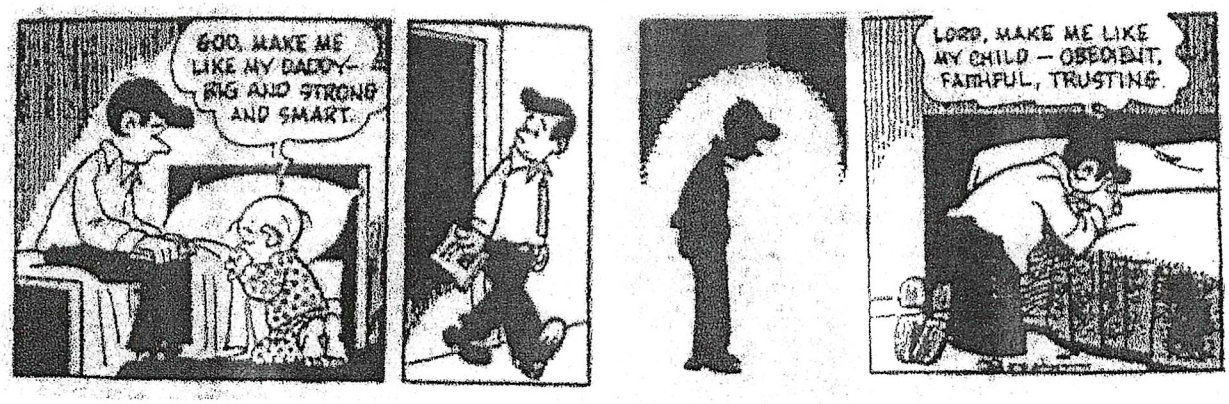
James Malcolm Dwyer, organist

The Story of Our Organ

The congregation first sang without any instrumental accompaniment, with a flute used simply to give the pitch. A hand organ arrived in 1839, followed by new organs in 1846 and 1868. By 1914, the congregation raised the funds for a Folgemaker pipe organ, which served the church for decades. By the 1980s, many of its stops no longer worked and its leathers had deteriorated. Spearheaded by Pastor Scott Kavanaugh, the congregation decided to purchase a new pipe organ built by Leonard Carlson & Co. of Albany. The new organ, still in use today, was dedicated on June 28, 1987. Its facade of gold-colored pipes is purely decorative, the true pipework stands behind it. The full cost of the organ was covered entirely by members' pledges and donations, many given weekly or monthly, until the purchase price was paid.

About the Organist

James Malcolm Dwyer began keyboard study on the piano at age six, followed by organ studies at twelve, and continued his music and organ studies for two additional years at Atlantic Union College. He began playing for church services at fifteen and has since served as organist for nine churches spanning multiple denominations, directing several bell and chimes choirs along the way. He currently serves as organist at Guilford United Methodist Church and First Baptist Church of Norwich, performing a repertoire ranging from sacred to classical works.



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 Worship
11:30 AM 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): Nick Curry, Lenora Hite, Mike Knapp, Sheldon family, Georgetown Amish, France, USA, Lexi Miner, Give God Thanks!, Laurie Brussel, Chris Marquard, Elva White, family of Paul Thurston*

PRAYER LIST: *(Long Term):* ***PRAYER LIST:*** *(Long Term):Dan Andrews, Jonna Bartlett, Richard Bishop, David Boyer, Ron Colasudo, Kaity Davis, Doug Evans, Linda Excell, Ted Gargas, Kevin Grewe, Roger Hakes, Chuck Hathaway, Fran Knickerbocker, 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, Jim Slocum, Harvey Stalker, 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

South Otselic United Methodist Church
PO Box 47
South Otselic, NY 13155

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
South Otselic, NY 13155
PERMIT #4