

THE CHIMES

March 16, 2016

**Next Chimes
deadline:
April 6**

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**Pastor Alicia will swap
pulpits April 3 with
Pastor Andy Anderson.**

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

Palm procession begins Holy Week drama as ‘Gifts of the Dark Wood’ draws to a close

Palm Sunday is just about here, and it marks the final Sunday of our Lenten journey on which we explored the “Gifts of the Dark Wood.”

The theme for Palm Sunday is “The Gift of Misfits.” A processional will include children and adults with palms.

This week, during the time for reflection after the sermon, we’ll be encouraged to write a thank-you note to someone who has been with us at times in the Dark Wood journey in our lives.

On Maundy Thursday, March 24, worship shifts to James Street United Methodist Church, 3027 James St., Syracuse, at 6 p.m.

The service, on “The Gift of Disappearing,” will be a dramatic reading of the events of that day from the perspectives of Mary, friend of Jesus; Simon Peter, Judas, a Roman soldier, Mary, mother of Jesus; and Salome. Communion will be served.

Our sanctuary will be open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Good Friday, March 25, for meditation and prayer. Volunteers are sought to help with that. Call the church office if you are able to.

Easter Sunday worship’s theme is “Where Do We Go from Here?” The Handbell Choir will be accompanying the Senior Choir on two selections and the congregation on one hymn.

Hand to Plow: See people as gifts from God, not needs

The Syracuse United Methodist Large Group Hand to Plow gathering met for the third time in late February to promote cross-congregational interaction and discuss missional life through the lens of the book “When Helping Hurts” by Brian Fickert.

Again the gathering included approximately 25 laypersons, including six members from UUMC, as well as all three Syracuse clergy.

Pastor Andy Anderson opened the morning with a short worship service, and from there Pastor Alicia led the group in a discussion of the central themes of the book and how they apply to UMC mission work.

Two key takeaways from the dis-

ussion were:

(1) **“Don’t be a one-hit wonder”** – A church’s mission strategy should not revolve around showing up on special occasions/holidays with food and gifts while disappearing the rest of the year but instead be a consistent support structure building trust and relationships with people throughout the city all year round.

(2) **Relief, Rehabilitation and Development** – This concept was translated into the common saying, “Give a person a fish, teach a person to fish and then build a fishing community.” Here we are to understand that while relief mission work (food pan-

See **FOCUSING**, Page 5

Spiritual growth during confirmation retreat, Dark Wood journey



Alicia Wood

Greetings,

It has been my joy and pleasure to lead the Syracuse United Methodist Churches confirmation class this year with Jeanne Finlayson-Schueler and 10 students.

There are four churches represented: James Street, Gethsemane, Erwin First and University.

University has four students who have chosen to continue their Christian journey of faith through our confirmation class.

March 11 and 12 we all attended the "Bishop's Confirmation Retreat" at Casowasco.

Our students were very present in all of the worship and discussions about their faith. I was so proud of how engaged they were as we reflected and prayed.

My favorite part of the retreat was the relationships built among the students. They now have friends in four of our United Methodist city churches. It was a weekend of spiritual growth for both the students and me.

I have heard several in our congregation share their stories of spiritual growth as they have wandered into the Dark Wood this Lenten season. I'm grateful the Gifts of the Dark Wood has been a time of reflection and growth.



The 10 members of the Syracuse United Methodist Churches confirmation class, plus Pastor Alicia and Jeanne Finlayson-Schueler.

For me, the Gifts of the Dark Wood has reminded me that time is so valuable as is my relationship with God. So I cannot make myself so busy that I neglect or shortchange my time or relationship with God.

The gift emptiness had resonated with me most. Sometimes we need to make space for God to do something in us. I know this is true of me.

Emptiness sounded sad and scary to me at first glance, but as I read and reflected on this I realized I needed to make space for a deeper relationship with God.

In my busyness, I had hurried

my devotional time.

My journey into the Dark Wood has given me the reminder to *trust* more fully in God and the process of life.

I have also been reminded that we as humans share in common the uneasiness of uncertainty and getting lost even as we do our best to trust in God.

I'm grateful for this reflective season of Lent, your authentic work in being present and open and the anticipation of Easter, the resurrection and the new things to come.

Peace be with you,

— Pastor Alicia

Ministry Shares collected in 2015 fall far short of money needed for Conference commitments

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We want to share some challenges, concerns, and, by the grace of God, opportunities for our Conference in the area of financial stewardship.

As we finalized the total of Conference Ministry Shares collected in 2015 from local churches, we be-

came aware that there continues to be a significant gap between the dollars needed for the ministries we have committed to do and the funds available to do them.

Last year at the Annual Conference session, Conference members approved a budget designed to help us live within our means even as we

sought to equip Conference leaders and congregations for the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. However, once again, Ministry Share receipts came in at a lower level than the prior year, forcing difficult choices to be made about how to

See CONFERENCE, Page 5

SU students include Food Pantry in their educational experiences



**Galyn
Murphy-
Stanley**

Over the past three weeks about 40 Syracuse University students and their professors moved through UUMC.

The first group had freshman students in an Honors program taught by a “food studies” professor.

The second group, mostly juniors, was enrolled in SU’s Falk College’s Food Studies program.

The freshmen visited on a beautiful Saturday morning, learned the mechanics of our Food Pantry and then worked on auxiliary projects that happen during Friday Community.

These students packed “blizzard packs” (pre-packed, nonperishable food bags filled with supplies for two meals, breakfast, miscellaneous other foods and toiletries, suitable to get an individual through a blizzard or a couple days where one couldn’t get to the store – hence the name “blizzard pack”), organized clothing for our visitors from Visions for Change, shelved books for our Little Library and packed small toiletry bags.

The juniors were much more



SU honor students prepare “blizzard packs” during their visit.

traditional in their time. After a quick tour of UUMC, I presented the workings, large and small, of an urban food pantry inclusive of data and statistics.

As anyone who has ever learned knows, the lesson is only as good as the teacher, so I did some homework to prepare for our visitors.

After hearing highlights from Professor Evan Weissman on the history of food pantries, I learned that we, as a nation, were basically able to stave off starvation for all Americans with the invention of Food Stamps by Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace.

The program's first adminis-

trator, Milo Perkins, established that for every \$1 an individual received, 50 cents were blue and 50 cents were orange stamps.

Orange stamps allowed one to buy food items of choice. The blue stamps allowed one to buy generously from the national agricultural surplus.

With slight variations this system worked famously.

From the 1930s to the 1980s, Americans in troubled or low-income standing were fairly fed American-generated food.

During budget cuts of the Reagan years social service pro-
See **RELIGIOUS**, Page 5

April birthdays

- 1 - Matthew Steenberg
- 2 - Ted Holmes, Jereline Weah
- 5 - Ralph Best, Diamond Weah
- 6 - Connor Fay
- 8 - Russ Young
- 11 - Sheila Murphy
- 13 - Merylyn Mungure, Doug Coutts
- 14 - Marty Nicholas
- 16 - Julie Pedro, Ryan Steen-

- berg, Eleanor Frank, Jeff Huard
- 17 - Dale Fryer
- 19 - Dr. Richard Phillips, Gale Youmell, Abby Hyland
- 20 - Corinne Upcraft
- 22 - Princess Weah
- 23 - Golden Duru
- 24 - Carol Dawes
- 25 - Cheryl Brown
- 29 - Ginny Knight, Janet Sciscioli
- 30 - Vera Gaskin, Dennis Triggs

Flower donors welcome

Thanks to \$40 donations from many members, we enjoy the beauty of floral arrangements during Sunday worship. After the service, they are taken to homebound or ill members or given in appreciation for service. The Altar Guild welcomes new volunteers to donate these flowers. Please call Marg McDivitt, 488-2201, if interested.

People/Prayers

PRAYERS REQUESTED:

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

Sunday, February 28

- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, I thank you for yelling to me, Get going to the path I set before you!
- **Jayne:** Dear Lord, please let the cease-fire in Syria continue.
- **Peter:** For a big change in U.S. priorities – to notice our job of keeping the planet safe, and all our living species, including our human species.
- **Tendai:** Thank you, Lord, for all your blessings and answered prayers. Please bless all those in need. Amen
- Pray for all the people who were involved in finding **Mad-dox**. Prayer for all suffering from her passing.
- Prayers for the children who have been harmed this past week and for their families.
- Prayers of thanks for the gift of all children.
- Pray for stress and anxiety to go away.
- For a friend who is undergoing cancer treatment.
- I pray that God's healing rest upon my mother, **Mary Payne**.
- My younger U.S. veteran buddies still suffering from PTSD and other wounds that can't be seen.
- Pray for sanity in our political process.
- Prayers for **Mary Payne**, Eva Jah's mom, who is hospitalized in Liberia.

Sunday, March 6

- **Ann:** Pray that I can get along with my family, especially my mother.
- **Anneke:** Prayers for uncomplicated successful surgery tomorrow.
- **Dithole:** Pray for my sister, who had a heart attack in South Africa yesterday.
- **Doug:** Pray for my uncle and his family. This morning he is critically ill.
- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, I praise you to guide me toward your family affairs!
- **John:** Today is my birthday
- **Linda:** My mom has been diagnosed with brain cancer. Pray for her treatment and recovery.
- **Morgan:** Prayers for a successful, second knee surgery for Dan and prayers for healing after.
- **Peter:** Thanks for health and wellness, everybody's natural birthright and the ways we can return to this natural balance and peace.
- For new members of our church becoming friends of older members.
- Prayers for **Lori Wyman** on her birthday.
- For a new beginning and a renewal of spirit.

Sunday, March 13

- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, ignite the flames inside this hidden heart chamber by burning off old useless notions.
- **Peter:** For the memory of **Alison Swords**, whose enthusiasm for music is carrying on in new, younger generations.
- For healing acceptance and

spiritual progress.

- For those who are sick and in need of healing.
- For **Ann:** May doctors find the source of her pain.
- Prayers for the family of **Dr. William Stewart**
- Prayers for Tuesday, March 15, when I see a vascular surgeon.
- Prayers of hope, love and healing to the family of **Samantha Stewart**.
- That I have a safe trip back this week.
- Please help restore some logic, thoughtfulness and dignity to our nation's political process.
- For Legal Advocacy for the Disabled.

THANKS AND PRAISE

Sunday, February 28

- **Beth:** A joy! **Olivia Drew Rios**, born Feb. 17, daughter of **Katie and Carlos Rios**, granddaughter of **Beth Drew**.
- Congratulations to the **Weahs** on the birth of baby **Dominick**.
- Congrats to **Rebekah Grella** and **SJ Moon** on their engagement and prayers for their future.
- Thank you, God, for sun and spring and flowers

Sunday, March 6

- A "welcome" to the world to **Michael David Saxby**, born Feb. 28, great-grandson of **Nancy Nevin**.

Sunday, March 13

- Thankful for a successful surgery for **Dan**. Continued prayers for healing and a speedy recovery.

Conference Leadership Team made cuts with 'least direct impact' on ministry of local church

CONTINUED from Page 2
make do with less.

While financial stewardship through our Ministry Shares giving has declined overall, it is not all bad news. We increased our General Church Apportionment giving to 65 percent, and we funded Africa University, the Black College fund, and the Northeastern Jurisdiction at 100 percent.

Furthermore, two-thirds of our congregations paid 100 percent of their Ministry Shares in 2015. Many of the churches that did not pay 100 percent in 2015 have been working hard to increase their level of support to the connection. This is all good news that we celebrate!

Unfortunately, nearly one-third of Upper New York churches are paying below 100 percent – many well below – and a fair number are not paying any Ministry Shares at all. This has limited our ability to adequately support ministries in the budget, and the time has come for

some very painful decisions.

According to our Conference's governance structure, the Conference Leadership Team is authorized to act on behalf of the Annual Conference between sessions. Working with the Council on Finance and Administration – the team responsible for overseeing the well-being of Conference finances – the Conference Leadership Team has developed a 2016 spending plan to manage Conference expenditures based on the assumption we will not have all the dollars we need to fully fund our budget.

To accomplish this, we were once again forced to change ministries formally categorized as "fixed" expenditures (i.e., fully funded) or "variable" expenditures (i.e., partially funded) to categories receiving less or, in several cases, no funding in the coming year.

The process of making these decisions has been very painful. There were no easy answers. The

guiding principle in making these decisions was, "What cuts will have the least direct impact on the ministry of the local church?"

In the end, we feel we made the right decisions, but nobody on the Conference Leadership Team or the Conference CF&A is happy with the results.

We pray that Ministry Share receipts will exceed expectations in 2016, resulting in the restoration of some elements of our ministries that have become unfunded in the current spending plan.

In closing, we want to thank the churches that have continued to pay their Ministry Shares at 100 percent and those who are working hard to increase their support toward that goal. Together, we make amazing ministry happen!

Grace and peace,
*Nathan Trost, on behalf of the
Conference Leadership Team
Lawrence Lake, on behalf of CF&A*

Religious communities filled gap when social service programs were severely cut

CONTINUED from Page 3
grams, including Food Stamps, were butchered.

Religious communities quickly rose to the demand of feeding their neighbors, congregations and friends. UUMC's Food Pantry is a perfect example of this methodology.

As I answered student and professor questions of how many folk we feed, how we acquire the food we provide, how we fund our programming, the role CNY Food Bank plays and the importance of the auxiliary programs, I realized that UUMC's Food Pantry is not only part of American

history but part of our current American fabric.

Our Emergency Food Service Program is a depended-upon resource for all of our pantry guests.

So proudly and happily I greet and feed our guests understanding that we are working within a broken system of feeding America.

For more information: See the Netflix documentary "A Place at the Table" based off text by Susan Rebecca White.

— *Galyn Murphy-Stanley
Outreach Coordinator*

Focusing on relief and ignoring rehabilitation and development just continues cycle of need

CONTINUED from Page 1
tries, clothing giveaways, etc.) is extremely important to our communities' immediate suffering, working on relief while ignoring rehabilitation and development within a community does not lead to change within the community but only continues

the cycle of need.

I'll leave you with same question we ended the day with, which was discussed in small covenant groups: "What would mission look like and feel like if we saw people as gifts from God rather than a list of needs?"

The next Hand to Plow Large

Group Gathering will be held on Saturday, April 16, at 10 a.m. at Gethsemane UMC where the theme of Evangelism will be discussed using the book "Unbinding the Gospel" by Martha Grace Reese. All are welcome!

— *Sophie Finlayson-Schueler*

Finance Corner

Pledging Update

2016 total pledges: \$179,649
Paid to date: \$31,085
Non-pledge contr.: \$4,848

Sounds of the Spirit Visual Fund

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

Altar flowers

Altar flowers were given:

- by Mary Klepper and her family in loving memory of Larry Klepper
- by Mike Fay and Gwen Tillapaugh-Fay in memory of loved ones
- by Nancy Hough in loving memory of Stephen Chen and Katherine Huang

Flowers were delivered or given to Anneke Vasquez, Dr. Howard and Frances Long, Martha Sutter, Maggie Loney, Dot Logan and Carol Boll.

Flowers were delivered by Marg McDivitt and Tom Boll.

Guild meeting

The next meeting of the UUMC Guild will be 1:30 p.m. March 30. The meeting is at the home of Bobbie Hemphill, 4628 Providence Road, Jamesville. Program is "Planning For Planting." The speaker is Carol Bradford.

Citywide celebration

At 6 p.m. Sunday, April 10, a citywide United Methodist celebration and gathering will be held at St. Paul's UMC, 2200 Valley Drive. Come hear the progress and dreams as we continue building a cooperative ministry.



University United
Methodist Church

Feed My People: Body, Mind, and Spirit

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WEEK OF MARCH 20

Palm Sunday the 20th

10 a.m. Contemporary Issues
10 a.m. Sunday School, kindergarten -12th grade, Pettengill Center
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 23rd

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting
12:30 p.m. Soup and Sermon Chat, Chappell Rm

Maundy Thursday the 24th

7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Good Friday the 25th

8 a.m. – 6 p.m. Sanctuary open for prayer, meditation

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

WEEK OF MARCH 27

Easter Sunday the 27th

9 a.m. Community Breakfast, Fellowship Hall
11 a.m. Worship, Pastor Wood.
12:15 p.m. Fellowship, Gathering Rm
12:30 p.m. Soup and Sermon Chat, Chappell Rm

Wednesday the 30th

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Thursday the 31st

7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Friday the 1st

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

WEEK OF APRIL 3

Sunday the 3rd

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 Andy Anderson. 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

Wednesday the 6th

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Thursday the 7th

7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Friday the 8th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

WEEK OF APRIL 10

Sunday the 10th

9 a.m. Community Breakfast, Fellowship Hall

10 a.m. Contemporary Issues

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

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

11 a.m. Worship
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 13th

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Thursday the 14th

7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Friday the 15th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community



Sunday School children make cookies on March 13.

Syracuse UMC
Confirmation Retreat
at Casowasco
March 11-12, 2016
(4 photos)









March 6 Communion Service (5 photos)



Jeanne shows children a sign and tells them it's OK to ask for help when they need it and that Jesus is always there to call on when we need him.



Confirmation class members receive their Bibles from the church.









Confirmation Class Helps
at Feb. 28, 2016
Community Breakfast
(7 photos)















Syracuse University
Honor Students Visit
Pantry, Clothes Closet (2 photos)



