



# CHAPEL CHIMES

*Newsletter of*  
**FOREST HOME CHAPEL**  
**United Methodist Church**

222 Forest Home Drive, Ithaca, New York 14850

**AUTUMN 2014**

*Editor: Elizabeth Mount*

*Photos by Spear & Mount*

## IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE, BUT...

*...on December 15, 2015, the Chapel will celebrate 100 years! We are already in the midst of preparations based on suggestions made at the last visioning day. There has been a lot of excitement about choosing our favorites, such as a history book (underway) & displays, 100 Acts of Kindness, Anniversary Web Pages, Fellowship Hall upgrade, and all culminating in a Celebration/Reunion Service in November 2015. These and more only await your input to make them happen. To whet your appetites, go back with us to 1952 with Sue Cotton, our beloved and longest time member, who writes:*

**I MOVED TO FOREST HOME WITH MY HUSBAND AND TWO YOUNG DAUGHTERS IN 1952. WE STARTED ATTENDING AS A FAMILY AND I HAVE BEEN COMING HERE EVER SINCE.**

**IN THE BEGINNING**, we had a large Sunday School as many children came down the hill from Vetsburg\* to attend. It was as much a family as a community church with very few attending from outside Forest Home. The children often read the scriptures, there was a junior as well as a large adult choir, and youth fellowship was well attended. I especially remember trips to Niagara Falls and New York City.

The Chapel was mostly served by retired ministers who settled in the community for many reasons including its beauty and its closeness to Cornell libraries. My children's favorite pastor was Mr. Coman. He loved nature and often spoke about the beauty in Forest Home and Ithaca. My son, Richard, often said Mr. Coman made him feel good as he always had something nice to say to him. One day Mr. Coman brought our 2 year old son, Dale, home to me after Dale had walked out our front door and headed down the road. I was very appreciative, but very embarrassed by having my minister rescue my son!

A monthly "Family Church" featured an outside speaker - a missionary or Cornelian who might show slides. It gave the pastor a day off and was a special time for families to attend together for the whole service. We also closed for a month or two to give the pastor a vacation. We had "Student Sunday" on the first Sunday of the year when usually college students took over. I especially remember when Barb Little's son, Randy spoke of his love of birds and showed us his beautiful slides.

Three people stood out when we first attended. **Dr. Guthrie**, professor of food science at Cornell, was very involved in maintaining the Chapel, and he used to walk by each morning to turn up the heat, shovel snow or do whatever was needed. **John Hertel**, professor in agricultural economics, was in charge of Family Church as well as heading an adult Bible study group, giving out Bibles to the children at the appropriate times. **Mrs. McCurdy** was Sunday School Superintendent for 50 years, and I remember that when she asked me to teach first grade she quizzed me about my background to make sure I was qualified! I'm sure I learned more than the children!



*cont p 6*

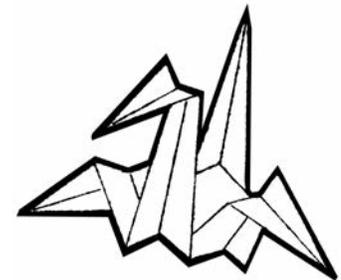
# CALENDAR Autumn into Winter 2014

## NOVEMBER

- 2 All Saints Sunday and remembrance of those who have died.  
–Daylight Savings Time begins
- 6 –10-11:30 am -- Bible Study in Fellowship Hall. New Testament Figures: The Christmas Story.  
DVD by Amy Jill Levine, Professor of New Testament at Vanderbilt, with discussion led by Rebecca Dolch
- 9 *Kitchen Cupboard staffing, 1:15 - 3 pm, Salvation Army office bldg; see Debbie Novelli*
- 16 Carol Hockett, guest preacher  
–2:30-4:30, area Charge Conference, this year at Lansing Methodist Church, Brickyard Rd, Lansing  
–Pledge Sunday, during the service
- 20 10-11:30 am -- Bible Study in Fellowship Hall. New Testament Figures: The Christmas Story.  
DVD by Amy Jill Levine, Professor of New Testament at Vanderbilt, with discussion led by Rebecca Dolch
- 30 Advent 1, Communion; *start collecting new pre-K and Kindergarten sized SOCKS for our "Sock Mission" to a local school; see Carol Hockett*

## DECEMBER

- 4 7 pm, Church Council meeting if needed; *start/keep baking to fill the PCM bags on Saturday*  
–10-11:30 am, Bible Study in Fellowship Hall. New Testament Figures: The Christmas Story.  
DVD by Amy Jill Levine, Professor of New Testament at Vanderbilt, with discussion led by Rebecca Dolch
- 6 10 am, gathering **GREENS** at Wollney's, directions TBA  
–11 am-6 pm, Ithaca Alternative Gifts Fair, First Presbyterian and First Baptist Churches,  
–5 pm, Dish to Pass, create our greenery decorations and put up our Christmas tree  
–5 pm, *filling bags with "Study Snacks" for students at the Cornell Protestant Community*
- 7 Advent 2, **Hanging of the GREENS**, during service
- 9 *Kitchen Cupboard staffing, 1:15 - 3 pm, Salvation Army office bldg; see Debbie Novelli*
- 14 Advent 3, Christmas Pageant, during service  
–*Ask about caroling with the Chapel Spirits*
- 21 Advent 4 (*plus remembering to collect those small-sized SOCKS*)
- 24 7pm, Christmas Eve Service
- 25 Christmas - All Day Long!!!
- 28 Looking Forward to a New Year (*did you collect enough SOCKS?*)



## JANUARY

- 4 Traditionally called "Souper Sunday," this is when we have soup and bring something small to share during Coffee Hour while we take down our Christmas tree
- 22 7 pm, Church Council

### **SUPPORTING the CHAPEL**

Our Chapel is such an inspiring and nourishing place of worship, friendship, education, outreach and inner growth. It is completely supported by individual donations. Everyone's contribution makes a big difference towards our approximately \$80,000 goal. Prayerfully consider your gift for our 2015 Ministry Budget.

*Generosity begets Generosity Luke 6:38*

## Forest Home Chapel is A RECONCILING CONGREGATION!

ON OCTOBER 19TH, 2014, all Chapel participants who were in church cast their votes on whether or not to become a Reconciling Congregation. Those who were unable to attend church that day received their ballots by mail and returned them by October 29th. The outcome of the vote was overwhelmingly positive – 80% of voters returned a completed ballot, and of those, 99% voted in favor. Forest Home Chapel proudly joins the more than 600 United Methodist Communities who identify themselves as Reconciling Congregations and who are united in their rejection of the statement in the Book of Discipline of the UMC which says that “homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching”.

How will anyone know? We will be registered on the Reconciling Ministries national website (you can visit this website at [rmnetwork.org](http://rmnetwork.org)). This is where the address of the chapel and our reconciling statement will be accessible to visitors or newcomers to Ithaca who want to worship in a church which welcomes members of the LGBTQ community. Established in 1982, the Reconciling Ministries Network consists of United Methodist individuals, congregations, campus ministries and other groups who work for the full participation of all people in the United Methodist Church.

Locally, we will be listed on the Cornell University and Ithaca College religious life websites as being a “safe and accepting” church for the LGBTQ community. Our reconciling statement (see box below) will be on our website and posted in our building. We may choose to indicate this ministry to the greater community in other ways that seem suitable as well.

Wendy Millroy, Chair

### RECONCILING CONGREGATION STATEMENT FOR FOREST HOME CHAPEL UMC

*After a year of education and listening to/with our congregation, the Chapel's Reconciling Congregation Exploration Team created the following statement and presented it to the congregation on October 5, 2014, in support of Forest Home Chapel becoming a Reconciling Congregation:*

Forest Home Chapel United Methodist Church believes that all people are created by God. We publicly affirm our commitment to spiritual diversity and individual integrity.

Our faith compels us to be in ministry with all people, and all means ALL.

- We specifically welcome people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.
- We acknowledge that this challenges the explicit policy statements made against homosexuality by the United Methodist denomination.
- We also reaffirm our welcome of people who have been excluded because of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, family make-up, or religious background.
- As a congregation, we embrace all people as a way of celebrating God's love.
- At the same time, we recognize that there are differences of opinion in a healthy Christian community.
- Together we journey toward greater understanding and mutual respect.

Therefore, as a Reconciling Congregation, we commit to grow in our love of God and of one another.



*Respectfully submitted by Team Members:*

Wendy Millroy, Chair

Lou Carlucci, Bud Dolch, Sally Grubb,

Debbie Loring, Elizabeth McMahon,

Elizabeth Mount, Linda Nicholson,

Sue and Jack Reid, Janet Snoyer;

Rebecca Dolch, Pastor



**Daughters of Wendy Millroy and Mark Constas, the three Consta sisters are (for those of you who can't tell them apart!) from the Left: Katharine, Christina and Alexandra. All the sisters attend the Chapel when they are in town, but it is Christina who has given so many hours of service, caring for our children since the family came to the Chapel in December of 2011.**

## Christina writes.....

*Last August, I moved into a dorm room to begin my educational journey at SUNY Geneseo. As I prepared to move onto this next step in my life, I began to reflect on how my education began. I was homeschooled and as people are often curious, I thought I could share it with you.*

"I was homeschooled for 3 years (grades 3-6). Some people may associate the concept of "homeschooling" with extreme solitude, picturing a child working alone at a desk without any social stimulation or peer relationships. While that idea may ring true in other communities, it is far from the truth in the Ithaca homeschooling community.\*

Not only did I interact with my peers on a daily basis, I often interacted with adults on a personal and an academic level, learning such skills as piano, trumpet, skiing, snowboarding, public speaking and yoga. I engaged in theater, art, music, creative writing, hands-on science projects and more. There were also classes

taught by other homeschooling parents at the Northern Lights Learning Center here in Ithaca. And every Thursday I attended Primitive Pursuits, an outdoor education program where I learned shelter construction and fire building. This is where I found my passion for the outdoors in addition to my love of working with children. Even after I stopped homeschooling, I worked as a camp counselor with Primitive Pursuits.

Homeschooling gave me the freedom to focus on skills and topics that really interested me at a young age in addition to allowing me to master necessary elementary academic skills. When I was not working with other families, I learned in my own home, taught by my mother. I have many fond memories of working on school projects at my own dining room table, or in the springtime, out on our front porch.

Looking back, I can truly say that the experiences I had while being homeschooled have greatly contributed toward the (almost!) grown person I am today. Working with so many homeschooling families, I learned to be accepting of all learning and living styles. Through my involvement with Primitive Pursuits I learned leadership skills and an appreciation of the natural world, not to mention how to identify poison ivy!

On my at-home days, I gained skills that have helped me be a self-driven and independent learner. I am so grateful that my mother committed herself to homeschooling me though elementary school. No amount of public schooling could have taught me all the important life lessons and ideals that I learned through her."

*\* Trained as an educator with a strength in math, Wendy thoroughly enjoyed teaching her children at home when they were young - Alexandra (grades 5-7) and Katharine (grades 3-5) together, for 3 years. Christina was in preschool and too young to join in at the time, but had her own turn when the family moved to Ithaca.*





Educator Carolyn McPherson made learning Bible lessons fun. Here, Carolyn's grand-daughter Eva created wonderful stick puppets the children used to act out the story of Moses and the miracles in the deser wilderness.

## “Taste and See, Taste and See, the Goodness of the Lord!”

FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW, FOREST HOME CHAPEL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS CONTINUED THEIR FAITHFUL COMMITMENT TO BE A FRIENDLY, GROWING, SPIRITUAL HOME FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

Ten resourceful Chapel adults spent a week of August mornings leading Church Day Camp for 17 young Chapel members and their friends, with Bible lessons, songs, crafts, games, visitors, cooking lessons and healthy snacks, all about “Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.”

We are indebted and thankful for the inspired joint leadership of retired elementary school Principal Sue Reid, Pastor Rebecca Dolch and Jack Reid who led the songs and enjoyed the children’s company during breakout activities.

Our mission offering went to Heifer International. Some of the children presented Heifer “success stories” about families worldwide who benefited from gifts of chickens, fish, fruit trees, or milk cows.

We saw our children growing in maturity and expression, as well as forming closer friendships with each other, as we had hoped. The mood was happy, relaxed, and unhurried, a last camp for the kids before school starts. We’re so thankful for our beloved children and Chapel families.

*Susan Spear*

For more photos and stories about Day Camp, check our Chapel website: <http://foresthomечapelumc.org/>

*The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being. Matthew 6:21*

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*If you live wide-eyed in wonder and belief, your body fills up with light.*

*Luke 11:34*

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*Generosity begets generosity.*

*Luke 6:38*

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*They all realized they were in a place of holy mystery, that God was at work among them. Luke 7:16*



*Thankyou from Rosa & Lucia*



Apiarist Peter Borst visited on Tuesday, bringing live bees and bee knowledge. The kids in the youngest group leaned right in to find the queen bee.

**cont from p 1**

\* After WWII, Cornell built temporary housing (on land where the Veterinary School was subsequently built) for returning military vets and their families who lived there until the early 1950s, swelling the 1st-3rd grades of Forest Home School, now the Plantations Headquarters.

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- Masthead photo: 1932 workparty
  - Opposite sketch: date unknown

Sunday School was in session during the second half of the service, but Mrs. McCurdy was also famous for her pasting parties each week at her home. The second graders would work on their notebooks on Jesus' life. She had pictures from the bulletins, and the children would cut, paste them into the books, and write appropriate Bible verses followed by snacks. Father's Day - always sunny in my memory - feature our annual Sunday School picnic on the McCurdy's lawn on Judd Falls Rd. We ate, sang, and watched the kids played games.

The Chapel has always been my second home. My husband and I were "Chapel Keepers" for several years, when my two daughters took over and then my two sons. I think it made the children feel closer to the Chapel and more a part of it. The make-up of the Chapel has changed over the years, but it has always been very friendly and more like one big family. It is very special to me.

Sue Cotton, July 14, 1996



**2014 UNY May 29-31 Annual Conference Report:**

*Conference highlights by Susan Spear, Lay Representative*

Perhaps the most stirring moments of the conference came at the very beginning, as Bishop Mark Webb led us in worship. I feel that the following article, summarizing Bishop Webb's highest quality of Christian leadership displayed, says so much about the problems the global Methodist Church in general and the Upper New York Conference in particular have been facing. His talk is reported here by **Beth DiCocco, Upper New York UMC Annual Conference correspondent.**

*See page 8 for Conference news.*

**"We Are Claimed by God for Relationship."**

**THE THEME FOR THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE WAS 'PLANTING GOD'S FUTURE IN HEARTS AND NEIGHBORS: CALLED TO CULTIVATE.'**

About three-quarters of the way through an opening worship sermon that had members applauding and on their feet at the Annual Conference session, Bishop Mark J. Webb announced that he'd lost his place in his notes, saying: "I hope you know that I am preaching with passion," drawing a laugh from members to whom that was obvious. "I am preaching to myself first, and in an attitude that loves you and respects you and believes that God wants us to be better than we already are." The main message of that passion was this: "We need to cultivate the truth that we are claimed by God for relationship."

Bishop Webb told members he was not going to say "anything new or profound" but rather, "I believe there are some truths that maybe, together, we need to hear again in a fresh way, so we can respond to them in a new way. Those truths hold the key to fostering growth and fulfilling the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. If we are going to be effective and fruitful in living the mission, we need to cultivate the truth that we are claimed by God for relationship."

Acknowledging that "our Church is in a difficult place," Bishop Webb said "There are disagreements, there is pain, there is lack of trust, there is talk of schism, and we are doing harm to one another in print, through social media and in gatherings of all sizes. We are making choices that we honestly believe will bring change, but the reality is that some of those choices are also adding to the harm. Some.... say we are at this place, because of our struggle with topics like human sexuality. But the foundation of our 'unhealth' is that we have somehow forgotten that we are called by God for connection to one another. In some ways we have abandoned the call to love one another in all things."

Saying he did not want to be "Pollyanna-ish," Bishop Webb said unity does not mean the absence of disagreement nor does it mean that it isn't important to have the difficult conversations.... but it does mean that in the midst of disagreement I claim my connection to you as a sister or brother in Christ and I claim the commandment to love. The bad news is in and of myself, I can't muster that kind of love.... The good news is.... through Jesus Christ, I believe we can seek a unity in Christ that is deeper than our differences."

"The Church of Jesus Christ is not dead," Bishop Webb said. "It will never die; God says to you what he said to Peter a long time ago: 'On this rock I will build my church, and the very gates of hell will not prevail over it.' Do you believe that?" he asked members, and urged them to stand up, join hands, and hold their hands in the air. "You don't have to like (your neighbor), but you're supposed to love them," and he led everyone in creating a clear picture of what he had been preaching about.

"Our ideas, our strategies, our works may very well make people's lives better, but they will only make people's lives different through the power of Jesus Christ."



*The Fellowship Hall is much loved as our hub for conversation, activities, studies, children's ministries, hospitality and of course food! Can we improve its acoustics, storage, efficiency, comfort, aesthetics, safety, and/or usability? We'll consider these questions in the next few months as we work together to prepare our building for its 100th Anniversary Celebrations.*



## PROCESS IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF A HEALTHY GROUP LIFE, AND FOREST HOME CHAPEL IS PROVING TO BE QUITE ADEPT AT FOLLOWING PROCESSES. HERE'S HOW:

**Processes and procedures** make sure that all people who want input have the clear opportunity to give it, and those charged with decision-making have enough information to make the best decision for the church. **Processes** insure that we are doing things legally and through proper church processes. Trustees, Church Council, and Pastor/Parish/Personnel Committee-- all have procedures that must be followed in order for the work of the church to be legal. **Processes** help groups make important decisions in a way that is not dictated by personality or strong individual opinions. They help move things along and not get stuck.

**PARSONAGE:** When we were deciding what to do with the parsonage, the Church Council appointed a team of people to study the possibilities, ask for input and make recommendations. This **process** took months and many meetings. An additional **process** was followed to decide what major capital improvements needed to be done and how it was to be paid for.

**RECONCILING CONGREGATION:** When we were discerning our call to be a Reconciling Congregation, the Church Council appointed a team of people who studied, invited conversation, created information sheets and programs for an entire year before creating a statement and inviting the congregational vote.

**FELLOWSHIP HALL:** Our next big **process** together is refurbishing the downstairs Fellowship Hall. The windows were cracked and nonfunctional, so the Trustees, within this year's budget, decided to replace them after the **process** of bids, type, and style were explored. All Trustees were kept in the loop along with our Church Council Chair and our treasurer.

**EVEN MORE:** We are establishing a **process** for deciding other major improvements downstairs: ceiling, acoustics, floor, furnishings, kitchen, layouts. Each one of these pieces will be decided not by one or two people, but by a **process**. Everyone is invited to give input and tweaks as we move forward. Our goal is to keep the congregation informed as we move forward together to create our ministry space for the next 50 years!



It is my experience that following proper **processes** and procedures builds community, trust, consensus, group pride. It also lessens anxiety – A good **process** keeps us from doing things in a hurry, overreaching our financial abilities, or doing things that don't make sense for our future. A good **process** protects people from undo criticism when they are charged with making decisions. That said, a good **process** can feel freeing, fun, spirit-led and can lead to great results that impact the ministry of our Chapel. Thanks everyone!

*Rebecca Dolch, Pastor*

**My Last Task as Parking Czar** is to thank our Forest Home neighbors for allowing us to use their driveways and other parking spaces on Sunday mornings while the bridge was closed. Although not everyone parked in a private driveway or in front of someone's house, we all benefited from the Chapel's use of these extra parking spaces.

We are especially grateful to Barb Chambers, Kim Ramm, Linda Copman, Claudia Fuchs, John Foote, William Arms and Montana Petersen. Also a big thank you to Chapel drivers for cooperating and making the parking assignments work.

A small group continues to work on improving the size and parkability of the Chapel Parking lot and we hope to report on what we might do in the near future.

*Sally Grubb*

*cont. from p 6*

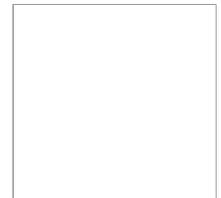
- **2015 Budget** was proposed and approved at \$2.1M, contingent on the annual conference receiving full ministry shares monies from all churches. (*In 2013, only about 70% of ministry shares were received. In the recent past, the Chapel has always sent its full ministry share.*)
- **Clergy Compensation** recommendations were in line with previous years' figures, with a recommended salary increase of 2.1%.
- Last year, we voted to amend our organizational procedures, so that any motions pertaining to **human sexuality** be voted on by paper ballot, to allay fears that some attendees might feel pressured by others to vote against their spiritual discernment. This year, a vote to rescind that amendment was defeated.
- **Records:** We were encouraged to fill out a Church Accessibility Report. Also, other churches are working with Ancestry.com to digitize and make conference records accessible. Upper New York is considering this for additional records and general accessibility.
- I also learned how many agencies within the UMC provide essential services and ministries

beyond the scope of individual local congregations and annual conferences. For more detail, I enthusiastically encourage you to explore the following web pages: <http://www.umc.org/who-we-are/agencies>.

- Look for minutes of our Administrative Board meetings, budgets, and other documents posted by Sue Reid, Chair, on the doors to the "chair closet" downstairs.



[www.foresthomechapelumc.org](http://www.foresthomechapelumc.org)  
**Forest Home Chapel**  
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14850



*The parable of the rich man and the banquet says that everyone is invited; everybody is worthy. You get to choose whether or not you are going to show up, but if you don't, you are going to miss the feast.*

Sermon by Rebecca Dolch: October 5, 2014