



VOL. XLIII NO. 10

OCTOBER 2019

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 6:23

Once I have an idea, the hardest part of writing a monthly newsletter article is starting it. This month I couldn't decide if I should begin "I have beautiful woodwork" or "My cat is a jerk"????

When my husband and I were house shopping 4 years ago, the first thing we noticed when we opened the front door was the woodwork. We loved it. It helped us know that this was the house we would call "home."

We also love our cats. For almost our entire marriage, Dan and I have enjoyed having pets as part of our family. At one point we had what seemed like a menagerie with one dog, two cats, a hamster and a fish tank to make our family complete --along with our 3 children of course!

Westley and Buttercup (named after the characters in *The Princess Bride*) have been part of our family now for 7 years. They have provided companionship, joy, and up until now they have been very well behaved. Recently we discovered that Westley has decided he loves our woodwork also. He thinks he should let everyone know that it belongs to him by marking it with his claws. Up until now he has been content to use the scratching posts we have provided. We have no idea what caused this change in behavior to use the woodwork instead—he's not sick, there have been no added stresses to the household, no changes to food or environment, and he gets plenty of attention. He's just being a jerk!

As much as we love Westley, we cannot tolerate this destructive behavior for obvious reasons. My husband and I discussed various options. Declawing? No. It's not only painfully inhumane, but illegal in NYS. More scratching posts? No. He's obviously rejecting them for some reason after previously using them. Give him away? Who wants a destructive cat? Euthanize him? That seems excessive and beyond sad, even cruel. We decided on a combination of plastic nail tips and confining him to the basement whenever we are not at home and at night when we're asleep.

Naturally Westley is not happy with his new living arrangements. He doesn't like the nail tips or losing his freedom to roam the house as he pleases, but I'm sure he would like some of the alternatives we considered even less.

The fact is, bad behavior has consequences. Sometimes the consequences come in the form of punishment or discipline. (i.e. Drive 80 mph in a 30 mph zone and you get a speeding ticket. Break the law and you go to jail.) Sometimes we experience natural consequences as a result of our poor choices. (i.e. Stay up late and you'll be tired in the morning. Say an unkind word to a friend and you may damage your relationship.) Other times, what feels like punishment to us, is simply the natural consequences of sin in the world. This often includes unexplainable things that just happen because we live in an imperfect world marred by sin. (i.e. sickness, even death.)

Our bad behavior, our sin, often has consequences for other people besides ourselves as well. (i.e. The drunk driver who hurts or kills someone.) Westley's bad

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behavior caused consequences for Buttercup (the well behaved kitty) although she did nothing wrong. Since both cats need access to the litter box in the basement, Buttercup must also join Westley behind the closed door when we can't keep an eye on the naughty one.

I'm sure that Buttercup is not pleased to lose her freedom due to Westley's bad behavior. Neither kitty understands why the household rules have changed. Truth be told, I'm not so happy about the situation either. Putting nail tips on a cat is a struggle and it's not convenient or easy to get either of them into the basement when we can't actively watch them. Yet it seems the only solution if we're going to keep these cats that we love as part of our family, just as we have loved all the pets we've had through the years.

So what's the point you may be asking. It's this: we are much more valuable to God than pets. We are God's beloved children—chosen and claimed as God's own. And yet, too often we sin against the God who loves us. When we sin by making poor choices, disobeying God's teaching and refusing to follow the way of justice, love, and peace, the natural consequence is separation from our heavenly Parent. Separated. Just like my cats. I wish I didn't have to take away the comforts of sunny windows, soft furniture, and the freedom to go where they please.

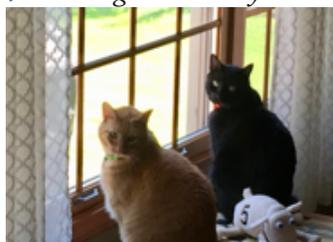
I wonder if God is just as unhappy as we are when we suffer the natural consequences for our bad behavior? I think the answer is yes. For when God saw humanity suffering from their separation and loss of freedom, and even when we deserved to be punished for our bad behavior, God sent Jesus to show us a better way of living. And then he took the sin of the world upon himself, redeeming us and giving us new life.

I can't become a cat and teach my beloved, but naughty, Westley how to behave better so he can be released from the basement. But I can give thanks to God for being released from the prison and consequences of sin. I hope you'll join me in a prayer of thanksgiving for the freedom we have in Christ and then resolve to behave better so that we can please our Master who loves us more than we can imagine.

*"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life."*  
(John 3:16)

Thanks be to God!

—Rev. Del



**October 6 – 1-2 PM**

Bring your pet (or a picture) for a blessing. Dogs on a leash, cats in a carrier (or on a leash if they tolerate that).

Drive up to the front door by way of the front circle.

(In case of rain, blessings will be done in the narthex.)



Diana Law has secured a group of seats at Syracuse Stage for Sunday, November 24th for the 2:00pm performance of *"Beauty and the Beast"*.

The discounted ticket prices for the First United Church of East Syracuse are \$29.00 for adults and \$26.00 for all students (includes college students).

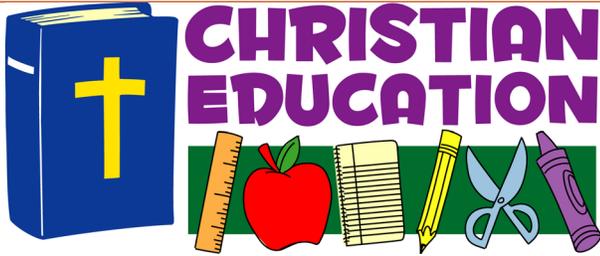
**Contact Diana for tickets if you are interested in attending.**

In the past we have attended a performance during the week between Christmas and New Years. Last year we paid \$29.00. The cost of tickets for that week this year would be \$45.00.

We are most thankful and appreciative to Syracuse Stage that our church has been offered the discounted rate for the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

## Beyond the building

The Christian does not go to the temple to worship. The Christian takes the temple with him or her. Jesus lifts us beyond the building and pays the human body the highest compliment by making it his dwelling place, the place where he meets with us. —Ravi Zacharias



Last week was a tough one for the First United Church of East Syracuse. First, former parishioner Larry Robbins and then later, auditor par excellence, Linda Polcaro both passed on to their great reward. Their great circle of life has been completed. Ashes to ashes for the outside framework but the spirit moves on to eternal life in heaven.

The “Lion King” sings about the circle of life. But when you discuss ‘circular reasoning’ it refers to a form of thinking that just keeps going around and never really getting anywhere. I think there is a wonderful lesson in there for us. The circle of life refers to our being born, living and then passing on. If that is only a circle of life: birth, struggle and eventual death, then I feel we have lived without all that we could achieve.

In John 11, Jesus talks about our moving on and tells us: *‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though they die, yet shall they live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.’* To me that signifies that our purpose is not just to live on this level of existence but to impact above and beyond this level. If you have lived a good moral life, congratulations. In this world of temptation and turmoil, that is indeed quite an accomplishment. Yet I believe we need to live a life that allows us to continue to serve and worship our Lord in other worlds and ways. I am sure I do not have the mind to begin to imagine, even after reading the book of Revelation several times, what heaven is like. I don’t know exactly how to please our Heavenly Parent in the next realm. But I also can’t possibly believe that Jesus would tell us about the resurrection and living again, if there was not a plan to it.

So in saying that, I hope we do not just exist in circles, but that our lives may continue to serve God almighty. We go on. Our words, our actions, our legacy become a message, a quest, to continue to praise, or help others to (at least see how to) praise God. Which is where this column began. For those of us who were fortunate enough to remember Larry and his questioning ways and humor, he was a great help to me and our church the first time i was on Parish Council. The lessons he taught me and the methods by which

he dispensed his wisdom were valuable and powerful. Similarly, Linda served the church and congregation with wisdom, strength of thought and action and an outpouring of love and concern. If and when something was needed, Linda could be counted on to either do it, or find a way to get it accomplished.

How much more could they impact our church life? With warmth, humor, insight, time and effort to learn - share- and love... I hope there is a circle of our lives, that we may again encounter such wonderful folk in our future lives. But I thank them and our God that their lives were not lived spinning in endless circles, but in reaching out and showing us how to live and continue to serve our Lord. While we live to God, after we have left this world, and in the world beyond.

May God bless these lives. And as we think about the spirits of Halloween, may we especially remember two outstanding contributors to the First United spiritual life.

Amen

—Dale H. Greabell for the Christian Education dept.

## October Outings

- 6 - communion
- 13 - Learning with our Young Disciples presentation during worship
- 20 -
- 27 - maybe we can conjure something special for a Halloween party?



We are currently in need of people to help decide, plan and work at events, especially fundraisers, so that the work of the church can go on.

If you have ideas to share for future events, are willing to serve on a newly forming Fundraising and Events Committee, or would like to find out how you could help, please see Sue Borasky or Gladys Greabell (co-chairs).

## Food Collection

Please bring to church non-perishable items for our food pantry.

Please note dates on any items. Items with expired dates cannot be used.

A basket for donations is in the narthex every Sunday. Food will be used for our holiday basket distribution.

# Stewardship CAMPAIGN

Our annual Stewardship Campaign will begin October 6th as Inspiration Sunday. October 13th will be known as Gratitude Sunday and the 20th is Consecration Sunday, when the responses received for financial support to our church will be Blessed.

Stewardship means managing all our resources, be it our time, skills or financial offerings. Through your stewardship we can open the church doors, turn on the lights, heat and air conditioning, hire staff, fund programs and maintain the building and grounds. This allows for a safe, peaceful space to worship our loving, forgiving God.

Letters will be mailed to church members and congregants the week of October 7th. Giving Intention Cards will be enclosed along with a return envelope. As you think of your blessings, please prayerfully consider your financial support to our church for 2020.

Your Financial Committee is beginning the process of developing a preliminary 2020 budget. Early return of Giving Intention Cards allows the Finance Committee to determine the extent to which financial support will be available for our budget planning.

As in previous years, the pledged amounts are confidential. Our Assistant Treasurer, Cheryl Fox, receives the cards and maintains the records of financial giving. If your circumstances change during the year, please notify Cheryl of any necessary adjustments to your contribution.

—Anne Coughenour for Your Finance Committee

## Coming in December

December 7 – The Christmas Shoppe  
9:30-AM - 1:30 PM



December 14 – Annual Cookie Walk  
9AM - 1PM



## Prayer Shawls

You are invited/encouraged to participate in our Prayer Shawl Ministry.

Norine will have supplies. She has new patterns, and new yarns available.

When shawls are completed, they are blessed and made available to those who would benefit by having a comforting shawl to surround them during a time of illness, stress or loss, etc.

For more information contact Norine Stephan at 437-8581.

## Donate Your Old Glasses

Did you know that your old glasses can make a world of difference for someone in a developing country? Lions Club desperately needs your old glasses to continue their program of international optical missions.

There is a donation box located on the lower shelf of the table in the narthex.

## Puzzle!

Each year, the Israelites had three harvests.  
Find and circle these foods that the people gathered.

almonds	gourds	nuts
apples	grapes	olives
barley	herbs	onions
beans	leeks	pomegranates
cucumbers	lentils	rye
figs	melons	wheat

H A C B R Y E B R V E N  
G A U A S N O L E M S U  
R L C R F I G S T A T T  
A M U L I M B E H A N S  
P O M E G R A N A T E S  
E N B Y E S E L P P A K  
S D E H R O N I O N S E  
V S R E S G O U R D S E  
T I S M E S L I T N E L  
S E V I L O W H E A T H



*In October*

- 2. Connie McEvers,
- 4. Brian Schweitzer
- 10. Lynn & Bill Jacques' anniversary,  
Christine & Michael Olivadoti's anniversary
- 12. Brian Lansing,  
Max Orphanides,  
Henry Stephan
- 16. Adam Borick,  
Katie (Spero) Carr
- 17. Elina Mehegan
- 19. Margee Borick
- 21. Carl Sterling,  
Ray Haynes( in memoriam) 2019
- 22. Crystal Thomas
- 24. Lori Greabell,  
Marsha Provo,  
Rev. Debra Thomas
- 27. Cole Axton Greabell,  
Courtney Lynne Greabell
- 28. Sandy Briggs
- 31. Judy Walters



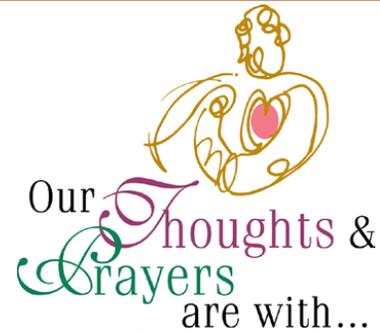
### Just Plant It

As the church year wraps up, many Bible readings address the end times and Jesus' return at an unknown date (unknown to all but God the Father, that is). Specific beliefs about the Second Coming vary

throughout Christendom, but our attitude about that momentous event affects how we live right now.

“Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces,” Martin Luther reportedly said, “I would still plant my apple tree.” Instead of constantly despairing about this broken-down world, we can remain determined to serve God and our neighbors, planting seeds of life and hope in the process.

**The Newsletter**



*In Hospitals, Nursing Homes, Assisted Living*

- Nancy Bregard – Morning Star Care Center - Oswego
- Juanita Coleman – Elderwood – Diane Shafer's mother

*At Home*

- Chuck Baker
- Kari Briggs – Sandy & Bob Briggs daughter
- Daniel Camp – friend of Christy Knowlton
- Jean Troy & Debbie Kelly – Shancy Gorman's cousins
- Betty Hickox – Lynn Jacques' mother
- Chuck & Madeline Kieb – Horton family friends
- Mary Pat Lavigne – Chuck & Marsha Provo's daughter
- Barbara Manley
- Heather Miles – friend of the Provos
- Christine Opera – Shancy Gorman's niece
- John Novak
- Mark Radley
- David Shafer
- Bob Stanton – Terri LaVergne's uncle
- Sandra Van Auken- Don Snyder's sister
- Shirley Venterea – Shancy Gorman's aunt
- Judy Walters
- Barbara Weyer
- Lucinda Weyer – Harry Weyer's wife

*Serving in the Armed Forces:*

- Tina Bearup – US Navy -Joan O'Donnell's niece
- Bret Gratien – US Air Force – son-in-law of Cindy Jackson
- Andrew Metz – US Air Force -California
- Austin Miller – US Navy – Linda Graves grandson
- Beth and Nate Roczen – US Army - Horton family friends
- Eric Spero – US Navy

*Please notify the office of any changes so this list may be kept current.*

### The day's first task

The moment you wake up each morning, all your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists of shoving it all back, in listening to that other voice, taking that other point of view, letting that other, larger, stronger, quieter life come flowing in.

—C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

# October 2019

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

		1	2	3 5:30 PM Girl Scouts (FH) 6:30 PM Finance Comm. Mtg. (Lounge)	4	5
6 <b>Inspiration</b> 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed.	7	8 6:30 PM Parish Council (Lounge)	9	10 5:30 PM Girl Scouts (FH)	11	12
					Pastor Deb on vacation	
13 <b>Gratitude</b> 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed.	14 2:00 PM Girl Scout Service Unit (Lounge)	15	16	17 5:30 PM Girl Scouts (FH)	18	19 Silent Auction and <b>Cranberry Pork Dinner</b>  4 - 7 pm in Fellowship Hall
						Pastor Deb on vacation
20 <b>Consecration</b> 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed. 11:15 AM Sandwich Making 3:00 PM Mission Comm. @ Onondaga Center Pastor Deb on vacation	21	22	23	24 5:30 PM Girl Scouts (FH)	25	 <p>almonds apples grapes olives nuts gourds barley herbs onions pomegranates beans leeks lentils rye wheat figs cucumbers</p>
27 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed.	28	29	30	31 Halloween 5:30 PM Girl Scouts (FH)		

## First United Church of East Syracuse Events

puzzle answer



# HARVEST

## Trail Mix

This portable snack combines favorite fall flavors.



### What you need:

- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 1 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 2/3 cup pecan pieces
- 1/3 cup roasted pumpkin seeds
- 1/3 cup almonds
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 2/3 cup dried fruit (any)

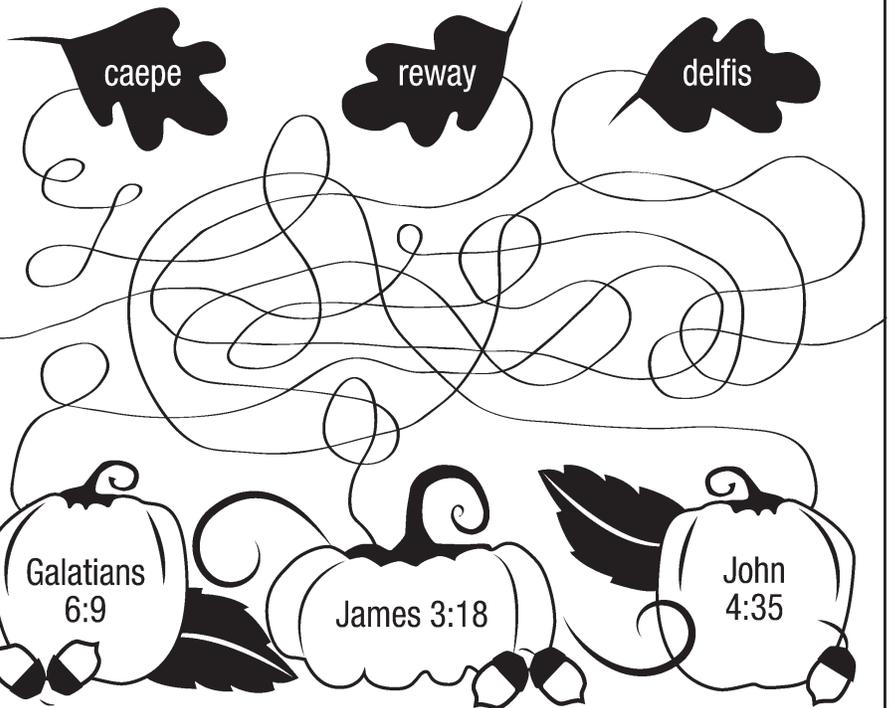
### What you do:

1. Microwave syrup, spices, seeds and nuts for 30 seconds at a time, stirring frequently, until mixture thickens.
2. Spread the mixture on a baking sheet lined with wax paper. Let cool and harden.
3. Break the candied nuts into chunks. Combine with dried fruit.
4. Store in airtight container.



# Harvest hunt

Directions: After unscrambling each leaf's word, follow the vine to complete the Bible verse.



Peacemakers who sow in \_\_\_\_\_ reap a harvest of righteousness. James 3:18, NIV

Let us not become \_\_\_\_\_ in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9, NIV

I tell you, open your eyes and look at the \_\_\_\_\_!  
They are ripe for harvest. John 4:35, NIV

Answer: peace, weary, fields

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*First United Church of East Syracuse  
823 Franklin Park Drive  
East Syracuse, New York 13057*

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### **A prayer for peace**

St. Francis of Assisi, an Italian Catholic friar, is commemorated on October 4. Though it's unclear whether this famous "peace prayer" was his, it reflects his gentle spirit as an ardent Christ-follower:

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace;  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is error, truth;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
And where there is sadness, joy.  
O, Divine Master,  
Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
To be understood as to understand;  
To be loved as to love;  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
And it is in dying to ourselves that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

*"For all those who  
exalt themselves  
will be humbled,  
and those who  
humble themselves  
will be exalted."*



LUKE 18:14, NIV