

# THE CHIMES

Feb. 28, 2014

**Next Chimes  
deadline:  
March 12**

## Inside this issue:

Pastor's Page: Travel lessons apply at home	2
Outreach: Volunteer Graduates	3
Finance Corner	4
Guild Meeting	4
Thanks, from UMCOR	4
Birthdays	5
People/Prayers	5
Altar Flowers	6
Three-Week Schedule	6

**Correction: 100 years ago this month a fire destroyed our sanctuary**

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

Rev. Craig French, Pastor  
Tom Boll, Editor

## District ministry plan for Syracuse: fewer worship centers and pastors

On Jan. 27, the Rev. Darryl Barrow, Crossroads District superintendent, released a plan to restructure urban ministry in the city of Syracuse.

Five elements sit at the heart of the plan:

- bringing all the city churches together into a single blended/cooperative ministry
- reducing the number of "worship centers" from 8 to 2 (or 3)
- reducing the number of appointed pastors by half or more (from the current 8)
- uniting the remaining pastors as a single staff team, serving the entire city
- developing "Shalom Zones" in different corners of the city as the primary focus of United Methodist mission and ministry in Syracuse

The next day, Rev. Barrow convened a meeting at UUMC of representatives from all eight city congregations — Bellevue Heights, Brown Memorial, Erwin First, Gethsemane, James Street, Rockefeller, St. Paul's, University — and observers from

Christ Community and The ROAD to discuss the plan.

Attending from University Church were Carol Boll, Bob Dewey and Craig French, along with Beth Drew, who oversaw hospitality.

How and when all this happens is not known. A second meeting of city church representatives and the district superintendent was held this past week on Feb. 25. No new information was given except that a definitive timeline would be announced in the coming week.

It is expected that pastoral assignments will be revised as early as this summer. One city pastor already knows she will be moving to Troy.

The plan has generated many questions, along with a good bit of uncertainty and anxiety. At the same time, there has been acknowledgment that something needs to be done — that the present trajectory, with no changes, will eventually lead to the closing of all eight churches, one by one.

See **FOUR**, Page 3

## Lent: Luncheon, guest preacher, music and prayer

The Lenten lineup this year includes a number of events at UUMC.

As usual, Ash Wednesday, March 5, the sanctuary will be open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. for silent prayer and meditation. Rev. French will be on hand for those who wish to speak privately to him or to receive the mark of ashes on their forehead.

An after-church potluck luncheon will be held on March 16 in Fellowship Hall for members and



**Rev. Deb Richardson-Moore**

friends to have a time to connect and chat.

Sunday, March 23, the Rev. Deb Richardson-Moore from Greenville, S.C., author of "The Weight of Mercy: A Novice Pastor on the City Streets," will be

See **READINGS**, Page 6

# Lessons from travel that apply here at home



Rev. French

I just returned from eight days in Ireland. It was a great vacation for lots of reasons, including the fact that I got almost totally away from work. Exactly what a vacation is for. No datebook. No pads of paper. No laptop. Even the two books I brought with me for Lenten sermon planning remained unopened.

From time to time, however, I did find myself thinking about church, in terms of (a) persons in my prayers, and (b) the District Superintendent's new plan to restructure ministry in the city of Syracuse, including reducing the number of worship sites and pastors.

Curiously, some of my experiences in Ireland seemed to parallel and speak to the uncertain situation we — and all the other United Methodist churches in Syracuse — now face. The rest of this column goes back and forth between my adventures in Ireland and the lessons those adventures may hold for the future that awaits us.

(For more details about the new ministry plan introduced by the district superintendent, please see the accompanying story on Page 1.)

## 1. "I hate it. I hate it. I hate it."

**Ireland:** Strong words, for sure. And perhaps a bit of an overstatement. But an honest and truthful one, nonetheless. Not about our trip to Ireland, as a whole — which was wonderful in so many ways. Nor about the sights we saw, the places we visited, the people we met. Again, all exceptional. No, my comment specifically reflects my feelings about driving on the opposite (left-hand) side of the road.

I expected it might take some adjusting, but I had no idea how difficult — frustrating — aggravating the change would actually turn out to be. The problem lay not in remembering to drive on the other side of the road. (Well, except for the time I found myself heading straight into a line of cars exiting the harbor tunnel into Dublin ... )

No, the problem came in finding myself in a different position — with the steering wheel, driver's seat and driving lane all reversed from what I'm used to. That "little" shift was enough to push

me out of my comfort zone and make me lose my sense of place in the world. I found it difficult to gauge where I was in relationship to either the center line or the outer edge of the road — especially when driving on narrow country roads or even narrower city streets. The result was a regular scraping of roadside brush, a couple of mirror mishaps, and one or two run-ins with curbs (eventually leading to a flat tire and the purchase of a new one). It also caused me to skip some sights, because I feared they would mean further tight passageways, further stress, further annoyance.

**Syracuse:** The new ministry plan for Syracuse city churches will likely evoke similar strong feelings and a loss of place (or at least the fear of that). I understand that. Boy, do I understand! If nothing else, my experience of driving in Ireland was a well-timed reminder of how upsetting change can be — even to reasonably mature, stable, well-adjusted people. I'm going to keep that in mind as we try to navigate the new course in front of us.

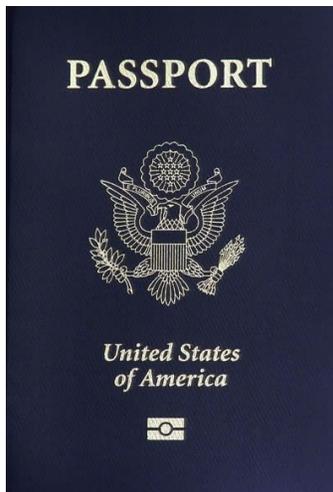
## 2. In the midst of chaos or disaster, angels may be lurking.

**Ireland:** As we made our way into Kilkenny at twilight on Day 2, I heard a suspicious thumping in one of the tires. Having just banged into one or two of Kilkenny's ancient curbs, I had a good idea what was coming. I found a wide open parking spot, so there'd be room to work on the tire (just in case). Sure enough, it was totally flat. The 24-hour roadside assistance that came with the rental car consisted of a voice on the phone saying, "Fix it yourself."

That's when Angel 1 appeared, in the form of a parking lot attendant who offered to help me change the tire and, when the wheel lugs wouldn't turn, found a local garage for me to call. As I waited for the mechanic to arrive, Angel 2 appeared, in the form of a shopper on his way home, who offered to give the wheel a second try. Angels, apparently, have differing gifts and abilities, for Angel 2 succeeded in loosening the tire and in no time flat had the spare tire securely in place. Both angels disappeared into the night, taking only a "thank you" for their help.

**Syracuse:** As we make our way into the new ministry plan, no doubt there will be unexpected and unwelcome mishaps, obstacles and detours.

See **YOU CAN'T**, Page 4



# Congratulate the first graduating class of volunteers



Deb Virgo

What's in a name?

A while back, we re-named what goes on in this church on Friday mornings "the Friday Community."

We recognized that it was more than a food pantry. Although we affectionately still call it "pantry."

And since then it has risen to meet its name, with groups decorating Christmas trees and so-

cializing and praying.

One of the main things that make Friday a Community is the volunteers. And again, "volunteer" is too simple of a word.

Because the people who come every week to help are investing their energy and their creativity.

They are working to make the pantry a place where all feel safe and welcome and respected.

So we gave a core group of these volunteers a new name: the Leading Through Service

group. And, not surprisingly, they have risen to meet their name.

The first graduating class is four people: Jeff Foley, Mike Cammone, Robert Simmons and Val Young.

Each of them has brought their passion, their compassion, their experience and their commitment to our congregation.

I am proud to know them and to serve with them. I hope that you will have a chance to serve with them also.

— Deb Virgo  
Interim Friday Community  
Coordinator

## Four key goals are related to plan's vision; congregations to vote in spring

CONTINUED from Page 1

The proposed reorganization is rooted in three realities:

- The shrinking and aging of church membership and attendance in all of the churches, including University; the inability to make new disciples and new members; growing financial difficulties
- The authority of the bishop to determine whether a church "stands alone" or is paired with one or more other churches
- The authority of the bishop to make all clergy appointments

At the core of the plan is its stated vision: "Within the City of Syracuse there will be a healthy UM congregation that intentionally develops two or more worship/program centers practicing vital spirituality that is moving beyond its walls, reaching new people and joining the community in meeting needs in a holistic and redemptive way."

Closely related to the vision are four key goals:

- To grow spiritual vitality, reach new people and make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
  - To work as a collaborative, connectional and strategic church ...
  - To strategize, plan, collaborate and assess the current and future needs of Syracuse in relation to starting new faith communities and mission outreach:
    1. Transforming the existing congregations (need to reclaim our churches' potential)
    2. Forming new faith communities (we need to create new faith communities, more diverse faith communities, and multi-ethnic faith communities)
    3. Empowering the congregation to become partners with other congregations and their communities, walking with people and creating life-changing ministries that address the whole of the human condition
    4. To use what God has already provided and make it stronger
- Each congregation will be asked to vote "yes" or "no" on the plan this spring. Congregations voting to affirm the plan will begin working with other like-minded congregations in fairly short order. Congregations voting no "will not be provided pastoral leadership" and will be moved toward some diminished status.
- A copy of the plan is available from the church office or online at the church's website under the "Reports" tab. University Church's Governing Board, Trustees and Staff-Pastor Relations Committee have all begun discussing the merits and implications of the plan.
- Please feel free to voice your questions and comments to University Church's representatives: Carol Boll, Bob Dewey, Beth Drew and Craig French.

You can't predict everything. Surprises can be good.

**CONTINUED** from Page 2

But no doubt there will be angels, too, ready to intervene and intercede on our behalf. Will we have eyes to see them ... and a willingness to accept their assistance?

*3. Being too cautious can be just as dangerous as jumping without looking.*

**Ireland:** As I analyzed my driving problems, I realized that my discomfort and unfamiliarity were causing me to be overly cautious. Not wanting to run into oncoming cars, I avoided the middle of the road and hugged the outside, instead. This was my undoing, for it brought me into contact with the roadside shrubbery, mirrors of parked cars, and those spiteful stiletto curbs. Once I figured that out and tossed my timidness aside, the driving and the trip became a whole lot better.

**Syracuse:** As we begin to find our way into the new plan, the natural tendency will be to take it slowly and cautiously. However, this natural cautiousness may, in fact, keep us from making the most of the new plan and certainly from learning to enjoy and appreciate it to the fullest. If the plan is to succeed, we may well need to relax, take some risks and try to have some fun along the way.

*4. Some things are beyond our control. How we handle those moments is what matters.*

**Ireland:** The weather was miserable. I'm not exaggerating. Depending on whose word you took, it was Ireland's worst weather in 30-60 years. Rain every day. Snow. Sleet. Hail. Hurricane-strength winds (topping 100 miles per hour). Power and phone outages. Flooded roads. Streets that were impassable due to fallen trees and power lines. None of

that kept us from enjoying ourselves and making the most of our time there.

**Syracuse:** No matter how good this new ministry plan eventually turns out to be ... no matter how careful and thorough we are in our planning ... there are going to be events that none of us can foresee. Events that don't fit the plan. Events that force the plan to be revised. It's not about faulty or inadequate planning. It's the reality of life. Will we let those outside intrusions slow us down, or will we keep going, no matter what?

*5. You can't plan and predict everything. Surprises can be good.*

**Ireland:** One of the best days on our trip came about as a result of a chance meeting in a pub the night before.

As we chatted over dinner, someone asked if we planned to tour the Beara Peninsula. No, it wasn't on our list, but based on their recommendation, we altered our carefully made plans. The next day took us up and over Healy Pass. The views were absolutely spectacular and breath-taking in every direction — especially with the dusting of snow that had come overnight. To think we would have missed it, if we hadn't been willing to adjust our itinerary.

**Syracuse:** At this stage of the newly announced plan, there's a lot of uncertainty and a lot of details that are unclear. The lack of specifics makes the plan hard to grasp and harder to embrace enthusiastically. The truth is that this new plan — even after we pin down as many details as possible — will be constantly changing and evolving over time ... just the way ministry plans and family plans always do. Very likely, some of the best parts of the plan involve elements we can't even imagine today.

— Craig

**Pledging Update**

2014 total pledges:	\$230,877
Paid to date:	\$22,904
Non-pledge contr.:	\$2,267
Pre-paid pledges:	\$56,504

**Sounds of the Spirit Campaign**

Donations received	\$70,743
Expenses paid	\$70,589
Current balance	\$154

**Guild Meeting**

The next Guild meeting is March 26 at 1:30 p.m. at Bobbie Hemphill's home. Ernie Hemphill will speak on "Pharmacy in the 1900s." All are welcome.

**Thanks**

Thanks to Jo-Ann K. May for providing the concept and materials for the Peale Entrance Display Case honoring Black History Month. Take note of the selection of books and highlighted dates for February.

**Volunteer Luncheon**

This year's volunteer luncheon is April 3. Invitations will be going out shortly.

**More Thanks, from UMCOR**

UUMC received thanks from the United Methodist Committee on Relief for two donations from the congregation in December.

They were:

- ◆ \$1,235 for International Disaster Response
- ◆ \$2,000 for Dr. Mark Zimmerman in Nepal

**From the History Room**

Church Historian Rosemary DeHoog's "From the History Room" column isn't history. It will return in the next issue of The Chimes.

# PEOPLE/PRAYER CONNECTION

## PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR:

- Those in military service: **Nathan Miller, Jim Pettyjohn, Lt. Timothy Nevin, Matt Fischer**

## Sunday, Feb. 23

- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, guide me to create better choices in my new year of life on earth! P.S. 45 candles!
- **Grandma Ann:** Daughter **Sue** very ill with the flu (a strain not included in the vaccine).
- **Josephine:** God please help heal my eyes!
- **Peter:** Thanks for the natural way that people can come back to their wholeness, strength and well-being – in love with each other
- Thank God for all he has done.
- Blessings on all who are ill and having surgery

## Sunday, Feb. 16

- **Dave Sacia and Ed Potter:** For **Susan Burnap**, a dear friend with metastasized lung cancer.
- **Peter Swords:** Dr. King's vision of "the beloved Community" and our opportunity to make it happen here
- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, guide me to prevent and remind me to never use my son as a bargaining chip to settle a dispute between my husband and myself!
- **Katie** and her family
- That God will continue to bless us and give us wisdom and perseverance.
- Victims and survivors of sexual abuse, those who perpetrate these crimes and those whose silence enables it. May we end this plague.

## Sunday, Feb. 9

- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, direct your servants to ask from you what we can do to build a better life!
- **Grandma Ann:** Thanks for **Chris** back to work, **Blaine** getting an apartment, **Katie's** healing, **Dave's** recovery from surgery
- **Becky Potter** and **Julie Harrison**, daughter and granddaughter of **Ed and Lee Potter**, as they travel to El Salvador as part of a mission team sponsored by Young Life.
- It is my concern that all people should be cared for.
- Prayers for all the people in the hospitals should be well again.

## DEATH

- Former UUMC member **Peter Mortenson** died Feb. 13 in Ann Arbor, Mich.

## CARE AND SHARE MINISTRY ASKS PRAYERS FOR:

- **March 2:** Gwen Tillapaugh-Fay, Michael Fay, Maria Fay, Connor Fay
- **March 9:** Michael Toe, Sherman Toe, Dennis Triggs
- **March 16:** Kevin Upcraft, Corinne Upcraft, Jacob Upcraft
- **March 23:** Jim Virgo, Deb Virgo, Alison Virgo, Benjamin Virgo
- **March 30:** Michael Warner, Anthony Weah, Evelyn Weah, Sam Weah

## PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR CROSSROADS DISTRICT CHURCHES AND PASTORS:

- **March 2:** South Scriba UMC, Bill Nickolas; Fulton First UMC,

Michael Weeden

- **March 9:** Brewerton UMC, Jack Keating; Christ Church Parish, Ed Bennett
- **March 16:** Bridgeport UMC, Hyun Joo Yang
- **March 23:** Granby Center UMC, Dean Flemming
- **March 30:** Camillus First UMC, Marcia Wickert

---

## March Birthdays

- 2 – Jerry Cargo, Emelia Weah
- 3 – Julia Ross
- 4 – Grace Bradshaw
- 5 – Doug Hemphill, Bob Coutts
- 6 – Aimie Sarkodie-Mensah Best
- 9 – Kirsten Magowan, Keith Wellner
- 11 – Rita Soufleris
- 16 – Sierra Messina-Yauchzy, Nichola Weah
- 17 – Don Betz, Jonathan Weah
- 19 – Stuart Hosler, Dianne Grome
- 20 – Donald Koten, Vito Sciscioli
- 22 – Craig Myers
- 23 – Bill Potter
- 24 – Lisa Weah
- 25 – Michael Fay
- 26 – Barbara Nunn
- 27 – Rosemary DeHoog, Denise Marshall, Jeanne Finlayson-Schueler
- 29 – Renee McKay

---

## Website Changes

Our denomination has a redesigned website. Check it out at UMC.org.

The Upper New York Annual Conference wants your opinions as it redesigns its site. To fill out a brief survey, go to <http://buff.ly/1kgdfW2>

## Altar Flowers

Altar flowers were given by Bob and Ginny Dewey, Ernie and Bobbie Hemphill, the children of Kate and Dick Shickel and Nancy Hough.

Flowers were given to Roger MacDonald, Ginny Dewey, Jim Wiggins, Ben Wiles, Ben O'Connor, Eva Cooper Jah, Sue Bambacht and Alicia Wood.

Flowers were delivered by Barb and Jerry Cargo and Bobbie and Ernie Hemphill.



## University United Methodist Church

*Feed My People: Body, Mind, and Spirit*

1085 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13210  
Phone: 315-475-7277 Fax: 315-475-8995  
www.uumcsyracuse.org Email: uumc@twcny.rr.com  
www.facebook.com/UUMCSyracuse

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Syracuse, NY  
Permit No. 2761

Return service requested  
Dated material

### WEEK OF MARCH 2

#### Sunday the 2nd

**9:30 a.m.** Contemporary Issues

**10:30 a.m.** Worship

**10:45 a.m.** Sunday School: Pre-K through grade 12, adults with special needs

**11:45 a.m.** Discussion on District Ministry Plan, sanctuary, followed by Soup and Sermon Chat, Chappell Room

#### Wednesday the 5th-Ash Wednesday

**9 a.m. to 6 p.m.** Sanctuary open for prayer, receiving of ashes

**11:15 a.m.** Staff Meeting

#### Thursday the 6th

**7:30 p.m.** Senior Choir

#### Friday the 7th

**10 a.m. - noon** Friday Community

### WEEK OF MARCH 9

#### Sunday the 9th

**9 a.m.** Community/Church Breakfast

**9:30 a.m.** Contemporary Issues

**9:30 a.m.** Sunday School: Elementary and high school grades

**10:30 a.m.** Worship

**10:45 a.m.** Sunday School: pre-K, kindergarten, adults with special needs

**11:45 a.m.** Fellowship, Gathering Room

**Noon** Soup and Sermon Chat, Chappell Room

#### Monday the 10th

**7 p.m.** Handbell Choir

#### Wednesday the 12th

**11:15 a.m.** Staff Meeting

#### Thursday the 13th

**7:30 p.m.** Senior Choir

#### Friday the 14th

**10 a.m. - noon** Friday Community

### WEEK OF MARCH 16

#### Sunday the 16th

**9:30 a.m.** Contemporary Issues

**10:30 a.m.** Worship

**10:45 a.m.** Sunday School: Pre-K through grade 12, adults with special needs

**11:45 a.m.** Fellowship, Gathering Room

**Noon** Congregational Potluck Luncheon, Fellowship Hall

#### Wednesday the 19th

**11:15 a.m.** Staff Meeting

#### Thursday the 20th

**7:30 p.m.** Senior Choir

#### Friday the 21st

**10 a.m. - noon** Friday Community

## Readings, sermons for Lent tap into sayings of Desert Mothers, Fathers

### CONTINUED from page 1

our guest preacher, courtesy of the Rev. Donald Wright Lectureship. A workshop with Rev. Moore is being planned for Saturday, March 22.

April 6, the Senior Choir will present its special Lenten music.

During Lent, you are invited to join in reading "City of Prayer" by Rachel Srubas, which has 40 brief chapters that connect some of the earliest writings of Christian believers to life and faith to-

day – perfect for reading one a day for the 40 days of Lent. Portions of the readings will form the backdrop for Sunday sermons and talk-back sessions after worship. You can buy the book in the church office for \$13.

If you don't buy the book, you can get a taste of its themes through the sayings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers that start each chapter. The Desert Fathers and Mothers lived in the 3rd and 4th centuries and sought to draw

closer to God by withdrawing to the silence, solitude and rigorous simplicity of the desert.

Two examples:

Amma Theodora said, "A devout person happened to be insulted by someone and replied, 'I could say as much to you but the commandment of God keeps my mouth shut.'"

Hyperichius said, "Hollow out the rocky places of your heart, so that you turn them into springs of water."

# February Snow in Syracuse 2014









**Communion table arrangement by Christine and Marg to accompany sermon by Alicia Wood that opened with a video clip from “The Lorax” that mentioned planting.**





**Alicia Wood speaks to the children on Feb. 16.**



**Bobbie Hemphill shows a child's cap she knitted at the Friday Community crafts table.**



**Jeff Foley helps a pantry guest pack her food.**



**Julius Lawrence reads Scripture while staffing the door as he awaits Friday Community guests.**



**Getting the fruit ready for the Community/Church Breakfast**



**Jeanne chops up the scrambled eggs.**



**Contemporary Issues Class members, from left: Elise, Val, Russ, Eva and Barbara.**