

# THE CHIMES

March 19, 2014

**Next Chimes  
deadline:  
April 2**

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**Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday on April 13. Easter is April 20.**

*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.*

*Rev. Craig French, Pastor  
Tom Boll, Editor*

## Workshop: Serve without hurting; Special music: 'From Grief to Hope'

One opportunity this Lent offers us a chance to learn to be better ministers to those in need, while another, by our Senior Choir, feeds our souls.

In the first, the Rev. Deb Richardson-Moore, our guest preacher this Sunday, March 23, will be leading an urban ministry workshop the day before, March 22, at UUMC.

The free workshop, which runs 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., is called "Serving You, Changing Me: How to Serve the Poor without Being Toxic." A freewill offering will be taken for the lunch. Contact the church office to sign up.

Richardson-Moore heads the nondenominational Triune Mercy Center, a mission church that minis-

ters to and alongside those who live in the "homeless triangle" in Greenville, S.C. Her Sunday sermon title is "Seeing Navy."

The Senior Choir's special music for the April 6 service is titled "From Grief to Hope" and is a musical interpretation of the death and resurrection of Lazarus from the day's scripture, John 11:1-45.

The music includes selection from well-known requiem Masses, such as Kyrie and In paradisum by Faure, Lacrymosa by Mozart and Sanctus by Gounod, interspersed with the reading of the Gospel. Soloists are Katie Weiser, soprano, and Jonathan English, tenor.

## Rev. French to take a study/spiritual growth leave

Rev. French will be gone this summer for a study/spiritual growth leave approved by the Staff/Parish Relations Committee and the Governing Board.

His time away, which combines a five-week leave and normal vacation time, runs June 9 to Aug. 17.

Rev. Jim Wiggins, chair of SPRC, made the announcement during worship March 16.

The Upper New York Conference mandates a five-week study leave when a pastor has been at a church for four years. Rev. French has been at UUMC since 2008.

Plans for this leave began before the consolidation plan for the Syra-

cuse city churches was known and has nothing to do with that development, Wiggins said.

In Rev. French's absence, UUMC has contracted with Alicia Wood, second-year student at Boston University School of Theology, who preached here Feb. 16, to be a pastoral presence for UUMC.

She will be present every Sunday for worship, preach three times, be at the Community/Church Breakfasts and Friday Community and work with Stephen Ministers to attend to pastoral needs.

Guest preachers arranged by Rev. French will fill the pulpit the other Sundays.

# Make most of what we're given and trust God



Rev. French

“Where have all the flowers gone,  
long time passing?  
Where have all the flowers gone,  
long time ago?”

+ + +

As I kept vigil in the sanctuary on Ash Wednesday, there were long stretches of time when I was alone — alone with my thoughts and prayers, alone with my Bible, alone with my spiritual/devotional reading, alone with my worries and desires. My eyes wandered around the sanctuary: the towering pillars and arches, the carved woodwork, the stained-glass windows.

“What is to become of this place,” I wondered. Chances are I would have had those thoughts, no matter what, but they were particularly poignant and salient this year, in light of all the talk about merging and closing churches.

(Yes, I know that’s only half of the story and that the other half is about extending and expanding United Methodist impact on the city. But before we can get to that, we first have to deal with what’s going to be lost or left behind. That’s simply how it works for most of us. We have to find a way to let go of the past before we can move on to the future.)

What will become of this place, I wondered ... and all the other places like it? What will become of its witness for justice and truth, its goodness and mercy, its beauty and joy? What will become of the faith and hard work that supported it over all these years? Will it simply become a footnote of history, a relic of a bygone era? Has it all been for naught, subject to the whims of a culture that increasingly sees religion as irrelevant or, worse, hateful and injurious?

Perhaps it was coincidental (I think not), but on my way to finding Psalm 51 (the chosen Psalm for Ash Wednesday), my eye was drawn instead to Psalm 49. For the record, let me admit that Psalm 49 is one I don’t know well. I can’t tell you the last time I looked at it. But it was as if it had been written just for me and that occasion.

Psalm 49 stands as an unblinking reminder that we all — women and men, rich and poor, wise

and foolish — have a common destiny and fate ... the grave. “They all perish. Their graves will be their homes forever. Their prosperity cannot keep them from death.” (Psalm 49:10-12) (I know this is depressing, but hang on. It gets better.)

In the midst of all this, the Psalmist pauses to declare: “But God will redeem me and will pluck me out of Death's control.” (verse 15) I needed to hear that word last week — that in God, nothing is ever lost or wasted, and death and decay do not have the last word.

As I made the sign of the cross on the forehead of friends and strangers, I took that promise to heart. In place of the usual Ash Wednesday blessing, I whispered these words: “Another year closer to death. Another year closer to Life. Thanks be to God, in the name of Jesus.”

I got some strange looks — including the woman who literally jumped back in startled shock and sputtered protest. The message was too stark, too blunt, too direct. But the pronouncement of Life that overwhelms and overcomes death lifted that woman (and me and everyone else) beyond the raw acknowledgement of our mortality and finitude.

We — none of us — can control what the future brings. Nor can we guarantee that anything we have done will be preserved to the end of time. All we can do, day by day, is to make the most of what we’ve been given, for as long as we’re given ... and keep growing in our trust of God for the rest.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from thy presence,  
and take not thy holy Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of thy salvation,  
and uphold me with a willing spirit.”

(Psalm 51:10-12)

— Craig

P.S. The season of Lent is the perfect time to think about death and endings ... and unimaginable, unfathomable newness that lies beyond our grasp. This is God’s season and God’s time, not ours.

## Food Bank ordering is an adventure



**Deb Virgo**

I admit one of my favorite things is to order the food from the Food Bank.

Strangely, I enjoy going through the Web-based list

of available items. The price, size and available quantity are listed.

This is where the fun comes in: Some items in limited quantity go fast so you never know what you can get. Free and very low priced items don't last long.

One Food Bank staff member said that some people go to the list almost daily to see what there is. I shop about once a week so I take my chances.

With a budget of about \$500 a week we stock the shelves with food from the major categories: fruits, vegetables, protein, dairy and grains. There are almost 200 items to choose from.

Bread is always free and comes in a big box. You never know what it will be.

Canned items like beef stew, soup and vegetables are always plentiful. We always try to carry a variety of these staples. They are roughly the price of comparable items in a discount grocery store.

There are always donated items which are always a bargain — like this week there was yogurt. A case of 12 containers (the single-serving ones) cost 35 cents. Yes...35 cents for a whole case! Hard to pass this up.

But I've learned (the hard way) not to go crazy with ordering these bargains. Because you don't know the flavor or brand.

Lately we have been getting Chobani in assorted fruit flavors...and it's very popular.

But ask anyone who volunteers in the pantry about "the blueberries" (humongous packages we can't seem to give away) or, even worse, the "whole wheat rotini," which we bought cartons of thinking it was a great bargain. It's still sitting there.

See why shopping at the Food Bank is such an adventure?

Then there is the meat. Our food pantry is known for giving good meat. But it's surprisingly affordable to do this through the Food Bank.

A box of "assorted meats" is \$5.18 for 35 pounds. Now, I know the term "assorted meats" sounds scary, and I'll admit that you never know what you will get.

But lately it has been packages of very nice-looking meat, with only the occasional freezer burn.

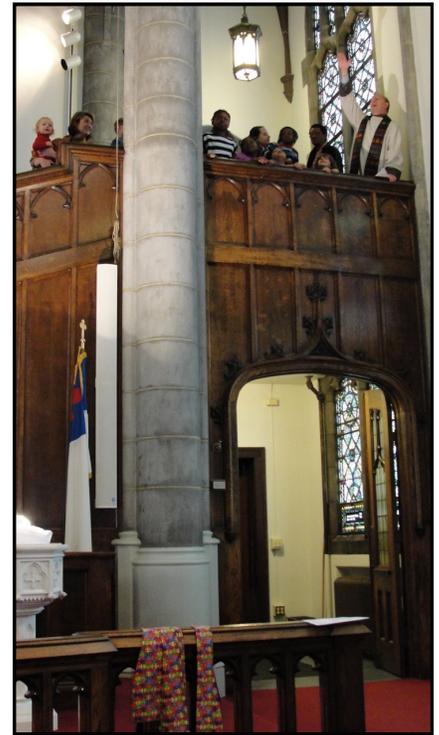
Even better, a 10-pound bag of chicken legs is free. This is because it is USDA. We save these for the larger families since it is 10 pounds of meat. But really we could give this to every family and not pay a dime.

The final thing on the list is the fresh produce. There is rarely a charge for these items. At this time of year it's mostly potatoes, apples and onions. The potatoes come in 50-pound bags so the volunteers (hi George!) divide them into smaller bags. But this week there were none.

I'll try again next week.

— Deb Virgo

*Interim Friday Community Coordinator*



**Rev. French took the children "to the mountaintop" during worship on Transfiguration Sunday.**

## Lots going on in Sunday School!

Here's a look at what's been happening in our Sunday School classes in recent weeks.

**Pre-K/Kindergarten:** Taught by Tiffany Steinwert and Bette Helwig, the preschool class has been working on the stories of Jesus.

Tiffany said, "Last week had fun making a storm in a bottle as we talked about Jesus calming the seas. We talked about what we do when we are afraid. We have also had excellent support from other members of the teaching team. Thank you!!"

Danielle Adams, Sophie Finlayson-Schueler and Lea-Ann Vinton have assisted.

**Elementary Grades:** Steve Bacon reports: Our elementary See **ELEMENTARY**, Page 6

**Time to meet UUMC members: the Nevins**



We're finally catching up with Nancy and Keith Nevin, who joined UUMC at the end of 2012.

**Nancy Nevin** Syracuse native and a Syracuse University graduate with a major in history. She also lived in Cleveland, Ohio, and Illinois.

She started teaching in the Syracuse City School District in 1964, taught three years in junior high and then taught social studies at Nottingham High School. She retired in 1991.

She has three children, Keith, who lives in Syracuse; Elizabeth, who lives in Florida; and



Philip, who lives in Canandaigua. At UUMC, she is a member of the Guild and in the past volunteered at the pantry at

**Keith Nevin** First Presbyterian Church.

Her hobbies include reading books by favorite authors John Grisham and David Baldacci, playing bridge and traveling.

Keith Nevin was born in Cleveland and attended school in Syracuse, where he graduated from Nottingham High School.

He volunteers at Crouse Hospital. His favorite hobby is building model airplanes. He's in the process of writing a book.

**Pledging Update**

2014 total pledges:	\$230,877
Paid to date:	\$28,770
Non-pledge contr.:	\$2,900
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.

**Address Changes**

If you are moving or will be away, let the office know so we can avoid returned Chimes.

**From the History Room...**

**Peale years saw rapid growth, crowded pews, membership of 1,650**

*By Rosemary DeHoog, Church Historian*

After the burning of the mortgage in 1946, the ongoing work of the church went forward under the leadership of Dr. Wilson G. Cole.

But time does not stand still, especially in cities, and churches, like the rest of society, are always facing change.

University Church was no exception. It, too, had to face the problems of changing neighborhoods when much of its congregation moved to the suburbs changing the nature of the church from a parish church to one where many congregants drove some distance to attend.

A study in 1956 revealed that 65 percent of the membership and 70 percent of the Sunday School came from homes more

than a mile from the church.

For a city church to grow or maintain itself in this situation requires the drawing power of strong preaching and an outstanding program.

In this respect University Church has been fortunate. From 1927-1932 Norman Vincent Peale was pastor. Only 28 years old when he came to Syracuse, Peale was in the early days of his remarkable career.

Already, he had an extraordinary ability to reach his listeners and to infuse strength for meeting the problems of life.

The Peale years were a period of rapid growth with crowded pews and a membership climbing from 1,000 to 1,650.

In a resolution of September 1930 requesting the bishop to return Peale to the church for an-

other year the Quarterly Conference trumpeted its praise of the young minister:

"It is the candid opinion of all who take a comprehensive view, that the most outstanding Kingdom Effort within the bounds of Methodism is being accomplished at University Church in Syracuse, New York.

"It is here plainly demonstrated that the Gospel Message sincerely delivered is yet a mighty magnet that will draw all men unto it; and that a united church will make of the pulpit a veritable rock which will turn all beating bellows into Heavenly benedictions. Such fields should not be disturbed until all the golden grain is safely garnered."

*From "A Century of Ministry" by Dr. Nelson Blake, Syracuse University*

# PEOPLE/PRAYER CONNECTION

## PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR:

- Those in military service: **Nathan Miller, Jim Pettyjohn, Lt. Timothy Nevin, Matt Fischer**
- Sunday, March 16**
- **Dean Moyer:** The family of the **Rev. Frank Halse Jr.**, a retired UM pastor who died last Sunday.
  - **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, guide me toward your parables to end my hypocrisy and zealotry!
  - **Grandma Ann:** Instead of fearing change, let's opt for and practice HOPE!
  - **Robert:** My friend **Michael**, who is in St. Joseph's Hospital
  - **Weah Family:** To all, for all to be better and stronger.
  - Those in Ukraine and Crimea and for those awaiting word of their loved ones on Malaysian Airline 370.
  - My church
  - **Robert's** health
  - **Tom Trainor**

## Sunday, March 9

- **Peter:** For the energy which continues to "bubble up" in this congregation and in our city when people can get together on common goals.
- **Russ:** Please pray that God bless all service men and women protecting this country. God bless all members of this church and staff.
- Those sick and those making decisions about medical care.
- Dear God, help us all to be generous to all and not covet our neighbors' churches or their endowments.
- Happy birthday to **Keith Wellner**

## Sunday, March 2

- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, guide

us, as your servants to steady our feet on this rocking spiritual home!

- **Peter:** For equity and justice at the state level — in school aid and energy policy for Syracuse
- **Ralph:** May we hold **Deb Joiner** in the light as she faces extensive medical tests
- **Weah family:** Wish **Emelia** a happy and safe birthday!
- Prayers of thanks for **Katie Flynn's** improvement & medical stability and for all the love, care, concern, support and prayers for her from everyone.
- **Katie, Joyce** and for all the family and for those facing tough decisions about medical care.
- Continued recovery for **Bob Dewey**
- The people of Ukraine
- For adult friends of children for their love & kindness — for bearing Christ to children.
- Dear God, help us be your "salt" to leaven this world with your help. We ask your help to see your light in the midst of political and religious conflict

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- Congratulations to **Mary Magowan** on getting her master's degree from Grand Canyon University in Arizona.

## CARE AND SHARE MINISTRY ASKS PRAYERS FOR:

- **April 6:** Jerome Weah, Josephine Weah, Jereline, Nichola, Jonathan, Diamond, Emelia, Princess, Esther, Lisa, Seineh, Jerome Jr.

## Congregation helps Eva

UUMC'ers came through again — this time for Eva Cooper Jah. She lost everything in a fire.

She has relocated to a beautiful Housing Visions unit across from St. Joseph's Hospital. It has four bedrooms, enough room for her three children still in Liberia when they arrive in Syracuse. Eric is with her now, a bright and sometimes rambunctious 3-year-old.

The congregation contributed a total of \$1,169, which was used to purchase major items: living room furniture and two queen-size beds. They also contributed bedding, kitchen utensils and other smaller items. The Outreach/Mission Team appreciates your generosity.

## Thanks, from Eva

Dear Members of the Congregation,

I'm so happy to be part of you. I say "thank you" in a special way to everybody who helped me financially, morally, spiritually in all my endeavors.

May God bless and give you long life and success.

— Eva C. Jah

## April birthdays

- 1 – Matthew Steenberg
- 2 – Ted Holmes, Jereline Weah
- 5 – Ralph Best, Diamond Weah
- 6 – Connor Fay
- 8 – Russ Young
- 11 – Sheila Murphy

**Remainder of April birthdays will be in the next Chimes.**

## Altar Flowers

Altar flowers were given by Mike Fay and Gwen Tillapaugh-Fay, Mary Klepper and her family and Lynn and Matt Steenberg.

Flowers were given to Bob Dewey, Diane Tarbell, Nancy Hough, Dot Logan, Mary Klepper and Phyllis Wright.

Flowers were delivered by Rev. French, Lee Potter, Marg McDivitt, Margo Kotten and Barb Cook.



University United  
Methodist Church

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

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### WEEK OF MARCH 23

Sunday the 23rd

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

**9:30 a.m.** Sunday School: Elementary through 12th grade

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

**10:30 a.m.** Worship, Rev. Deb Richardson-Moore preaching

**10:45 a.m.** Pre-K, kindergarten, adults with special needs

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

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

Monday, the 24th

**7 p.m.** Handbell Choir

Wednesday the 26th

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

Thursday the 27th

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

Friday the 28th

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

### WEEK OF MARCH 30

Sunday the 30th

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

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

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

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

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

Tuesday, the 1st

**6:30 p.m.** Governing Board

Wednesday the 2nd

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

Thursday the 3rd

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

Friday the 4th

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

### WEEK OF APRIL 6

Sunday the 6th

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

**10:30 a.m.** Worship, "From Grief to Hope," special choral music

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

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

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

Wednesday the 9th

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

Thursday the 10th

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

Friday the 11th

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

## Elementary class members are using their Bibles; Confirmation Class gets under way

### CONTINUED from Page 3

school youth have been learning about Lent and preparing for Good Friday and Easter. The youth are excited to be using their new Bibles!

They have been looking up New Testament scriptures such as Jesus Blesses Little Children and Jesus Heals a Blind Man.

We discussed the struggles with temptation and not living on bread alone. In upcoming lessons, the youth will follow Jesus'

encounter with Zacchaeus, Peter's preparation for Passover and Jesus praying in the garden.

We are planning a Sunday school altogether time for Palm Sunday in The Gathering Room.

**Confirmation Class:** Jeanne Finlayson-Schueler is meeting regularly with Allison and Ben Virgo and Diamond and Jonathan Weah. Rev. French will also contribute to teaching the class. Confirmation is planned for Pentecost, June 8.

### Adults with Special Needs:

Ginny Dewey and Steve Bacon are the teachers, and they sit with the members during worship until the children's blessing and then accompany them to the classroom. The elementary students visited the adults one Sunday.

**Contemporary Issues:** This meets at 9:30 a.m. weekly in the Chappell Room and wrestles with events of the day and what the Christian responses might be.



**Mike Cammone spreads salt on the sidewalk on a recent Sunday morning.**



**A pantry guest receives help from three volunteers.**



**Rev. French talks to the children about the desert-like display on the Communion table for Lent.**



**The children get a closer look at the display.**



**Rev. French and the children reach the “mountaintop” on Transfiguration Sunday.**



**The children enjoy the view from the “mountaintop.”**



**They head back down from the peak.**



**Jeanne Finlayson-Schueler leads the confirmation class.**



**Steve Bacon leads the class for adults with special needs.**



**Deb Virgo introduces the graduating members of the first Leading Through Service class of volunteers. From left, Robert Simmons, Val Young and Mike Cammone. Jeff Foley also was a member but couldn't be present.**



**Eric stirs the pancake batter at a recent breakfast. (Photo by Jeanne Finlayson-Schueler**

# After-Worship Potluck Luncheon

March 16, 2014  
(6 photos)











