



# THE PARK CHURCH

ELMIRA, NEW YORK

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## CROSS CURRENTS

January 2013

### **Felicitations-**

In an old Cherokee legend, an angry boy talks to his grandfather about a friend whom he felt had betrayed him. The grandfather responds: "Let me tell you a story... I too, at times, have felt a great resentment for those take from others with no remorse for what they do. I have struggled with these feelings many times."

The wise elder continued, "It is as if there are two wolves inside me engaged in a challenging conflict. One is evil: he is anger, envy, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, lies, false pride, and ego. The littlest thing will set this wolf into a tantrum. He fights everyone, all the time, for no reason. He cannot think because his anger and hate are so great. Yet it is helpless anger that will change nothing."

He continued, "The other wolf is good: he is joy, peace, love, hope, humility, gratitude, empathy, truth, compassion, and faith. He lives in harmony with all around him, and does not take offense when no offense was intended. He only fights when it is right to do so, and in the right way. Sometimes, it is a challenge to live with these two wolves inside me, as each tries to dominate my spirit. The same challenge is going on inside you and inside every other person, too."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked, "Which wolf will win?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

It's the beginning of a new year; a time for pondering past and future, a time for considering those good things we want to take into our future, and deciding which things that are better left by the wayside. This annual self-reflection is as important for us as a community as it is for us as individuals.

2012 has been a wonderful year of growth and excitement at The Park Church, and I celebrate the dedication, devotion, and courage of all of our members taking us a good step up on the road from where we were to where we want to be.

Sadly, the same cannot be said for the Protestant church as a whole. In her recent book, *Christianity After Religion: The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening*, Diane Butler Bass summarizes the problem: in the last ten years "unaffiliated" or "none" has become the third largest religious group in the country, and huge majorities of young adults hold intensely negative views of Christianity claiming it to be homophobic, judgmental, hypocritical, and out of touch with reality. These non-believers don't want to feed the evil wolf of vicious condemnation and so they leave the church of their upbringing. I can't blame them.



## *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

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office@theparkchurch.org

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www.theparkchurch.org

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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.

Bass argues that we are experiencing a religious recession and an awakening simultaneously. Although the institutional church is in decline, we are on the cusp of a cultural awakening that could restructure our institutions and redefine our social goals. We are in a paradigm shift that involves moving from religion/institution to spirituality/experience. That process requires changing our mindsets from "dogma" to "conviction," from "rules" to "practices," and from "members" to "neighbors."

So where is the good wolf of hope, peace, joy, and love? Can we find it inside the church, or must we abandon the institution entirely? I believe that the good wolf lives and thrives inside The Park Church, but too often he is out-barked by the bad wolf in the larger church. Willingly or not, we must acknowledge that fact and recast our message from religion to spirituality and develop opportunities for all of our neighbors to experience the all-welcoming love of God.

So as we go forward into the New Year, I ask you to look at those practices and attitudes that feed the evil wolf of dead-ends as against the good wolf of new opportunities, serving all of God's people with new opportunities to encounter God.

Blessings,  
Rev. Felicity

## **Notes from the Council President**

I have been caught up in the bustle of many things – work; coordination of holiday activities for my family; Church Council; Church – which has led to my lack of expression of my appreciation, respect and care for the members of my church – Park Church (remember that the Church is US)! I was reminded of how great this place is as I sat in Council last evening and participated in the reports and discussions about the many wonderful things WE care about enough to contribute to through our lives.

The Stewardship Campaign is coming to a close and I know that all of you have given great thought to how you can contribute in a monetary way to next years expenses and also to easing the burden of the Roof Loan. Thank you in advance for support of The Park Church. We will learn how this all fits together at the Annual Meeting which will be held on Sunday, February 3, 2013. Plan to attend immediately after the worship service.

I sat with the members of the Pioneers on December 18 as we heard a presentation from Kim Stanton, Coordinator of Youth Services for the YWCA Elmira. We have a keen interest in the youth of our congregation and wanted to know what Kim saw as youth needs of this area. Since she had just completed the Youth Summit last month, she had a fresh perspective of what the youth saw as being needed. It was very enlightening to see that thought

that perked up from the Pioneers also were on the list that Kim brought to the committee. The committee will continue to work on the suggestions which might be doable at Park.

I know that there are the members of The Park Church but I know that there are many people that are not members but fondly hold The Park Church in their hearts. Friends? I believe so!! How can we interact with them in a fuller way? Yes, the Pioneers are discussing this as well.

The Oversight Committee which is working to fulfill the direction of the COMPLETING THE CIRCLE through providing people the opportunity to give feedback to the various components of Park Church. The next step is to train the group facilitators and recorders. This will occur on January 13, 2013. Small groups will be invited to participate in the various feedback sessions.

Have you noticed how neatly the bushes appear at the front of the church? Thanks Rich Gridley! It looks great!

So, now I pause to acknowledge the many who contribute their wonderful voices to The Park Church! You make it alive and I am so proud to be part of you!

I wish all of you a Blessed Christmas season and ask that you continue to contribute – not just your funds- but also yourself in the New Year!

Judith Clovsky

## ***From the Missions Team***

We plan to give \$1600 (3\*300+2\*350) to the Community Kitchen in 2013 to cover increased need and rising costs. Ann will arrange a payment schedule with the church staff.

The AED is expected shortly, we think it should be placed between Beecher Hall and the Sanctuary. Peg will conduct additional training when the AED is ready for use. If the training is planned after church, we will try to avoid conflict with other after church

activities.

We have a number of activities on the table for 2013!

Elmira Clergy benefit dinner  
Coordination with YWCA programs  
Volunteer opportunities: Tanglewood, The Food Bank, and many others  
Community Choir project  
Park Church Pioneers planning group  
Park Church family in need of assistance  
Community Garden

We are discussing the possibility of selling Food Cards that could be used at local markets. The church might realize income of five percent of sales.

Next meeting: Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm at the church.

## ***From Congregational Life***

A BIG thank you to everyone who helped make our church even more beautiful for Christmas!

For cutting, hauling and setting up the trees,  
Dean Butts Dale Bryant  
Rich Gridley Pete Peterson  
Ralph Moore Jim Wolcott  
Jon Homuth Ian McLaughlin  
Jan Eberhard Ross Tutschulte

We thank Barb Butler for making the Advent wreath.

Thank you to Bill Knapp for making beef stew and Wendy Hovey for the vegetarian chili. They were delicious!

Un-hanging of the Greens on January 6!

## ***Meaningful Movies***

Meaningful Movies screen at 7 PM at The Park Church in Beecher Hall on the second Thursday of the 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.

January – Thursday, January 10

## ***Farmageddon***

Americans' right to access fresh, healthy foods of their choice is under attack. *Farmageddon* tells the story of small, family farms that were providing safe, healthy foods to their communities and were forced to stop, sometimes through violent action, by agents of misguided government bureaucracies, and seeks to figure out why

February – Thursday, February 14

## ***The Dark Side of Chocolate***

*The Dark Side of Chocolate* is a documentary film about the exploitation and slave trading of African children to harvest chocolate still occurring nearly ten years after the cocoa industry pledged to end it.

March – Thursday, March 14

## ***Last Call at the Oasis***

*Last Call at the Oasis*, a documentary about the global water crisis, sheds light on the vital role water plays in our lives, exposes the defects in the current system, shows communities already struggling with its ill-effects and introduces us to individuals who are championing revolutionary solutions. It also presents a convincing argument for why the global water crisis will be the central issue facing our world this century. We see how because of overuse, population burdens and climate change, our water supplies are no longer being replenished. It is also revealed how the issue of water cannot be approached without understanding its connection to everything else, from the food we eat to the clothes we wear to the electricity we depend on.

## **RAISING THE ROOF!**

### ***Pies For The Roof***

Our pie sale was a great success. We sold all but one of the extra pies we made. There were 4 loaves of holiday bread left that will be used for Fellowship after services. We had a net profit of \$221.69 to go directly to the principal of our roof debt.

### ***Dinners For The Roof***

Our next dinner will be held Saturday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from 5-7pm. We will be serving Spaghetti

with homemade Meatballs and Sauce. Please talk to your friends, neighbors, relatives, even people on the street about dinners at Park. Let's fill the place up, the more people we feed the more money we make and put toward our debt. We will be having a Meatball Party on Thursday evening January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013 most likely starting a 6pm. Maybe we can coerce some of our council members into joining us when their meeting is over that night. Please see me to sign up to 'Maka da' Meatballs'. Bill Knapp

## **Spirit Café**



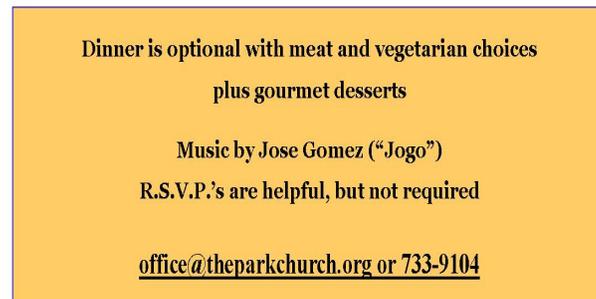
**SPIRIT CAFÉ**  
Friday, Jan. 4th at 6:00 P. M  
The Park Church



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

### **Theme: New Life in the Spirit**

with discussion and readings from diverse secular & religious traditions



Dinner is optional with meat and vegetarian choices plus gourmet desserts  
Music by Jose Gomez ("Jogo")  
R.S.V.P.'s are helpful, but not required  
[office@theparkchurch.org](mailto:office@theparkchurch.org) or 733-9104

# January 2013

## Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																	
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## ***From the Music at Park Committee***

**Lent 2013:** Two upcoming Lenten recitals for organ and voice, dates pending.

**May 18 2013:** Members' Recital at the Park Church sponsored by the Chemung Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organist. Time TBA.

## ***Adult Bell Choir***

Our next rehearsal will be Thursday, Jan. 10 at 2:45. We welcome new ringers!

## ***Children's Choirs***

Bravo to the children for their presentation on Dec. 23! Their performance was a much needed bright spot in this month of December! Regular rehearsals will resume on Monday, Jan. 7. See you then!

## **NOTES FROM THE OFFICE**

### ***New Administrative Assistant***

Amy Kick, our new Administrative Assistant, joined Mimi in the office on November 26. Amy grew up in Horseheads and now lives in Elmira Heights with her husband, Dan, their 6 year-old daughter, Rylie (who you know as our littlest angel from the Children's Christmas Pageant), their cat, Punkin and their dog, Bella. Stop in and say hello!

### ***Volunteer Opportunities***

- **Bulletins:** We can always use a couple of volunteers to help fold the worship bulletin on Fridays. Please call the office if you would like to come in.
- **General:** Watch our Weekly Email for other volunteer opportunities both here at the church and in our community. If you are not on our email list, please call or email the office to be included.

If any of these activities sound like something you might want to help with, contact the office by phone at 733-9104 or email at [office@theparkchurch.org](mailto:office@theparkchurch.org). If you want to find out how much fun you can have folding and preparing Cross Currents, talk to Connie Read, Jeannie Hicks or Irene Langdon and they'll be glad to fill you in!

## ***Joys***

Barry Roessler continues to improve and is home now! It will continue to be a long recovery so keep those prayers coming!

## ***Consider Going Paperless!***

If you would like to switch from receiving Cross Currents through the mail to receiving it electronically, please let the office know. Also, if you receive both forms of Cross Currents, and no longer need to receive the paper copy, let the office know so we can take you off of the mailing list.

## ***Next Issue Deadline***

The deadline for the January issue of Cross Currents is **Monday, January 14, 2012**. Please email your submissions, including birthdays, anniversaries, joys, and concerns to the office **no later than noon** to: [office@theparkchurch.org](mailto:office@theparkchurch.org).

## ***Christian Education***

Our December efforts concentrated on helping others, part of our Living Stewardship theme. The children put together supplies and gifts so that a family of four children and a single mother could celebrate a Merry Christmas. The family lost everything in a fire this past fall, so the children, with the help of Mary Jane Eckel, Jan Butts, Leslie Eberhard and Carol Eberhard, gathered materials for the family's Tree Trimming Party -- ornaments, lights, cocoa, cookies -- the works. Mrs. Eckel and Mrs. Butts delivered the supplies to the family the first week of December. Also in December, the children made cards and decorations related to the Advent Wreath candles -- joy, hope, peace, love -- and sent them to Linda and Barry Roessler in Scottsdale, Arizona, where Dr.

Roessler is recuperating.

The Living Stewardship Unit from the UCC Faith Practices curriculum continues to serve us and the children well. Some teachers follow the lessons as written, some adapt them to suit recent events, and some create lessons which align closely with the worship service.

Nita Seaberg will teach on January 13<sup>th</sup>, and, as usual, Jan Butts, Carolyn Moore, and Nita will lead the children in two Souper Bowl Sunday lessons – one to prepare the soup on January 27<sup>th</sup> and one to serve it on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, Super Bowl Sunday.

Carol Eberhard and Donna Homuth, chairs of Christian Education, need new teachers and will help you with planning and materials. Our Park Church children are delightful and engaging. One Sunday School session with them will brighten your whole week. To volunteer, please contact the church office or Carol, 734-8713 or Donna, 734-5497.

## Nursery

Ashley Rice, Sexton Cindy's daughter, welcomes our youngest children to the Nursery Room. Walk up and sign in before worship.

## Adult Education

Chair Ed Herman, Co-chair Bill Hungerford, and committee members Al Preucil and Kim Hanna plan a full year, with Adult Ed meeting on the second and fourth Sundays of most months. They'll continue Living the Questions with DVDs and discussions and are reviewing other topics and materials. Also, ask Ed, Bill, Al, or Kim about small group discussions in congregants' homes

## **Notes for Our Church Community**

### Lenten Booklet

Have you been feeling grateful during this Christmas season? Why not jot down some of your thoughts? Gratitude is the theme of this year's Lenten Booklet, and we would like to add your ideas, favorite poems, or other ways of coming at the subject. Email your submissions (there's no limit to how many you can send) to Wendy Hovey at [wroehovey@aol.com](mailto:wroehovey@aol.com). Please use Word format if you can.

## Church Fellowship

Thanks to the many hands who helped with the November Church Rummage Sale. Our net profit (slightly over \$2,000) allowed us to make December's roof payment! In addition, the following agencies were assisted: Second Place East: linens, etc.; Bright Red Bookshelf program: children's books; Our Sunday School: biblical books and craft materials; Our Kitchen: linens; A family rebuilding after a fire: kitchen utensils, children's items, etc. The repurposing of our gently used goods allows many in the community to afford needed items, giving them a second life. We thank you for your support. We are beginning to fill the basement again for the Spring Sale, which will be the first weekend of May. If successful, we will make June's payment as well!

## Members on the Move

Lois Gridley and Martha Buck have recently moved.

Lois:  
168 Miller St. B102  
Horseheads, NY 14845

Martha:  
Bethany Village A-107  
3005 Watkins Road  
Horseheads, NY 14845

## **JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

4      *Besaia Fahs*  
6      *Janice Butts*  
         *Dale Bryant*  
7      *Joan Treubig*  
8      *John Lesky*  
         *Paul Morss*  
10     *Debbie Peterson*  
17     *Seeley Booth, Jr.*  
         *Ron Hooper*  
18     *Lynda Brand*  
         *Connie Lazoration*  
20     *Ed Herman*  
         *Leora Amir*  
26     *Iris Prochnow*  
30     *Gail Bellohusen*  
         *Cynthia Raj*  
31     *Nancy Hooper*

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### *Upcoming Events*

<b>Wednesday, January 2</b>	<b>Seeker's Lunch 12:10pm (rescheduled from Dec. 26)</b>
<b>Friday, January 4</b>	<b>Spirit Café 6:00pm</b>
<b>Sunday, January 6</b>	<b>Unhanging of the Greens 11:30 am</b>
<b>Wednesday, January 9</b>	<b>Seeker's Lunch 12:10 pm</b>
<b>Thursday, January 10</b>	<b>Meaningful Movie 6:30 pm</b>
<b>Wednesday, January 16</b>	<b>Missions Meeting 4:00 pm</b>
<b>Thursday, January 17</b>	<b>Council Meeting 5:30 pm</b>
<b>Saturday, January 19</b>	<b>Spaghetti &amp; Meatball Dinner for the Roof</b>
<b>Wednesday, January 23</b>	<b>Seeker's Lunch 12:10pm</b>

### *The Park Church*

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