

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

63 Church Street

Saranac Lake, NY 12983

Email: firstumcsl@centralny.twcbc.com

Office (518) 891-3473

Secretary: Claudia Wamsganz

Editor: Deborah Donaldson

Website: <http://firstumcsl.org>

Pastor: The Rev. Wilbert Gamble (518) 897-6078 Cell

Pastor: email: wgamble@spaulsmiths.edu

APRIL 2014 NEWSLETTER

From the Pastor's Heart:

The Apostles' Creed: The Confession of Our Faith

I believe and am convinced of the validity of the Apostles' Creed which exhibits the essence of the Christian faith from its historical context. I have made the Apostles' Creed the confession of my faith when I accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of my life. I believe that it bears the truth about God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Church. I have touched upon every element found in the Creed in the messages I have preached and taught over the years. My goal in this essay is to summarize my understanding and what my convictions are as they relate to the Apostles' Creed.

The Apostles' Creed is a statement, compiled by later Christians, that defines the foundation of Christianity as testified by those who were eye witnesses of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, and by those who once adhered and lived under the governing authority of the Torah. Though the Apostles did not write the Creed themselves, they were the forebears of the testimony of Jesus Christ. Their statement and witness was recorded by other Christians who knew of the Apostles' life firsthand and who established the writings of the four gospels as recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Furthermore, many of the epistles were written while the Apostles were still living. So, the testimony of Jesus and all the events and teachings that revolved around his life was already widely in circulation in the province of Palestine by the Apostles, and throughout Asia Minor and around the Mediterranean basin by way of the Apostle Paul's missionary work.

Though the Apostles' Creed was not finalized until many years later, it was the people of the early church, but not the Apostles themselves, who transcribed the various statements of the testimony of the Apostles on papyrus and parchments. It was from these writings, that we find in our New Testament books and epistles, where the confession of the Apostles' Creed was extracted to exhibit and promulgate the essence of the Christian faith to the churches around the Mediterranean Sea. My own faith is predicated on this background history and documentation of the testimony of those who were first witnesses of Jesus' life and teachings. In other words, the Apostles' Creed is a direct reflection of what the scripture teaches, and I have accepted by faith the validity of these scriptures as God's inspired Word which bears the truth of the testimony of these first Apostles of Jesus Christ.

The Creed speaks of God, the Father, of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. It makes a cursory notation of the Virgin Mary who gave birth to Jesus, and of Pontius Pilate who consummated the role of putting Jesus to death. It unfolds the fate and destiny of Jesus' life. It speaks of Judgment of the living and the dead. It refers to the Church as a living entity and the state of its condition: Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of Sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Each phrase in its term carries tremendous theological weight and implication that could lead us writing volumes of commentary.

Here is the complete quotation of the Apostles' Creed as a statement of faith which I divided into three sections. Each section is followed by a brief commentary from my own perception and understanding:

"I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth."

This first sentence reveals something about God, the Father Almighty. He is the creator of heaven and earth as the Old Testament scripture in Genesis chapter 1 affirms and testifies to His creation activity. The term God Almighty is prevalent throughout the Old Testament Writings. But, it is only in the New Testament where God is ascribed to as "Father" by Jesus Christ as used in his prayers and teachings. This has opened to me an understanding of our relationship to God and God's relationship to us. He is Father. He cares, He loves, and He provides for our need.

“I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.”

In this second paragraph of the Creed the subject is Jesus Christ. It is his story line of what happened to his life from his conception to his ascension to the Father, and his second coming as a judge. Notice that some crucial elements are not mentioned, but are implied, in terms of why all of this was necessary for Jesus to go through. Our references in scripture reveal that Jesus came to reconcile the human race back to God, to redeem lost humanity, to pay a ransom for those who had the sentence of the penalty of death on their life because of sin. This condition of sin includes all of humanity. Sin is the violation of God’s will and command for our life. As you will discover in the next paragraph of the Creed, the word “sin” is used, and it is this sin that carries the sentence of death. Biblically, sin is the cause of our separation from God. The only answer God provided to resolve our human dilemma was the death of His Son Jesus Christ. It was the shedding of Jesus’ blood as the price to redeem humanity from the penalty of death. Through Jesus we are granted grace, salvation, forgiveness of sin, and eternal life – the goodness of God toward humanity.

When I observe how Jesus is written in the creed, the sense of the Almightyness of God can clearly be seen in his life. There is a close connection of the work of the Holy Spirit in this life of Jesus that defies understanding. The Holy Spirit was able to consummate the birth of Jesus in the womb of a woman without the aid of a man. So, he (Jesus) was literally born of the Holy Spirit and of human flesh. I believe the Virgin Mary’s birth of Jesus is true. And, that it was necessary that his birth came by way of the Holy Spirit and not by a human male. This made his relationship with God distinctively unique from all other persons that were ever born on earth. Perhaps this is why he tells Nicodemus in the Gospel of John that “you must be born of the Spirit,” because he (Jesus) was born of the Spirit.

“I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.”

This final paragraph shows something of the result of Jesus’ life. We recognize the person of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit plays a significant role in the life of the Church. He is the empowerment of the Church. In the language of theology, the Holy Spirit is recognized as the third person of the Trinity of the God head (God the Father, God the Son (who is Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit). In the New Testament scripture the Holy Spirit is referred to as Comforter, Teacher, Counselor, the Power of God, and the Holy Ghost. He was sent to dwell and to remain with the Church, and to help the Church fulfill the calling of God of the ministry of reconciliation.

The Holy Catholic Church is Christians everywhere; the meaning of the word catholic is not the same usages as the term when it is used to describe the Catholic denomination. The word catholic in the Apostle’s Creed, is catholic with a small “c”, as it relates to Christians universally. So, the Holy Catholic Church means that there is only one Church and Jesus Christ is its head or authority.

The communion of saints is the state of our relationship to the Christian community and to God. We are considered the family of God, and we are called sisters and brothers in Christ. Communion has much to do with how we are encouraged to live together as Christians – by loving one another as the Lord Jesus commanded his disciples.

The forgiveness of sins is not only something that God does for us as a human race, but it is expected of every Christian to practice forgiveness of sins of others including brothers and sisters in Christ. Even as God forgives sins so must we.

The resurrection of the body and the life everlasting is the gift of our salvation in Christ. This means death has no power over him/her whom God has set free from death’s penalty – life is forever and ever. We have no scientific way of explaining these miraculous phenomenon that is clearly of God’s work and power, but we are blessed with them.

I have disclosed in this essay a summary of my conviction and understanding of the Apostles’ Creed. I presented a brief history of the development of the Creed’s content that was found in the writings of the early Christians. The First Apostles of Jesus and other followers of Christ were eye witnesses to Jesus’ life and teachings, and these events and sayings of Jesus were recorded by these early Christians. The materials found in the Gospels were extracted by later Christians who composed what we have today, the Apostles’ Creed. In the light of what I have shared in the disclosure of this essay, I conclude that the Apostles’ Creed is the essence of my faith.

Grace,
Pastor Wilbert

March 19, 2014

Dear United Methodist Church Family,

We cannot begin to thank you for all the care and concern given to our family during the tragic loss of our daughter Adrienne. We so appreciate the contributions to the service by Reverend Gamble and Organist Kathy Cross, and special thanks to Claudia Wamsganz for all her assistance with the beautiful program. We have unspeakable gratitude to our friends at the church who graciously and tirelessly volunteered to prepare the reception after Adrienne's service, and we enjoyed the beautiful music provided by Michael Martin as well. Our grief is softened by the comfort and caring of our church family. Thank you so very much.

Bruce, Jill and Hillary Barnard
Jack Whitford

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES

- April 13th Palm Sunday 8:30am Praise Worship Service, 10:00 am Traditional Service
April 17th Maundy Thursday there will be a pot luck supper held at church at 6:00 pm.
Please bring a dish to pass and your own place setting. Beverage will be provided.
Communion will follow around the tables. Invite someone to come with you.
April 20th Easter Sunday 6:00 am Sunrise Service in Riverside Park
10:00 am Traditional Worship Service at church
Please note: No 8:30 am PW Service or Coffee and Fellowship today.

Serving our whole family in the name of Christ!

Some folks have expressed a desire to reach out to those who are a part of our church family, but are unable to come for worship. The Outreach Committee is planning a training for those who would be interested in a visitation ministry. Some have already expressed an interest and if you would like to join us for a series of training sessions, please let me know. We will be using the book "Lay Pastoral Care" and discussing not only visitation, but developing the program itself.

If you are interested or want more information, please contact me at 891-3915 or by e-mail at csmith314@gmail.com and let me know what day, evening, time, etc. would be good for you and I will try my best to accommodate everyone.

This is an important ministry and I am excited that we are getting started on it. It is especially important now that we have a half-time pastor. Of course, Pastor Wilbert will visit as he can, but we need to supplement that.

Thanks! I look forward to hearing from you.

Cindy Smith for the Outreach Committee

Hymns for those who speed on the highway

45 mph.....	God Will take Care of You	75 mph.....	Nearer Still Nearer
55 mph.....	Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah	85 mph.....	This World Is Not My Home
65 mph.....	Nearer My God To Thee	95 mph.....	Lord, I'm coming Home
		Over 100 mph.....	Precious Memories

Give me a sense of humor, Lord,
Give me the grace to see a joke.
To get some humor out of life
And pass it on to other folk.

Received from one of our readers. Thank you for sharing this with us. -- We would enjoy hearing from YOU!

RUMMAGE SALE DATES FOR 2014-- PLEASE MARK THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR

SPRING SALE

Monday through Wednesday for Set up--April 28, 29, 30

Thursday, Friday and Saturday for the Sale--May 1 & 2 from 9am to 7pm

Saturday May 3 from 9am to noon.

Please bring your donations to church and put downstairs any time BEFORE April 29. Clothing is acceptable in good condition, clean and no rips. Other household items must be in good condition and clean.

FALL SALE

Monday through Wednesday for Set-up--September 22, 23, 24

Thursday, Friday and Saturday for the Sale--September 25 & 26 from 9am to 7pm

Saturday September 27 from 9am to noon

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN YARD SALE FOR 2014

Set-up will be Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday July 21, 22, 23, 24

Sale will be Friday July 25 from 9am to 4pm

Saturday July 26 from 9am to 3pm

Walk the Talk

By Louis gander

Love is a tough word for men made of steel.
Some cannot say it – despite how they feel.
And way down inside, you'll find at the core,
That few can love higher than dog fleas soar.

Some utter their love in flowers and smiles.
There are many words and so many styles.
Some share their feeling with tears in one eye,
while others share thoughts in endless supply....

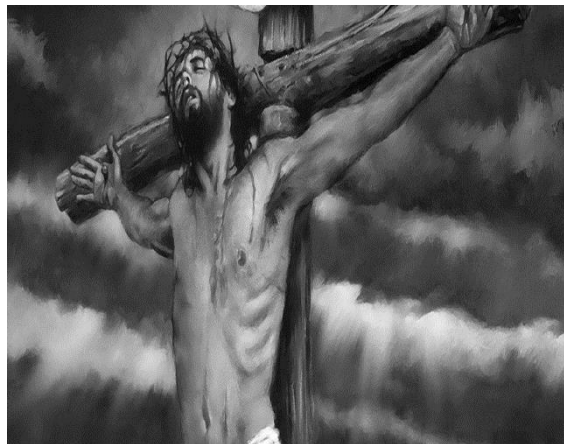
Talk is so shallow – it's easier said,
than walking the talk, and 'doing' instead.
When we are confronted with our simple trials,
Do we drag our cross and for how many miles?

A cross is a menace that scoffs in our ear.
We wish ever time it would just disappear;
but if our love's real – and fills us inside,
A cross surely conquers when we are denied.

For there was a Man that lived long age,
who gave so much more – than we'll ever know.
He shared with the children, women and men,
and taught us all how – to love once again.

There wasn't a record of "fanciful" talk,
but rather, instead, of unselfish walk.
While prayers were sincere to His Father above,
mere words didn't finish His dutiful love.

He spoke not a word – defending His own,
and faithfully walked each step all alone.
We cannot imagine the pain He endured,
and from the soldiers, the scoffing He heard.



Mere words had been spoken and all had seemed lost,
 but actions spoke louder than two timbers crossed.
 For love did not lose to the cross in that war –
 -because Jesus yet lives and that cross is no more.

MARCH 2014 LECTIONARY

April 6 5th Sun. in Lent

Ezekiel 37:1-4
 Psalm 130
 Romans 8:6-11
 John 11:1-45

April 13 Palm Sunday

Matthew 21:1-11
 Psalm 118:1-2,19-29
 Philippians 2:5-11
 Matthew 26:14-27:66

April 20 Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43
 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
 Colossians 3:1-4
 John 20:1-18

April 27 2nd Sun. of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 22-32
 Psalm 16
 1 Peter 1:3-9
 John 20:19-31

First United Methodist Church

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Sunday 8:30am Contemporary Service

Coffee and Fellowship 9:20 am

10:00 am Traditional Service

10:00 am **Sunday School**

ALL ARE WELCOME

Easter Flowers

Please let us know if you intend to have flowers in Honor or in Memory of a Loved One. You may fill out the form below for our information and drop it in the offering plate or mail it or you can call the church office at 891-3473 by April 15th.

Number of plants at \$9.00 each _____

Checks may be put in the offering plate or

Mailed to: First United Methodist Church

63 Church St.

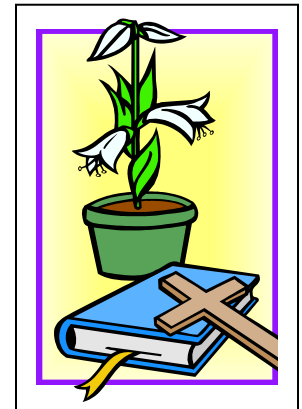
Saranac Lake, NY 12983

Your name: _____

In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

Payable to: FUMC Marked: Easter Flowers.



MARCH BIRTHDAY

- 2 Hailey Dell
Jon Leavitt
- 3 Logan Ploof
Angie James
- 4 Brandon Clark
- 5 Linda Charette
Eugene Wood
- 6 Margaret Turnbull 99 yrs.
- 7 Bruce Barnard
Clemos Tanzini
- 8 Minnie Beguin
Evie Hunt
Dillon Wilson
- 10 Aiden Hesseltine
- 11 Mathew Martin
- 13 Soo Hanley
- 15 John Santy
- 18 Barb Halla
- 18 Jim Griebusch
- 21 Marlene Martin
- 22 Christine Leavitt
- 23 Nicole Sells
- 25 Joe Pickreign, Jr.
- 26 Rachel Hannon
- 29 Kerry King
Eva Stinson
- 30 Paula D'Ambrisi
Samuel Stringer
- 31 Marshall Moore

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Mary Sue Dalton
- 3 Ruth Mader
- 5 Richard Lawrence
Scott Leavitt
Joe Fisher
- 6 Louise Harris
- 7 Austin Barry
- 9 Virginia Daniels
Merry Watters
- 12 Diane Kelting
- 14 Bob Donaldson, Sr.
Howard R. Myatt, Jr.
- 15 Megan White
- 16 Joe Pickreign, III
Jeannette Sheppard
- 17 Eileen Leavitt
Robert Smith
- 18 Jacob Heverly
- 25 Lucas Donaldson
- 27 Arthur Besio
- 30 Devon Bandru
Trevor Fravor

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Grant & Cindy Besio
- 2 Joe & Shirley Pickreign 54 Yrs.

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

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**For Those Of You Who Are
Receiving This By Mail**

**PLEASE HELP US BY
GIVING US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS**

The best way would be to send an
email to Claudia at:

firstumcsl@centralny.twcbc.com

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT	PLACE
*Wed.	Apr. 2, 9, 16, 23	5:00 – 6:00 pm	Community Supper	Fellowship Hall
*Thurs.	Apr. 3, 10, 17, 24	7:00 pm	Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
Fri.	Apr. 4	6:30 – 7:30 pm	Girl Scouts Zumba-thon	Fellowship Hall
*Sat.	Apr. 5, 12, 19, 26	9:30 – 10:30 am	Zumba - weekly	Fellowship Hall
*Sun.	Apr. 6, 13, 27	3:00 – 4:00 pm	Zumba - weekly	Fellowship Hall
*Mon.	Apr. 7, 14, 21	5:00 – 6:00pm	Zumba - weekly	Fellowship Hall
Mon.	Apr. 7	7:00 pm	Worship Committee	Tellers Room
Thurs.	Apr. 10	6:30 pm	UMW Meet - all women welcome	Lounge
Wed.	Apr. 16		Wednesday of Holy Week	
Thurs.	Apr. 17	6:00 pm	Maundy S	
Sat.	Apr. 19	8:00am	Men's Breakfast - all men welcome	Fellowship Hall
Mon.	Apr. 21	7:00 pm	Church Council	Tellers Room
Mon.	Apr. 21		*Newsletter Article Deadline – We are interested in hearing from “YOU!” please send your articles in to the office.. Thanks you.	
Mon.	Apr. 21	7:00 pm	Trustees Committee	Tellers Room
Thurs.	Apr. 24	9:30 am	Regional Food Bank food safety	Fellowship hall
Mon.	Apr. 28	9:00 am	Rummage Sale Set up (see above)	Fellowship Hall
Thurs.	May 1	9:00 am	Opening Day – Rummage Sale (see above)	Fellowship Hall