

Contact Us:
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Director of Music
Diana Parisi

Worship Hours
Sunday @ 10 am

Sunday Classes
(Sept-June)
11:15 am

Office Hours
9:30 am-3:30 pm M-F



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(draft October 2026)

THE ENVOY

A Newsletter of Emmanuel Friedens Church
American Baptist and United Church of Christ Congregation
218 Nott Terrace, Schenectady, NY 12307
Rev. Dr. Kathryn Stenta, Pastor

Issue 449

October 2026

From the Pastor

The “Falling Apart” Prayer

Here’s a Prayer for all those who collapse
at the end

Who are just holding it together
Somehow
Til the end of the Day

And then lose it
When they get in the door
Or are asked to do a thing
Or have to leave their comfort zone/thing/activity

Here are for those for whom the “Simple” tasks are not easy

Socializing
Being Organized
Paying Attention
Meeting People’s Eyes
Going Outside
Sensory Overload
New Things
Exposure
All the Things the one has to Weather

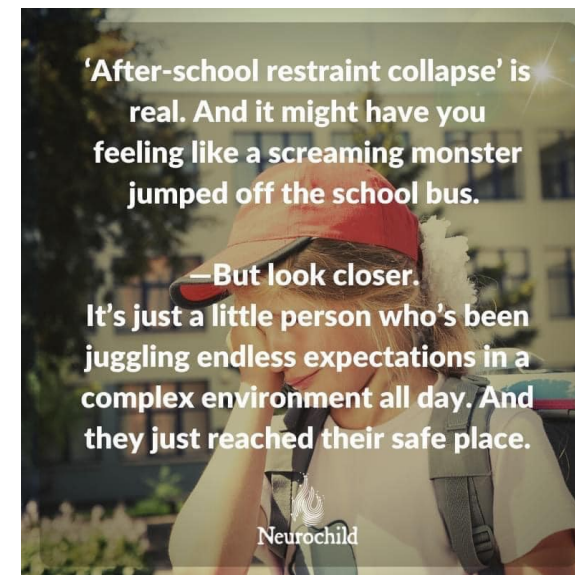
Here is a prayer for those whose bodies react
with twitches, or sleep disturbance, or accidents
migraines or other body aches

From the Pastor (continued)

This is a prayer for those who have to acclimate
to this STRANGE thing everyone else calls the norm

I want to tell you, God thinks you are beautiful
and perfect, exactly as you are
and I hope you are safe
and beloved—and you have spots of sanctuary
moments of hope
and experiences of full self

Here’s a prayer for those who experience after-school restraint collapse
Like ripe apples or rainbows of leaves in the fall
or tacos that are too full of good things to eat
or cake that is overfull of icing and sprinkles—



We all fall apart sometimes,
Jesus wept,
and ran away
and napped on a boat
and cursed a fig tree.
And went alone to a garden to pray—
but asked his disciples to body double him while he was there.

Here's a prayer for all of us who collapse, because we are overloaded
May we, like Jesus, rage or weep or pray or rest.

Whenever we need to, and find what we need along the way God.
We pray this in the name of your Counselor and Comforter the Holy Spirit—
Amen.



Dear Emmanuel Friedens,

Fall is in the air and the leaves are about to fall apart, and be beautiful about it. There is something deeply theological about that. That leaves can be dying, falling apart, and be one of the most spectacular sights to see. And of course, autumn in Albany is lovely. I think that not only do we live in apocalyptic times, but that the greater church as an institution maybe collapsing. That does not mean that I think we should just step back and watch everything fall apart, but I do think that there can still be moments of beauty even when things are chaotic and hard. I am putting this prayer out there hopefully not as a “downer for all time” but for those moments when things just seem too hard. I know we can all feel overwhelmed, and need to stop and take in the beauty or do something else in order to be able to reset.

I used to be someone who thought that controlling every aspect of my life would be a way to alleviate my stress. It's the perfectionist in me. If I could just schedule up my life, and account for things, then less would go wrong. Having three children with disabilities changed that for me, there was almost no way I could plan for what my day was going to look like with three completely different preschoolers, with three completely different needs. Instead, I took a deep breath and made sure everyone was safe, fed, and started and ended the day clean.

From the Pastor (continued)

I think that Jesus is someone who understands those of us who are collapsing, perhaps more than anyone, and it makes me wonder what God thinks of us wanting to have perfect worship experiences. First I think God is proud when we do our best for the Divine, but I also think God does not prioritize perfection the way that we do—that God takes us in their lap and comforts us when things go wrong. And when relationships are broken, God encourages us to reach out and talk to one another and to prioritize the relationship over who is right or how things went in the argument, not an easy thing to remember for sure. (Because I know, I feel like I am always right, maybe especially when I am wrong).

When I wrote the Restraint Collapse Poem it because I finally had a term for when my eldest child having perfect days at school and went from model student to coming home. At home they were “all out of good” and became a terror, unable to follow simple instructions or rules. They just could not listen to one more word. It was so hard because they had sat on themselves all day to do what they could during the day and then came home exhausted. We eventually learned how to leave them alone, and to stop asking them for things—which felt like bad parenting. I'm still not sure that we have it all figured out.

I feel like I see many ways in which we as a church are longing to figure out how to let some things go, I see other ways in which the emotional and physical tolls in our lives are adding up. How can we be a people who believe in the resurrection in a time such as this? We still want to be the Church. The relationships we have with one another are more important than ever. I am looking forward to the choir restarting, the meditation room going, the discussion for the UCC congregation going forward as it discerns its mission, the ideas Council has for the new year. I think the annual meeting will be an important one. I am happy that Hamilton Hill joined us again, but am sad that their transition did not go smoothly. I know that the brunch continues to be a lot of work, and am thankful for everyone who puts the time in to make it happen. I hope that we continue to figure out how to be connected to our community and to each other. I look forward to a beautiful Fall together. As always, if you want to connect further, I am around for coffee, tea or a chat.

In Christ's Peace,
Pastor Katy

Church Happenings

School of Wonder and Mystery

School of Wonder and Mystery (SWM) took place this past August. Our theme was Heart and Soul where campers explored the science theme of the human body and the spiritual theme of our soul, spirit and heart. In science, Miss Claire led our group in human body experiments about digestion, mucus and the skeletal system. In ELA, Miss Allison led our campers in human body bingo, recreating body parts with play do and a week-long project where campers showed appreciation of their best parts. In Creative Class, Miss Nelly led our campers in art projects including creating hearts out of clay and crosses with paint. This year we were happy to be able to invite Miss Kiara who led our group through dance ministry. We also welcomed Miss Dianna this year who led our group through music ministry. In worship, the campers shared insight on what heart and soul means and how the two are connected. We prayed with our whole body and learned how each part of us can worship God. SWM also gave campers the experience of MiSci, Bowtie Cinema, Collins Park and Jumpin' Jacks. We had 23 campers registered ranging in grades PreK- 8th grade. Special thank you to all of our teachers, Miss Claire, Miss Allison, Miss Nelly, Miss Kiara, Miss Diana, Pastor Katy, who helped lead worship and helped all around, Miss Emily, who assisted with preparing and serving lunches every day, and to our church congregation for all the support that you continue to shower on this program. It was an honor and a privilege to direct this program again this year. See you in 2027! —Charlie Reyes

Campers enjoying the day's activities



Church Happenings (continued)

Call to Meeting

Fall Quarterly Business Meeting
(In Fellowship Hall)
Sunday, October 25
@ 11:15 am -following worship

Please plan to attend. We do need your input. Questions and concerns; contact Debra Lent (Debra.Lent7983@gmail.com).

(Estate Plan of Friedens United Church of Christ (draft, October 2026) is enclosed.)

Welcome Back Sunday-September 20

Our Welcome Back Sunday worship service and picnic were to be held at the Lions Pavilion in Scotia. Unfortunately, due to the weather forecasted for September 20 (a rainy and windy day), it was decided that the Welcome Back Sunday worship and picnic would be held at the church. Thank you to all who helped set-up/clean-up, and those who brought food items to share and enjoy. Thank you to Ray Andersons, who was our BBQ chef, and who cooked in the rain.



The weather couldn't dampen the spirit of our Welcome Back Sunday.



Special Offering-World Mission

Throughout the month of October, we share in supporting the American Baptist World Mission Offering. For American Baptists, this is an opportunity to support the work of International Ministries, both of "Global Servants", individuals sent to work around the globe, and the local partners that they provide resources and support for. The theme for this year's offering is **"From brokenness to wholeness: educate, heal, restore"** There are many circumstances outside our control: wars, natural disasters, disease, accidents, etc. We have choices about how to perceive them.

To find out more about the work of International Ministries and the impact of your donations, go to internationalministries.org and www.internationalministries.org/annual-report-video-library/ or read the discussion guide that is located on the hallway table.

An envelope is included in the printed copy of the Envoy. Please make your check payable to Emmanuel Friedens Church making a notation in the memo line, "for World Mission." Additional envelopes are available at the church for those that receive the newsletter via e-mail. Thank you for your generosity.

Community News



Upcoming Fall Programs (www.newbreath.org)

Fall Retreat: "Being Present in Today's World" October 16 -17, 5:00 pm, October 16 through 5:30 pm, October 17 at the Saranam Center for Healing & Transformation, Greenville, NY. For more information on these events and others, check out their website.

Thanksgiving Food Baskets

Do you know of someone/a family that will need food for Thanksgiving. **Concerned for the Hungry** is once again offering food baskets for those eligible residents of Schenectady County.

Information Needed: There are specific dates for people to sign up (listed below) – sign-ups **end October 25**. You must bring a qualifying ID with you to sign-up. You must bring proof of your current address. Social Security and Medicare /Medicaid cards are not qualifying IDs.

Sign-up Location: St. John the Evangelist School Hall, entrance on Eastern Avenue near the corner of Nott Terrace and Eastern

Sign-up dates and times: Friday, October 23, 5 –8 pm; Saturday, Oct. 24, 10 am-4 pm; Sunday, Oct. 25, 1 -4 pm

Emmanuel Friedens Church
218 Nott Terrace
Schenectady, NY 12307



Mark Your Calendar
Daylight Savings Time Ends

Don't be an early bird for worship on
November 1
Remember to turn your clocks back
one hour before going to bed on
Saturday evening (10/31)

As a Welcoming and Affirming/
Open and Affirming Church, Emmanuel Baptist Church and Friedens United Church of Christ welcomes and affirms all persons without regard to sex, marital status, age, race, sexual orientation, or abilities, inviting all into membership, mission, and leadership.

STAY CONNECTED



www.facebook.com/emmanuelfriedenschurch

A Vision for Our Journey

Captivated by Jesus' life and teaching,
Committed to

Growing hearts and minds;

Learning openness, courage and love;

Serving with our neighbors;

Pursuing God's justice and peace;

Inviting others to share the journey!