



THE PARK CHURCH

ELMIRA, NEW YORK

CROSS CURRENTS

April 2013

Felicitations-

The Sunday of the Resurrection is not only the greatest day of the church year, it is also the only one dictated by God's lunar calendar, rather than our human calendar. It always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the spring equinox. This complicated scheduling of Easter seems to underscore its naturalness, insofar as it is literally grounded in the greening of the earth.

Easter comes with the knowledge that the most robust growth comes after dormancy and winter. In the gospel of John, Jesus recognizes this: "Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

During Lent, we waited through our wilderness time. Hopefully we used the time to prepare our spiritual gardens by discarding unwanted rocks of false pride, egocentric wounds, and needless material attachments. Now is the time to plant seeds of new life for the church. But what should they be? How do we decide?

The book *Bearing Fruit: Ministry with Real Results* emphasizes the value of "so that" decision-making. In the Bible, God says to Moses: "Have them make me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them." (Exodus 25:8). Later Jesus tells his disciples: "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5: 16) Our future success will depend on getting clarity about the "so that" equations in our church. We do "X" so that "Y" might happen: we start with a shared goal and then figure out the path for getting there.

Or, to change the metaphor from transportation to gardening, we decide about the harvest we want and then we figure out the required steps of preparing the soil, sowing the seed, watering and weeding, etc.

It is interesting that each of the Gospels had a different lens for describing the resurrection. Mark provides no description of the risen Christ. Matthew describes an earthquake and blazing light. In Luke, the risen Christ is first encountered as a teacher and is then recognized in the breaking of bread after the walk to Emmaus. In the Gospel of John, Christ rises from the ground in a springtime garden; in his first resurrection appearance to Mary, she thinks he is a gardener. I think it is the beautiful simplicity of this image that makes the John passage the most commonly recited on Easter.

And so I urge you to think of your lives as Christians as that of gardeners. As you enjoy the Easter blooms that bring delight to our sanctuary and then in your homes, remember "to cultivate a garden is to walk with God." And cultivating the garden is being a co-creator with God.

Blessings,
Rev. Felicity

Church Staff

Rev. Felicity Wright
Minister
Joe Barber, Organist &
Music Director
Mary Jane Eckel, Childrens
Music Director
Mimi Gridley, Office
Administrator
Cindy Rice, Sexton
Sue Weaver, Financial
Secretary
Amy Kick, Administrative
Assistant

Contact Us

607.733.9104
607.733.5077 (Fax)
office@theparkchurch.org

Visit Our Website

www.theparkchurch.org

"Like" our pages on Facebook:

*The Park Church Elmira
Youth Group
The Arts at Park*

Open and Affirming

As an "Open & Affirming" congregation we, the members of The Park Church, embrace people of every ethnic origin, race, class, age, ability, gender and sexual orientation.

We Welcome into Christian worship, membership, leadership, friendship and employment all who covenant with us to seek God's truth and follow Christ's example.

Message from Council

Thank You! Over the last few weeks I found myself thinking only about my Mother and how to be with her in her final hours. I am appreciative of my siblings and their families and my extended family as they came together to help each other. I also found myself missing my Park Church family and I knew that as I returned to Elmira, that I would be supported by you. I am blessed to be part of this family. Again, thank you.

The Council canceled the March meeting with many irons in the fire. We will be setting a date for a retreat to do planning. Some of the agenda items for that retreat include the bylaws which we have been discussing all this past year. It is more and more apparent that revisions need to be made. Another item will involve our concern for our members and how they are involved or could be involved in this church community.

The activity level at the church involves many people, of which there are individuals that are interested and care about the work of Park Church but they are not members. They have become part of committees, participate in programs provided by Park Church and feel comfortable coming through our doors. I, Judith Clovsky, a member of this church community, smile to myself and say – this is a new person that I have not met and they are interested in Park Church! I then reflect on some moments, maybe of two years ago, where I wondered how do we tell the community about this wonderful community because I know there are people that would like to feel the spirit of this place. Something is happening! Did you notice? I hope so!

I look forward to being with you.

Judith Clovsky, President

Congregational Life

Message from Peg Kutchukian, Committee Chair: Our Community Dinners were the brainchild of Bill Knapp. His mission is to help pay down the cost of our roof. We are all in this together and it is a shame that we, the congregation, have not fully supported the past dinners. If you do not care for what is being served, buy a ticket for someone else. If you do not want to drive or you are unable to get to the church, we will deliver meals. Tickets will be on sale each Sunday after worship – look for our sign! Please support this mission!

Dinners for the Roof: We had a net profit for the roof of about \$230 from the Corned Beef and Cabbage dinner. The next dinner is on April 20th – Chicken and Biscuits! We are going to try something new with a couple of the senior high rises in town: pre-order and bulk delivery to them. Everyone, please come and bring your friends, it's a great meal for a great cause. ~Bill Knapp

Dinners At Home: Friday, May 17, 2013

Hosted Dinners from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at private homes, with dessert together at 8:00 PM – place to be announced.

We need hostesses or hosts, probably 5 or 6, depending on the sign-ups. They provide the main entrée. Others provide a side dish, a salad or vegetable or a dessert, whatever they agree to with the host.

The dinners are casual and a very nice way to meet new church friends. There will be sign up sheets in Beecher Hall in late April and in May for those who would like to attend a dinner.

If you would like to host a dinner, please call Janice Butts at 562-8011 or Peg Kutchukian at 742-3894 (mkutchuk@stny.rr.com).

Missions Message

Easter Offering: The Park Church Missions committee has decided to donate this year's Easter offering to the Food Bank of the Southern Tier. To meet the challenge of hunger in our communities, the Food Bank distributes food through a community-based network of agencies and programs. This year's goal is to distribute over 8 million pounds of nutritious food. The backpack program, that now has 26 sites, provides 1,800 children with kid-friendly food each Friday of the school year. The goal for 2013 is to expand this program to all 41 school districts in the service area. Many Park Church members and friends have volunteered at the Food Bank and are familiar with its services. The need is great; please be as generous as you can.

Saving Grace Ministries plans to open a transitional residence for homeless parolees. They own a house in Elmira that they are making ready to open this Fall. At present, they are financing their activities with contributions. After they open, they expect to receive financial support from NYS. They seek donations, prospective board members, and volunteer labor at the house which is at Clemons Center and Hudson St. near Tops. Saving Grace Ministries' mission is to "provide a smooth transition to community life for men recently released from a (local) correctional facility, by providing a highly-structured program based on Christian principles." For those who might like to learn more, missions plans an after-church presentation in April.

Bill Hungerford

Music at Park

Adult Choir: Both April 21 and May 19 will feature an intergenerational choir, and we are asking anyone interested in singing to attend rehearsal at 8:30 that morning. If you do not sing regularly but want to give it a chance, we welcome you to sing with the children on those Sundays.

Adult Bell Choir: The "Ding-a-Lings" have been diligently preparing for Easter Sunday, when we return from our Lenten hibernation! Welcome to Barb Preucil, our newest addition to the group! In addition to Easter Sunday, we will ring our final musical selection for you on April 28 for this year.

Children's Choir: Things are buzzing in choir! We have had several newcomers to our group, and we are thrilled! Our Tale of the Three Trees musical was presented on Palm Sunday, after weeks of hard work. Even a snowstorm couldn't stop us! The remainder of our preparation this spring will be for some intergenerational choir anthems, and we invite anyone in the congregation to join us. Also, we are planning to accept the invitation to join with the Michigan Youth Choir that will be singing in our space on June 18. We will sing two numbers with them--don't miss this concert! Also, we plan to visit the Community Kitchen on Monday, June 10 to deliver our Souper Bowl donation, and then make our way to Harris Hill for our annual picnic.

Meaningful Movies

Meaningful Movies screen at 7 PM at The Park Church in Beecher Hall on the second Thursday of each month. Movies are free and open to all. A potluck supper at 6:30 precedes each movie. Here's the schedule for the next few months:

April – Thursday, April 11

Paper Clips

Whitwell Middle School in rural Tennessee is the setting for /Paper Clips/, a documentary about an extraordinary experiment in Holocaust education. Starting with two teachers and one class of students, the effort expands into a four-year project that gains support from around the world. The experience is positive and poignant for all participants and transforms the entire community.

May – Thursday, May 9

Singing Revolution

This documentary shares how, between 1987 and 1991, hundreds of thousands of Estonians gathered publicly to sing forbidden patriotic songs and share protest speeches, risking their lives to proclaim their desire for independence. While violence and bloodshed was the unfortunate end result in other occupied nations of the USSR, the revolutionary songs of the Estonians anchored their struggle for freedom, which was ultimately accomplished without the loss of a single life.

Notes for Our Church Community

Dear Park Church Members:

The Caring Tree, which has been in existence for many years, continues to provide loving service to the members of Park Church by providing meals, transportation for shut-ins, setting up receptions and providing cookies for memorial services. Please don't hesitate to call the church office or one of us if you or someone you know would appreciate our services. This past year our committee alone was able to take care of the meals for those in need. However, there were a few times we needed extra help with receptions and called upon others to provide cookies and give of their time.

Because our list of volunteers has become smaller, we are hoping that every member of the Park Church family will be willing to participate if called upon to help take care of those who need our assistance. When we call on you, please feel free to let us know if it is an inconvenient time for you to pitch in – we will understand.

Carry-out food and purchased baked goods are not frowned upon as an alternative (especially during busy times.)

We're sure you can appreciate how important and welcomed this service is to the members of our church. We hope you will say "yes" when called upon to help out.

Sincerely,

Jan Butts, 562-8011
Carolyn Moore, 733-1448
Carol Eberhard, 734-8713

Church Fellowship

Spring Rummage Sale: Calling all rummage and worker bees! The Spring Sale is closing in; Sale dates are May 2 and 3, 2013. The last day to bring in goods is April 19, in order that we can sort and set up. The children's choirs will assist with Bringing Up the Rummage on Monday, April 29. Pizza and salad supper to follow for helpers. Sorting will continue on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 30 and May 1. Please let Bertie or Mary Jane know if you are available to help. Our wish is to be able to make the June roof payment with our profits, so please assist if you have a few hours. You won't believe how much fun it really is--one man's junk is another's treasure, and we have lots of that!

Fellowship Hour: Please remember to sign up in Beecher Hall if you would like to provide the baked goods for our Fellowship Hour after worship service!

The Arts at Park

The Park Church Summer Art program received another local grant to continue our Wisner Market classes for children on Thursdays in July and August. We are in the process of planning, and will keep you informed of details. Critical to our success is the need for volunteers to assist with set-up, tear-down and general youth assistance. Hours range from 9:30-2:00, and we would be grateful for any assistance. More info to come!

Pioneers

An expanded group of "Pioneers" and friends met with Paul Nixon (via Internet) on March 20 and is busy exploring a number of exciting new directions for the church, which could include a café on Thursdays during Wisner Market hours. A survey is being written which will be used to canvas our neighbors to get their sense of the needs of the community. The group will be looking for lots of help in making these exciting events happen – and it promises to be a great deal of fun!

Next Issue Deadline

Committee reports and submissions for the May issue of Cross Currents are due **Monday, April 15.**

Spirit Café

SPIRIT CAFÉ

Friday, April 5 at 6:00 pm
The Park Church



Food for body and spirit designed for those who are "spiritual but not necessarily religious"

April's theme:
The Spirit in Bloom

Join with others in table discussion about readings from diverse secular and religious traditions

Optional dinner (meat and vegetarian choices) and salad - \$10
Add a gourmet dessert - \$3

Music by Jose Gomez ("Jogo")

Please R.S.V.P. to be guaranteed a meal, but walk-ins are welcome
office@theparkchurch.org or 607-733-9104

New Member

We welcomed a new member to our church family on Easter Sunday, Bill Saxbury. About Park Church, Bill says, "I like the Park Church very much. I started going many years ago and I quit going, and I am very happy I started going back. I love the people very much."

Notes from the Office

We are currently in the process of redesigning and updating our website! Please check it out and let us know what you think, but excuse any confusion you may find there!

Due to cost and lack of use, we have removed the fax line from the office. To send documents to or from the office, please use E-mail or U.S. Mail, or you are welcome to drop things off during office hours (Tues-Fri 9am-2pm).

Worship Planning

Exciting worship planned from Easter through Pentecost! A robust worship planning team under the able guidance of Rob Hovey and Mary Wynings has developed an exciting program for the next two months. Called "Acts to Change the World," we will look at the stories of the early church (as chronicled in the Book of Acts) and make correlations with their struggles and ours. These will be punctuated with some special delights, specifically:

- 4/7 Second Sunday of Easter / Acts 5: 27-32. We will look at the trial of Peter comparing that with an Elmira story of the Underground Railroad and asking when it is appropriate to challenge parents, teachers, and authorities when they do not share your understanding of what is right. Tentatively, we will enjoy the wonderful music of Todd Thomas, our beloved hometown opera singer. Rev. Felicity will preach and lead communion; William Godfrey will be our organist.
- 4/14 Third Sunday of Easter / Acts 9: 1-6: We will compare the conversion of St. Paul to that of "conversion" of Mark Twain, and look at modern conversion stories. Rev. Felicity will preach and William Godfrey will be our organist.
- 4/21 Fourth Sunday of Easter: The youth group (from Park, Bethany Lutheran, and Trinity Episcopal) will lead us in Earth Day worship. Music will feature an intergenerational choir, where adults join the children. Anyone interested in joining us is asked to come to the rehearsal at 8:30 that morning. It's a perfect offering for folks who may not sing regularly but want to give it a chance.
- 4/28 Fifth Sunday of Easter / Acts 11: 1-18: We will compare Peter's "conversion" regarding Gentiles to the ONA struggle and work of our Park Church "Pioneers." Rev. Elaine White will preach, Rev. Felicity will lead worship, and Joe Barber will be back at the organ console. We will also baptize Amelia Mary Nelson.

May brings the Sixth and Seventh Sundays of Easter and Pentecost, entwined with the baptism of Ethan Kline, Mother's Day, and Celebration Sunday. More details will be in next month's newsletter. We hope you are as excited as we are!

April Birthdays

3 Rick Carroll	5 Skip Brand
7 Jan Eberhard	8 Bill Iszard
15 Peggy Streeter	17 Carolyn Moore
17 John Tompkins	18 Linda Tutschulte
18 Mary Jane Eckel	21 Sue Backus
22 Suzanne Straily	23 Mary Welles Smith
24 Amy Kick	29 Charlie Streeter
30 David Webb	

Joys and Concerns

Congratulations to the Kline Family as they welcome a new baby boy! Ethan Michael Kline, son of Karin and Michael and brother to Heidi, came into this world on February 18th at 1:50 pm, weighing a very healthy 10 lbs 5 oz!

We are sad to acknowledge the passing of Park Church member Julie McDowell. Julie passed away on February 25 in Florida. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family.

Judith Clovsky’s mother, Sara E. Hartenstine, passed away on March 15 in Pennsylvania. Our deepest sympathies to Judith and her family.

Memorials

We would like to thank everyone who remembered Joe Buck with a memorial donation to the church. We and Joe’s family appreciate your generosity and thoughtfulness.

John W. Bennett	Ann Bishop
Mr. & Mrs. Dean Butts	Martha Clute
Linda & Doug Couchon	Mr. John Crandall
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Dalrymple	John Distefano
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Fahs	Tom & Deb Fennell
Mimi Gridley	The Heller Sisters
Mr. George Howell	Jocelyn Jerry
Mrs. Jeanette Keyser	Mrs. Elizabeth Loomis
John & Alice Lowman	Mr. & Mrs. Doug Lyon
Mary Clute Lyon	Mr. Boyd McDowell II
Mr. & Mrs. Malcolm Marsden	Julie H. McDowell
Keith S. McIntosh	Alice McIlvath
Dr. & Mrs. Arthur Miller	Dr. & Mrs. Ralph Moore
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Morss	Mrs. Carol Parker
Mr. Stan Panosian	Nancy Pollock
Bill Schweizer	Ms. Eleanor Steele
Charles & Nancy Swartwood	Mr. & Mrs. Charles Streeter
Mr. & Mrs. William Tryon	Marilyn Welles
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Woodhouse	CCTC Wealth Mgmt Group

Seminary Update

Greetings Friends,

I have officially finished the first half of the semester, and am entering into “Spring Break” though here at Eden it is called “Reading Week” and for good reason. Most of the time will be spent getting ahead on reading and assignments due in April and May.

In February I had the opportunity to attend the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, a conference whose mission “is to nurture, sustain, and mobilize the African American faith community in collaboration with civic, corporate, and philanthropic leaders to address critical needs of human and social justice within local, national, and global communities” (quote from www.sdpconference.info). It was an educational experience that I won’t forget, and it opened my eyes to the use of mass incarceration to control minorities. I highly suggest reading *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander and checking out the documentary movie *The House I Live In* for more information. The best part about attending the conference was that it reminded me of why it is important to continue to work for social justice.

As far as classes, I am taking Biblical Studies 2, studying the Old Testament Prophets and Writings, Church History, and Heresy. Bib Studies 2 is taught by Clint McCann, a highly revered Old Testament Scholar, especially Psalms, and I feel honored to have the chance to learn from him. Church History and Heresy tend to run together, but are both very interesting, as it was an area I did not know much about before.

I continue to live on campus while Jerad lives and works in Oklahoma City. We are thankful that his boss pays for him to travel to St. Louis once a month for 10 days, so that we can have some time together. Though it is tough being apart, I know that I am meant to be at Eden and in seminary.

Again, feel free to contact me via Facebook and Email (myers.vanessaj@gmail.com)! I will warn everyone that it does take some time for me to return them though. I am always thinking of everyone back in Elmira, and I can’t wait to get back this summer for a few weeks and share what I have learned.

April 2013

The Park Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																														
	1	2	3	4	5 Spirit Cafe 6:00pm	6																																																																																																														
7	8 Children's Choir 3:45pm	9	10 Pioneers Meeting 5:30pm Seeker's Lunch 12:10pm	11 Bell Choir 2:45pm Council Meeting 5:30pm Meaningful Movie 6:30pm	12	13																																																																																																														
14	15 Children's Choir 3:45pm	16	17 Missions Meeting 4:00pm	18 Bell Choir 2:45pm	19	20 Chicken and Biscuits Dinner 5-7pm																																																																																																														
21 Congregational Life meeting 12:00pm	22 Children's Choir 3:45pm	23	24 Seeker's Lunch 12:10pm	25 Bell Choir 2:45pm	26	27																																																																																																														
28	29 Bringing Up the Rummage Children's Choir 3:45pm	30	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">Mar 2013</th> <th colspan="7">May 2013</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td> <td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td> <td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td> <td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td> <td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Mar 2013							May 2013							S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2				1	2	3	4	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	26	27	28	29	30	31	31												
Mar 2013							May 2013																																																																																																													
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																																							
					1	2				1	2	3	4																																																																																																							
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	5	6	7	8	9	10	11																																																																																																							
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	12	13	14	15	16	17	18																																																																																																							
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	19	20	21	22	23	24	25																																																																																																							
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	26	27	28	29	30	31																																																																																																								
31																																																																																																																				

THE PARK CHURCH
208 West Gray St
Elmira, NY 14901

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
ELMIRA, NY
PERMIT No. 380

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Upcoming Events

Friday, April 5	Spirit Café 6:00 pm
Wednesday, April 10	Seeker's Lunch 12:10 pm
Thursday, April 11	Meaningful Movie and Potluck Supper 6:30 pm
Sunday, April 14	Youth Group Meeting 3:00 pm (Bethany/Park/Trinity)
Saturday, April 20	Chicken and Biscuits Dinner 4:00 pm
Wednesday, April 24	Seeker's Lunch 12:10 pm
Monday, April 29	Bringing Up the Rummage and Dinner
Thurs. May 2-Fri. May 3	SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

The Park Church

607-733-9104

[E-mail~office@theparkchurch.org](mailto:office@theparkchurch.org)

www.theparkchurch.org