

THE CHIMES

Feb. 24, 2016

**Next Chimes
deadline:
March 9**

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Daylight-saving time begins 2 a.m. March 13.

Articles for *The Chimes* must be submitted by noon on the deadline day and can be sent to: uumctb@twcny.rr.com or put in Box No. 12 in the church office.

Alicia Wood, Pastor
Tom Boll, Editor

Professional clothes donations help people trying to break through cycle of poverty

As Starke Donnally and I were storing away cases of potatoes in the kitchen stairwell after pantry on Friday, several folk arrived.

Terry Kubat received and directed our guests into Fellowship Hall and then called to me that my guests had arrived.

Our guests were visitors from Visions for Change's program "Choosing to Thrive."

These programs are the offspring of Housing Visions, a program conceived and given life at UUMC. The Choosing to Thrive program aims to empower participants to make positive, sustainable changes that result in a better quality of life both personally and economically.

The program aims to create space in an individual's life for self-assessment, allowing for mind-set

change from reactionary thinking to intentional thinking.

Leaders For Change (consumers of this program) begin by identifying and recording their dreams on paper to serve as motivation for this change.

Choosing to Thrive uses specific goal processes as a way to mobilize the individual to their desired outcome based on small, weekly, building steps.

Ultimately, the goal is for each individual to find a stable job that will break the cycle of poverty.

About a month ago I attended a Choosing to Thrive workshop by Ron Boxx at Visions for Change at the suggestion of Nelson Price, head of the Outreach Committee.

The day I went was the first of a new workshop series.

See **A DOZEN**, Page 5



City UM churches stabilized; James St. to close in June

"Syracuse United Methodist Churches have stabilized during the six months since our new clergy were appointed July 1," according to the Rev. B.J. Norrix, lead pastor.

He reported to the Leadership Team Feb. 9 that worship attendance had increased by 40 percent at Erwin First over a year ago and by 300 percent at Brown Memorial (40-50 each Sunday) with worship and church school attendance holding steady or

climbing at the other congregations.

UUMC worship attendance has stabilized and increased slightly during the last six months over 2014 with an average of three additional worshippers (average 90) each Sunday.

The Leadership Team is composed of representatives from each of the Syracuse United Methodist congregations. Gwen Tillapaugh-Fay,

See **CITYWIDE**, Page 2

How do you find the silence to listen for God in your life?



Alicia Wood

Greetings!

As a part of our look into “The Gifts of the Dark Wood” this Lenten season, the small-group study this Sunday talked

about centering prayer.

Centering prayer is a short prayer that one says over and over to focus oneself in meditative prayer. Centering prayer is one way we can stay focused on the prayer itself and on our time with God.

The prayer referenced in the study video was “The Jesus Prayer,” which is “Lord Jesus Christ Son of God, have mercy on me.”

The question was asked, how do you find you are able to center yourself? We had many different



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answers.

One person said they use a centering prayer. Some said music. Another said creating the discipline of quiet time with God each day.

One person mentioned the time while washing dishes somehow focused the mind and became meditative.

I said driving long distances and last Sunday the “Come and Rest” song really drew me into a

quietness within myself.

Have you renewed or made a change to your prayer time throughout Lent? Have you tried a centering prayer? How do you find the silence? Are you able to quiet yourself and listen for God? What are you learning so far in our Lenten season?

The Gifts of Uncertainty and Emptiness have stirred some things in me.

Peace be with you until we meet again,

— Pastor Alicia

P.S. This song spoke to me as I was writing the sermon for Sunday, Feb. 21, “Gifts of Emptiness”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8BBCYFAYRI>

Citywide United Methodist congregational meeting scheduled for Sunday, April 10

CONTINUED from Page 1

UUMC co-lay leader, and Nelson Price represent our congregation.

Doug Randall participates as a UUMC member of the Hand to Plow team that is charged with developing a vision statement.

The Leadership Team approved or noted:

- An all-congregation meeting **Sunday, April 10 at 6 p.m.** to celebrate progress and start dreaming about what’s next for our churches as a whole, our vision for the future as worshiping congregations and our ministry to the city of Syracuse.
- Ten students representing four congregations are in the confirmation class led by Pastor Alicia Wood. They will attend a conference retreat with

Bishop Mark Webb March 11 at Casowasco and will be confirmed in their home churches May 15 with a joint party to follow. Esther, Princess, Lisa and Emelia Weah are UUMC class members.

- SWUM, the Syracuse Westside Urban Mission, has been disbanded and assets have been transferred to Brown Memorial Church. The decision was triggered by the conclusion of service by Olga Gonzales-Santiago, community worker.
- With regret, the closing of James Street United Methodist Church June 30.
- A representative from each congregation has been named to draft articles of incorporation for United Meth-

odist Churches of Syracuse. It will delineate the joint vision, mission statement and relationships among the congregations, plus provide a vehicle for receiving and disbursing funds. At the present time, UUMC is acting as treasurer and disbursing salaries to the clergy team.

- Voted to request salary support for Brown Memorial from the Annual Conference.
- Noted completion of the Lenten Devotional booklet with 200 copies distributed.
- Affirmed two **Easter Sunrise Services at the Woodland Reservoir** (next to Bellevue Heights Church) at 7 a.m. with breakfast to follow (service inside if inclement weather)

See **THREE**, Page 6

Community Breakfast Communion an effort to break barriers



**Galyn
Murphy-
Stanley**

This past Sunday at our Community Breakfast, we began offering Communion to our breakfast guests.

An idea born out of a wonderful article found by our Outreach Committee leader Nelson Price,

we, the Outreach Team, learned that many find the act of receiving the sacrament of Holy Communion comes with unnecessary fanfare.

The reading suggests that this regalia creates a sort of boundary or division between those who know the routine, can participate in the celebration (wearing the right clothing, having the time set aside, understanding the music/readings, etc.) and those who do not know the process and protocol.

UUMC has the additional barrier of two flights of stairs and an hour of relatively unstructured time between the end of Community Breakfast and the beginning of worship.

In our continual efforts to tear down barriers and to create a space where we are not defined by our differences but in our similarities of finding spirituality, we agreed that offering Holy Communion at every Community Breakfast would be a great extension that might level the playing field.

Of course, this activity came with a personal learning curve. I wanted to ensure that all felt welcome, that truly barriers were minimized regardless of any breakfast guest's religious rear-

ing. What are the differences and similarities in the practice of Holy Communion that I could draw on to make this endeavor a success?

This quest also energized my personal efforts in understanding the theology of the church that employs me (Methodist) vs. the church that reared me (Roman Catholic). I found that most religions that identify as Christians teach the following:

- “(daily) Holy Communion preserves the supernatural life of the soul by giving the communicant supernatural strength to resist temptation. It reinforces the ability of our free will to withstand the assaults of the Devil. The Church calls Holy Communion “an antidote by which we are preserved from grievous sins” (Council of Trent, October 11, 1551).
- Holy Communion increases the life of grace already present (within) by vitalizing our supernatural life and strengthening the virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit we possess.
- Holy Communion cures the spiritual diseases of the soul by cleansing it of sin. The remission of venial sins and of the sufferings due to sin takes place immediately (after receiving Communion) by reason of the acts of perfect love of God, which are awakened by the reception of the Eucharist.
- Holy Communion gives us a



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spiritual joy in the service of Christ, in defending His cause, in performing the duties of our state of life and in making the sacrifices required of us in imitating the life of our Savior.

- On Christ's own promise, Holy Communion is a pledge of heavenly glory and of our bodily resurrection from the dead (John 6:55). St. Irenaeus (died 202) simply declared that, “when our bodies partake of the Eucharist, they are no longer corruptible as they have the hope of eternal resurrection” (Against the Heresies, IV, 18,5)#1.

Dean Moyer, Nelson Price and I met a couple times to organize the details. A loaf of organic gluten-free bread arriving through our Friday morning grocery rescue program was used as the Communion offering, a beautiful old pew and table were moved into position, a cross and candles were set up, Barbara Fought's temporary donation of a silver tray with the Altar Guild's loan of a tray and Communion cups to hold the “wine”/juice offering. Taa-daa! We had a basement area worthy of a religious sacrament, blessing, reflection and prayer.

In the end, no one participated. However, we'll try again and again to break down the barriers, to change those old separatist ideas of religion to invite our guests to participate in a way that is without judgment, without fanfare, in a safe place of quiet celebration and possibly some supernatural strengthening.

— Galyn Murphy-Stanley
Outreach Coordinator

People/Prayers

PRAYERS REQUESTED:

- For those in military service:
Jim Pettyjohn and Matt Fischer

Sunday, February 7

- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, I plead to you, to direct me to help recover a misinformed child.
- **Jayne:** Thank you that we are all here together this morning.
- **Jim and Kathy:** Prayers for **Jason** on the loss of his part-time job and his father, who is dying of lung cancer.
- **Peter:** For the commitment caregivers and parents make to care well for their children and the responsibility our community has to support all the kids.
- **Ralph:** For **Deb Joiner** and **Beverly Schmidt**, both facing serious health problems.
- To all struggling to belong and find a place in this world.
- For the life and family of **Dr. Robert Laubach**.
- Prayers for caregivers that they may find the strength, support and rest they need to continue.
- St. Paul's Church mission trip to Costa Rica.
- Pray for Super Bowl players who may suffer in years ahead for their lives of entertaining us.

Sunday, February 14

- **Danny Magowan:** For **Kirsten**, who has gone to Scotland to be with her father. Be with her family as they face his departure.
- **Jeanne F-S:** Prayers for **Danielle Adams'** family on the anniversary of her brother's death.
- For those living in uncertainty

- Prayers for those who are struggling in our community.
- Stability for my boss.
- Continued mental and physical health progress.
- Forgive the past, live in the present, look forward to the future.
- For the members of James Street UMC in their uncertainty.
- The family of **Justice Scalia**

Sunday, February 21

- **Best Family:** For God to heal baby **Noah**
- **Diana:** For the ability to see God's path for me and the courage to follow it.
- For **Dot Logan**, whose 98-year-old brother, **Rev. Wesley T. Logan Jr.**, died yesterday.
- Prayers of safety for the little girl of the Amber Alert. Please find her safe.
- For those who need healing.
- For those struggling with addiction, loss and emotional and physical pain.
- Stability at work and in myself.
- Pray for anxiety and stress to go away.
- That a cease-fire in Syria be observed by all.
- Continuing prayers for the people of Syria.

THANKS AND PRAISE

Sunday, February 7

- Thank you, God, for the newborn in the church community.
- Thank God for the new baby.
- Happy birthday to **Stella**, who turns 5 on Friday!
- Thanks for this beautiful day

Sunday, February 14

- Dear God, thank you for un-

certainty that pushes me to DO something — not just talk.

- Deeply thankful for God's grace giving me the courage to heal.

Sunday, February 21

- **Betsy & Jim:** Thanksgiving for our first great-grandchild, a healthy baby boy born last Wednesday evening.
- **Jayne:** Gratitude for my brother **Dick's** successful surgery.
- Prayers of thanksgiving for my daughter-in-law's successful surgery

Altar flowers

Altar flowers were given:

- by Danielle Adams in loving memory of her brother, Todd Adams.
- by Bobbie and Ernie Hemphill in memory of loved ones.
- in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Sneddon by their children

Flowers were given to Mildred Adams, Danielle Adams, the Bambacht Family, Dorothy Logan and Carol Moyer. Flowers were delivered by Dick Humbert, Jayne Humbert, Starke Donnally and Dean Moyer.

Guild meeting

The next meeting of the UUMC Guild will be 1:30 p.m. March 30. Because Easter is the week before, we meet later in the month than usual. The meeting is at the home of Bobbie Hemphill, 4628 Providence Road, Jamesville. Program is "Planning For Planting." The speaker will be announced.

A dozen people received clothing suitable for job interviews

CONTINUED from Page 1

I was immediately impressed with the work, the services and the thoroughness of the program's offerings to the approximately 30 folk attending.

I introduced myself around to Ken Craig, Rhonda O'Connell and Ron, shared my compliments and offered me and the services of UUMC as a support in their efforts.

Within a week, Ron suggested that professional clothing was often a hurdle for many of their participants.

He mentioned that in all of the efforts of the consumers and staff in the Visions for Change programs, it stinks to send folk to job interviews without an appropriate interview outfit.

I quickly replied to Ron that this would be an area where we could help.

With the help of a generous donation from Marsha Plucinik and some reorganizing of our clothing closet, we were able to put together a good collection of professional clothing.

Ron and I scheduled a visit for his program participants to UUMC's clothing closet at noon Friday. The 30 folk I had seen a month ago had dwindled to about

12.

However, the faces I saw were thrilled with this outing and the possibility of crossing another threshold toward job readiness.

One young man very quietly said to me, as we were looking through suit jackets, that he had just gotten out of jail, was on probation and he really wanted to get a job.

As I handed him a jacket, he looked me squarely in the eye and proudly told me he was "beginning again."

Several women were able to find beautiful, long wool coats. Two of the women could not work the zipper.

As I bent over one zipper to ensure it worked, I suggested to the group of three that in a long coat, zippers can be difficult and to "patiently lock the three pieces together and tug at the bottom of zipper as you pull the tab up."

The women said that they had never had a long coat. Who knew they worked differently?

The young woman I assisted cried while smiling upon seeing herself in the mirror.

I share this with you as I want to thank you. The clothes these people chose were donations from the staff and congregation.

I want you to know that you made a difference.

Your offerings are finding new life, are empowering an individual to have another choice, to break a cycle and to live differently.

Each of the 12 individuals left with some or several things. This means there is room for more. We hope this visit will be the first of several.

Ron runs his program every month, so new individuals each month will be preparing for job interviews, orientations and job fairs. We will need more professional clothing.

As we develop this relationship with Visions for Change and Southside Interfaith, which has identified a similar need, I am mindful of Choosing to Thrive's mantra: "A goal without a plan is just a wish."

We hope to continue helping UUMC's newest guests with their goals, but we need your help with the plan.

Please donate any of your gently worn, clean, professional items to our Outreach program. We'll ensure a wish becomes a reality.

— Galyn Murphy-Stanley
Outreach Coordinator

Good Friday Volunteers

We'd like to open the sanctuary during the day on Good Friday, March 25, for people to come in and meditate.

Volunteers are needed to be present in shifts. Contact the church office if you are able to be present for an hour or two that day,

Pulpit Swap

Pastors Alicia Wood and Andy Anderson will be trading

pulpits on Sunday, April 3.

Dinner and a Movie on March 5

The movie "An Act of Love" is the story of Rev. Frank Schaefer and his decision to officiate at his son's wedding and the subsequent church trial.

Dinner is at 5 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. The movie starts at 5:30 p.m., followed by discussion and dessert. The event will end by 8:30 p.m.

Earlier in the day, the Upper New York Conference's Human Sexuality Task Force will host a forum on "Human Sexuality and Biblical Interpretation" 1-4 p.m. at Liverpool United Methodist Church, 604 Oswego St., Liverpool. Attendance is free, but registration is required by March 2 at the conference website: www.unyumc.org. Click on "Full Calendar" to find the event.

Finance Corner

Pledging Update

2016 total pledges: \$179,649
 Paid to date: \$22,230
 Non-pledge contr.: \$2,094

Sounds of the Spirit Visual Fund

Donations received \$79,519
 Expenses paid \$75,901
 Current balance \$3,618

Three purposes for team

CONTINUED from Page 2

and at the **Woodlawn Cemetery Mausoleum** at 6:45 a.m., sponsored by James Street Church and other Eastwood congregations.

• Discussed the purposes of the Leadership Team as:

1. Strengthening each congregation
2. Supporting and working together
3. How together we can make a difference in the City of Syracuse

Pastor Norrix reported that it is his understanding that the current clergy team will be reappointed for the 2016-17 conference year that starts July 1.

Retired Pastor Betty Morey, former minister at Brown Memorial and West Genesee churches, has been appointed interim pastor at St. Paul's until Jee Hae Song arrives from South Korea.

— Nelson Price

Wedding Coordinator Needed

UUMC will host four weddings this summer and a coordinator for the rehearsal and ceremony is needed. This is a paid position. Contact Pastor Alicia if you are interested or know someone who might be.



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WEEK OF FEBRUARY 28

Sunday the 28th

9 a.m. Community Breakfast, Fellowship Hall

10 a.m. Contemporary Issues

10 a.m. Sunday School, kindergarten-12th grade, Pettengill Center

10 a.m. Adult Bible Study, History Room Annex

11 a.m. Worship, Pastor Wood.

11:15 a.m. Sunday School for adults with special needs

Monday the 29th

7 p.m. Handbell Choir

Wednesday the 2nd

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Thursday the 3rd

7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Friday the 4th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

Saturday the 5th

5 p.m. Dinner and a Movie: "An Act of Love"

WEEK OF MARCH 6

Sunday the 6th

10 a.m. Contemporary Issues

10 a.m. Sunday School, kindergarten-12th grade, Pettengill Ctr

10 a.m. Adult Bible Study, History Room Annex

11 a.m. Worship, Pastor Wood. Communion

11:15 a.m. Sunday School for adults with special needs

12:15 p.m. Fellowship, Gathering Rm

12:30 p.m. Soup and Sermon Chat, Chappell Rm

1:15 p.m. Confirmation Class

Monday the 7th

7 p.m. Handbell Choir

Wednesday the 9th

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Thursday the 10th

7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Friday the 11th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

WEEK OF MARCH 13

Sunday the 13th

9 a.m. Community Breakfast, Fellowship Hall

10 a.m. Contemporary Issues

10 a.m. Sunday School, kindergarten-12th grade, Pettengill Ctr

10 a.m. Adult Bible Study, History Room Annex

11 a.m. Worship, Pastor Wood

11:15 a.m. Sunday School for adults with special needs

12:15 p.m. Fellowship, Gathering Rm.

12:30 p.m. Soup and Sermon Chat, Chappell Rm

Wednesday the 16th

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Thursday the 17th

7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Friday the 18th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community



Feb. 21, 2016 service
(4 photos)

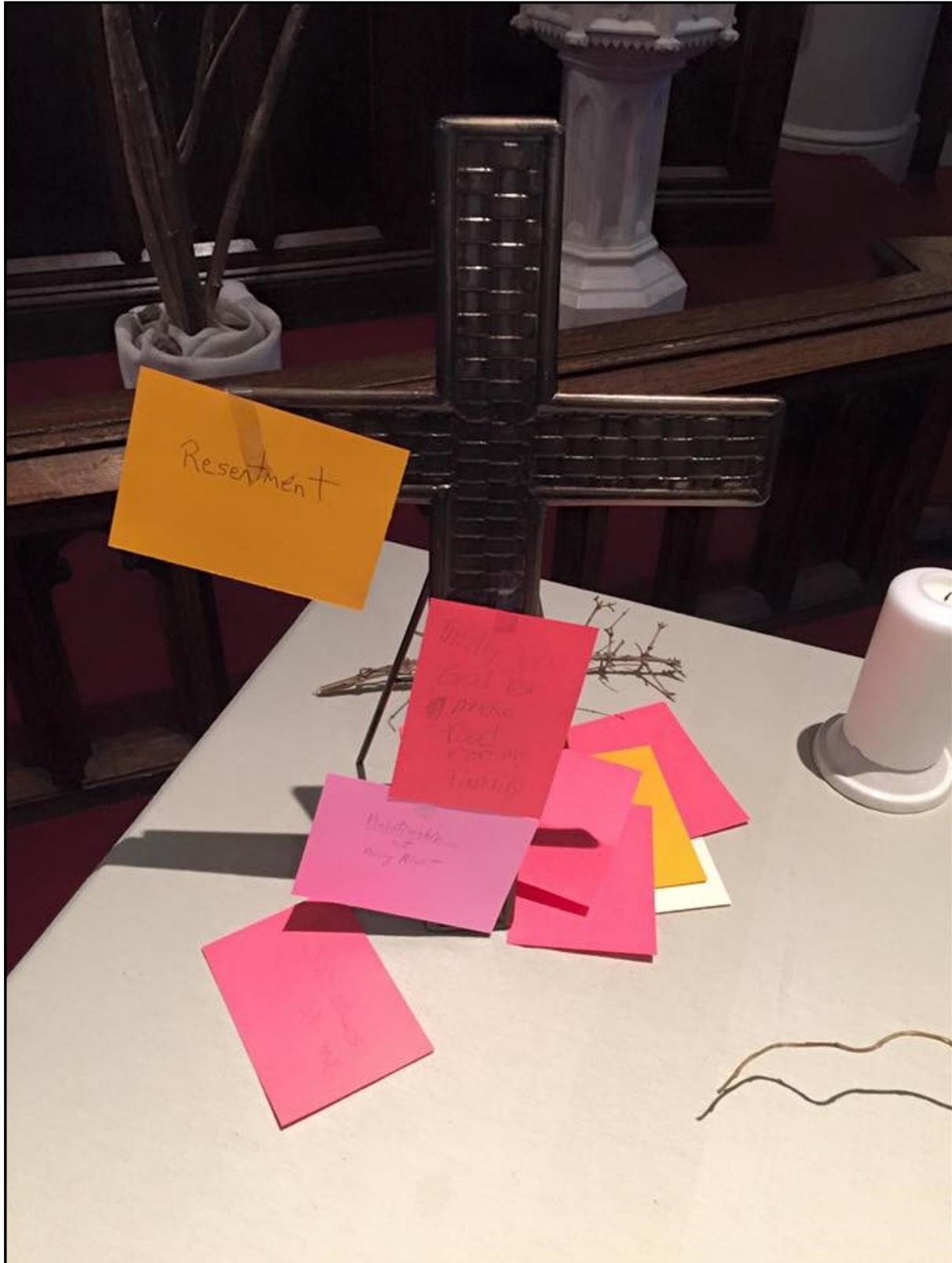


On the second Sunday in Lent, "emptiness" is our focus in our journey through the Gifts of the Dark Wood (our theme). Pastor Alicia and the children are silent with their hands cupped as empty bowls.



The children and Pastor Alicia act out a prayer.





As part of our journey through the Dark Wood we wrote down things we need to let go of so we can live more fully and placed them by or on crosses in the sanctuary.

Feb. 14, 2016 service
(1 photo)



The Senior Choir is sitting with the congregation during Lent and comes forward for its presentations.

Ash Wednesday service
Feb. 10, 2016
(5 photos)











Congregational Potluck Luncheon

Feb. 7, 2016
(5 photos)









