

THE CHIMES

March 5, 2015

**Next Chimes
deadline:
March 18**

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The Senior Choir will present special music on Sunday, April 19.

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

UUMC chooses fast track path; Rev. French announces retirement

Two important decisions were made in recent days that greatly affect the future of UUMC.

First, our pastor, Rev. Craig French, announced his retirement, effective July 1. (See Pastor's article on page 2)

Second, the congregation voted on Sunday to embark on Path 1 — Fast Track — in the Plan of Action for Syracuse City Churches.

The Plan of Action was adopted Jan. 13 by the Citywide Leadership Team, which included representatives from all the congregations.

Each of the United Methodist Churches of Syracuse had the month of February to decide on one of four paths for moving into the future.

The vote originally was scheduled for Feb. 22 but was postponed a week because of severe winter weather.

The Fast Track, which is for congregations ready to move quickly and decisively into a revitalization process, was recommended by the congregation's Governing Board.

All 48 members at a congregational meeting Sunday after worship voted in favor of the Fast Track.

Ten people who were "friends" of UUMC but not members and couldn't officially vote, also were in favor of the Fast Track choice.

Eleven people not present who wanted to register their preferences turned in responses.

Ten backed the Fast Track. The other was: "Regardless of my personal opinion, I will respect and support the will of the majority."

Here are the votes of the other city United Methodist churches:

- Erwin First UMC also voted in favor of the Fast Track.
- St. Paul's UMC, Gethsemane UMC and Bellevue Heights UMC all chose Path 2 — Slow Track — which is for congregations that want to take a more deliberate pace in the revitalization process.
- James Street UMC chose Path 3 — Side Track — which is for congregations moving toward closure but wanting to remain together as long as possible.

In each group, churches will work cooperatively with others who choose that path, so UUMC and Erwin First will be working together on the Fast Track.

Contributions sought for projector in organ loft

As we continue to make improvements to the visual presentation that we are using during our worship services, any contributions that you would like to make toward the purchase of an organ loft mounted projector would be welcome. This would allow removal of the projector tower behind the Communion rail. We have already received a generous gift of \$2,000 that puts us well on our way to raising the approximately \$8,000 we need overall.

A pastor needs to remember how limited a role he plays



Rev. French

I don't remember who gave me the book. No doubt it was someone wise and loving. Perhaps even someone who thought my ministry was in desperate need of help, guidance and reshaping.

Whatever the case, I am profoundly grateful to that person, for I have turned back to this small book again and again, especially when my faith and ministry needed re-centering or re-focusing.

The book is "The Art of Pastoring" by William C. Martin. Contrary to its title, it is not a how-to manual, chock full of advice on how to be successful in pastoral ministry ... or how to grow a church in 10 easy steps ... or how to handle conflict (especially when it's aimed at you). Far from it, in fact.

The sub-title is "Contemplative Reflections," and that's what it is: a series of brief meditations on how to care for the soul of both the pastor and the congregation.

One of my favorite reflections from the book (perhaps I've quoted it before) is this one:

*When your congregation despises you,
it is a great sorrow.
When your congregation holds you in awe,
it seems somewhat better.
When your congregation praises you far and wide,*

*it seems even better still.
But when your congregation hardly notices that you exist,
you have become a pastor.*

*How do you feel about your congregation deep within your heart?
That is what they will become.*

*When the pastor's work is done,
the congregation will truthfully say,
"We did it ourselves."
And the pastor will rejoice.*

There's much wisdom packed into these few short verses — wisdom that I have not always been able to heed in practice, but wisdom that has constantly beckoned to me, nonetheless. Wisdom that has invited me to lay aside my own agenda and ego, for the sake of the well-being of the congregation, its people, its mission and ministry.

I am mindful of these words — again — for two reasons:
With the announcing of my retirement, I am aware of how limited my role is and how everything truly depends on you. (The truth is, it's always that way.)

With each of the city churches now having selected its path for the future, I am aware that the *real* work of revitalization will soon begin ... and that you'll be

the ones saying, "We did it ourselves." (And I will rejoice.)

I am grateful for the support, affirmation and encouragement you've given me in response to my news, surprising and unexpected as it may have been.

At the same time, I am mindful of how all this may seem much more precarious or uncertain to you than it does to me — in part, because I (theoretically) know what lies ahead for me.

The trickiest and least stable part of these transitions may well be right now, just as we're getting started, in the same way that getting into and launching a canoe or kayak can be the most unsure, most unstable, most awkward part of the journey.

Once the boat is safely afloat and under way ... once this transition time is firmly launched ... we may all be able to relax, settle into a good rhythm and look forward to the trip ahead.

In the meantime, let's be careful where we step, where we lean, where we place our weight, where we find our balance ... lest we end up topsy-turvy and in over our heads.

(And even if there's a mis-step here or there, feel free to blame it on me. I'll still love you and be rooting for you.)

— Craig

P.S. All by itself, talking about canoes and kayaks at this time of year is an enormous act of faith!

Media in worship: One screen among ornamental pipes

Editor's Note: Second of two parts on this topic.

By Ted Finlayson-Schueler

We decided to stick with the single screen for a few weeks, and the positive comments just kept coming.

There was one group, however, that was not happy. The screen placement prohibited the use of the piano in the front loft and prohibited the choir from singing in the front loft.

Our Worship Team went to work again and before the end of our January meeting, Steve Bacon and Danny Magowan had an idea to put the screen in front of the ornamental organ pipes on the front wall of the sanctuary.

They, with the help and height of me and David Magowan, managed to get the screen into the location that they had envisioned.

Because the screen was now farther from the projector location, the image would not fit on the screen, and just to raise the stakes, Bernie Hinds' funeral gave us a Saturday deadline instead of Sunday. We met the deadline, and the service was lovely.

Then at a powwow after the service, Beth Drew remembered the fabric cross hanging that had often been hanging from the back loft railing. The hanging immediately improved the look of the "blue box," and we have continued to use this setup.

One big advantage is that all the worship activities can take place without interference from walking in front of the projector.

This is a long introduction to the work and events that led up to the survey.



The current worship setup has one large screen nestled in with the ornamental organ pipes, with the projector below behind the tapestry.

Sophie Finlayson-Schueler was kind enough to tabulate all the surveys in Excel so that the worship team could examine the results. These are Sophie's findings: Total surveys was pretty good for being included in the bulletin just one Sunday: **46**

Age numbers are not surprising:
Under 25 = 5
25 to 39 = 5
40 to 59 = 8
60+ = 28

Years attending UUMC was really surprising:
Started since 2000: 23
Started before 2000: 22

Preference for screen setup reflected the comments that we were getting:
Didn't want screens all the time: 8
Preferred two screens: 12

Preferred one larger screen: 26

The score for ease of readability of text was 4.67 out of 5 and for hymns 4.26 out of 5. The 60+ group, not surprisingly had more issues with readability. (We have been making the hymn text larger now.)

A little over 80 percent believe that images add meaning to the order of worship and sermon.

The final question asked whether the projection of text, images and music added meaning to worship. All age groups scored over 4 out of 5, with the two younger age categories around 4.5.

We were delighted that so many people took the time to complete the survey. If you have any questions, comments or ideas, or if you would like to join the Worship Team, please contact me. Thanks.

Thank You Notes

To the UUMC Congregation:

Thank you for the wonderful flowers, card, gift, kind words and reception on Feb. 8. Having worked at UUMC over the past 10 years has been an extremely enjoyable experience. I will always cherish the memories and friendships developed during that time.

May God bless you all,
Don Betz

Dear Church Family,

I just want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who delivered altar flowers and poinsettias to mother over the past year.

She always liked to see and smell the flowers, even though she might not remember where they came from. They made her smile all the time.

Thank you for remembering her.

Sincerely,
Barb Nunn

To the Church,

Our apologies to you for being so slow in showing our appreciation for your thoughtfulness.

Your gift of a beautiful poinsettia on Christmas Eve was greatly appreciated, so much so that we were able to share it with our niece and her family where we were invited for dessert on Christmas Day.

It must have been out of sight, out of mind. So we have been forgetful of your gift.

Please accept our belated thanks and know that the gift of a poinsettia has been shared with our family.

Sincerely,
Rev. Donald and Julia Megnin

Commitments by UUMC members

At a service beginning the New Year, UUMC members and friends made commitments for the coming year.

Here's a sampling of them:

- | | |
|---|--|
| I promise I will do my best in whatever it is and not be lazy or let procrastination take over me
*** | To be thoughtful of others
*** |
| To be more prayerful for other people, not be judgmental and not worry as much about money
*** | I wish to help people that need it through God's wishes
*** |
| Think of others and not myself!
*** | To find God
*** |
| More devotional time and pray regularly for this congregation
*** | To eat better and be healthier mentally and physically
*** |
| To further study the wisdom of Edgar Cayce's interpretation of God's laws
*** | That our marriage will be stronger without strife and difficulties
*** |
| To listen every day to God and through any means of contacting me
*** | Take time to be happy and holy
*** |
| Look to God more often
*** | I will pray every day
*** |
| To talk more about God's teachings and Scriptures with my son at home, to reinforce what he hears/learns at church
*** | To get closer to God
*** |
| Giving/sharing talents to help others | Be a good ally to all those who are targeted by racism and all other systemic oppression, especially the kids
*** |
| | To reflect God's love and Jesus among us to all I encounter, especially those hurting or grieving |

The Confirmation Class' Lord's Prayer:

Editor's Note: When five young people joined the church through confirmation in December, we prayed their interpretation of The Lord's Prayer during the service. Here is their version:

Our God who is in heaven, Your name is holy. May we live by peace and love as you do in heaven.

Fill our needs for food, water, rest, air, and caring people every day.

Forgive us for our sins and help us to forgive others. Help us do the right thing even when it is hard to do.

Because you are the source of peace and love. Amen

People/Prayer Connection

THANKS

Sunday, Feb. 8

- **Jeanne Finlayson-Schuler:** Thanks to all for your prayers and support after my dad passed two weeks ago.

PRAYERS REQUESTED:

- Those in military service: **Jim Pettyjohn and Matt Fischer**

Sunday, March 1

- **Dean:** Thanksgiving for the life and ministry of **Rev. Malcolm Boyd**, who died last Friday. An Episcopal priest who wrote many books.
- **Kotens:** For the family of **Mary Roblin**, who died Feb. 28.
- **Matt:** For my sister-in-law, who may have lung cancer. Pray the Lord's will in the tests she will have this week.
- Pray for me because I have an ovarian cyst that has ruptured.
- I am asking for you to pray for my children in Africa.
- For all struggling with illness, pain, infirmity...that they may find comfort, support and peace.
- Newborn Christian again and in need of prayers of help and repentance.
- All first responders who pour their lives in danger every day braving the cold for us.
- For the ministry of Methodists in the city.
- Humility, United Methodist Men and their works and Info-serv services.
- If God be for us, who can be against us? If we reach for his hand, it will never fail us.

Sunday, Feb. 22

- **Chuck:** Pray for the president, for there is a lot going on in this world.
- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, I plead you to guide me to brainstorm my peace creating four important tasks!
- **Joyce:** For a friend, **Jennifer**, who lost her daughter this week and her son six months ago.
- **Peter:** For healing and reconciliation of the deep divisions in our city and country in the spirit of Rev. Dr. King.
- **The Choir:** Welcome **Deeanna Dimmick's** parents, **Ross and Minna**, visiting from Seattle and singing in the choir. Deeanna performed a wonderful senior clarinet recital last evening at SU.
- Be with **Betsy** as she has surgery tomorrow.
- **Katie A.** will soon have gastric bypass surgery.
- Thanks to God for one more step on the way to getting **Eva's** children here from Liberia. Pray they get here soon.

Sunday, Feb. 15

- **Dean Moyer:** For the United Methodist Churches of the city as they choose the path they will take.
- **Peter:** Remembering Feb. 1, 2003, the day a million people gathered in NYC to say NO to war.
- **Shirley & Harry Miller:** Praise God for our new grandson, **Owen Eugene Hubbard**.
- For **Pastor Craig, Valerie, Russ, Nelson** and others who are sick and in need of heal-

ing.

- Healing prayers for **Genn Thuma**, who is at home recovering from the flu.
- Prayers to be healed of a stomach virus.
- Health and healing for all those sick in Syracuse.

Sunday, Feb. 8

- **Peter Swords:** For the unfailing creativity God gives in the times when we despair and the steadfast love that strengthens our relationships.
- Dear God, we are all broken; heal us all in the ways you know best.
- For **Sherry**, who begins chemo this week.
- **Valencia McCoy and Jermaine Thomas**
- Help our church make a good decision regarding our "path"
- City churches and the future of Methodism in the city.
- Be with our breakfast guests. Some of whom are dealing with very tough issues.
- The cops and medics in Hancock who were unable to save a 23-year-old young woman who had overdosed. God-speed to her.

CARE AND SHARE MINISTRY

ASKS PRAYERS FOR:

- **March 8:** Eva Cooper Jah, Joviet Cooper, Alphonse Cooper, Emmanuel J. Cooper, Erick Jah
- **March 15:** Eleanor Hunt, Rachel Kgama, Richard Kilmer
- **March 22:** Abby Hyland, Dan Hyland, Patrick Hyland, Madelyn Hyland

See **PEOPLE**, Page 6

Finance Corner

Pledging Update

2015 total pledges: \$210,572
 Paid to date: \$24,203
 Non-pledge contr.: \$7,421

Sounds of the Spirit Visual Fund

Donations received \$74,519
 Expenses paid \$71,544
 Current balance \$2,975

People/Prayer

CONTINUED from Page 5

March 29: Sherly Joseph, Neise Joseph, Mackenzie Joseph, Mikailo Joseph

PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR CROSSROADS DISTRICT CHURCHES AND PASTORS:

- **March 8:** Brewerton UMC, Jack Keating; Christ Church Parish, Ed Bennett
- **March 15:** Bridgeport UMC, Hyun Joo Yang
- **March 22:** Granby Center UMC, Dean Fleming
- **March 29:** Camillus First UMC, Marcia Wickert

Altar flowers

Altar flowers were given:

- by Mike Fay and Gwen Tilla-paugh-Fay in memory of loved ones
- by Nancy Hough in memory of Stephen Chen and Katherine Huang
- In memory of Betty Jane Myers
- by Danielle Adams, in memory of her brother, Todd Adams

Flowers were given to Jeanne Finlayson-Schueler, Genn Thuma, Mary Wilson and Jim and Betsy Wiggins.

Flowers were delivered by Barb and Jerry Cargo.



University United
Methodist Church

Feed My People: Body, Mind, and Spirit

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WEEK OF MARCH 8

Sunday the 8th

9 a.m. Community/Church Breakfast

10 a.m. Contemporary Issues

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

11 a.m. Worship, Rev. French, preacher

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

Noon Fellowship, Gathering Rm

12:15 p.m. Soup and Sermon Chat, Chappell Rm

Monday the 9th

7 p.m. Handbell Choir

Wednesday the 11th

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Thursday the 12th

7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Friday the 13th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

WEEK OF MARCH 15

Sunday the 15th

10 a.m. Contemporary Issues

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

11 a.m. Worship, Rev. Patience Kisakye, preacher

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

Noon Fellowship, Gathering Rm

12:15 p.m. Soup and Sermon

Chat, Chappell Rm

Wednesday the 18th

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Thursday the 19th

7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Friday the 20th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

WEEK OF MARCH 22

Sunday the 22nd

9 a.m. Community/Church Breakfast, Fellowship Hall

10 a.m. Contemporary Issues

11 a.m. Worship, Rev. French, preacher

Noon Fellowship, Gathering Rm

12:15 p.m. Soup and Sermon

Chat, Chappell Rm

Monday the 23rd

7 p.m. Handbell Choir

Wednesday the 25th

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting

Thursday the 26th

7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Friday the 27th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

Display Case Thanks

Thanks to Jo Ann K. May for loaning the books from her library for the display honoring Black History Month. Thanks also to Webster Fisher for sending UUMC the picture of the Martin Luther King Memorial in

Washington, D.C. Perfect for the display window.

Farewell for Rev. Barrow

A celebration of the superintendency of the Rev. Darryl Barrow will be held 4:30 to 7 p.m. Sunday, March 22, at Baldwinsville UMC.