

THE CHIMES

June 11, 2014

**Next Chimes
deadline:
July 2**

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Reminder: Worship time for the summer moves to 11 a.m. beginning July 6.

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

UNY Annual Conference: an awe-inspiring experience

Dear UUMC Friends,

It was my privilege to attend the fifth session of the Upper New York Annual Conference as your UUMC laity representative this year May 29-31.

Singing with a whole convention center full of United Methodists is indeed an awe-inspiring experience.

The Holy Spirit was in that space!

Our singing was led by energetic young musicians with guitar, drum, violin, piano and more.

Over the three days of the UNY Annual Conference I personally experienced very beautiful worship services, time of prayer, Communion and great preaching.

For my personal recollection the

business end of conference was also productive.

A 2015 budget was passed, resolutions approved, clergy compensation with retirement, health insurance plans and housing updates accepted, and special actions, opportunities and ministries highlighted.

A few more items from my notes:

◆ The lay servant ministry report explained the new process for approving and endorsing the lay speaker portion of being a lay servant. Lay speakers are advised to read the conference website to learn of expectations in training for good standing of the lay servant title. UUMC lay speakers,

See **MORE**, Page 4

Let's start keeping track of our 'God sightings'

Thank you all for this opportunity to share God's love and worship with you this summer. I am so grateful.

This summer I am hoping to get to know each of you.

I will be at University UMC on Sunday mornings for breakfast and worship and Fridays at the pantry.

I will also be available as a listening ear and for prayer.

Summer can be a down time for a church but it doesn't have to be.

I'm looking forward to feeling how hot University UMC gets this Pentecost as we worship and glorify God.



Alicia Wood

This summer our theme is "God sightings."

We will be asking, "Where have you seen God lately?"

Then we will be sharing our "God sightings" with each other.

This summer let's make a practice of noticing God in our lives or Jesus walking beside us.

Peace be with you,
Alicia Wood

The truth: We failed. It's a wakeup call to action.



Rev. French

As people of faith, we are called to speak the truth in love. Always. No matter what. Our words are to be used neither as weapons nor as smoke screens.

It may not always be pretty or easy to swallow, but, ultimately, the truth will set us free.

That's biblical too. Because we love — God and humanity — we speak softly, gently, carefully, tenderly. Because we love, we speak simply, clearly, truthfully, straightforwardly.

I've been cleaning my office in preparation for my sabbatical leave this summer. I want to come back to a clean office, ready for a fresh start, both here at University and with the new citywide ministry.

After six years, some office cleaning is due. Overdue, in fact. That's truth-telling. I may not like admitting it, but unless I acknowledge that my office is often a jumble (or is it jungle?) of books and papers, I'll never do anything to change it.

Change happens as a result of recognizing that the status quo is no longer acceptable or sustainable ... and then beginning to act in new ways ... ways that are consistent with the new reality or desired future.

John Wesley's historic questions for Methodist pastors include these: "Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life? Are you earnestly striving after it?"

The day we stop believing in and striving after "perfection" ... striving, with the help of God, to make tomorrow better and more loving than today ... is the day we die, at least spiritually.

One of the treasures I found when cleaning my office was a "memo" that pre-dated my arrival six years ago. The memo hung in the first floor kitchenette for several years. The memo grew out of work done seven years ago by our church leaders, aimed at creating a healthy, vibrant, sustainable future for University Church. Here are the highlights of the memo:

"At the January 20th (2008) Annual Meeting, many in attendance felt that UUMC is at a point for Revitalization, while a few felt

that UUMC is at a point for Redevelopment."

"How we make revitalization work: Looking at facts of decline; Avoiding blame & denial; Engaging in new learning; Committing to reassessing formation questions — identity, purpose, context."

"What blocks revitalization? Denial & Fantasy. Denial: Ignoring internal dysfunction; Ignoring external change. Fantasy: Growth can occur without change; Change can occur without conflict; Looking for the 'silver bullet' answer (e.g., 'We just need a new Sunday School curriculum ... more leaders ... a new pastor.')

"How we make redevelopment work: Recognizing loss of previous congregational identity/identities & purpose; Finding & empowering leaders who can start a new identity & purpose for the congregation; Reallocating resources to discover & live out the new identity and purpose; Care for members who choose not to engage the new identity and purpose."

"What blocks redevelopment? Failure to find resources: Spiritual failure — can't face the fact that the congregation is dying + disconnected from the power of God; Financial failure — inadequate budget or over-optimistic revenue projections; Political failure — leaders underestimate resistance from the congregation, resulting in stalemate."

Like it or not, the memo is a clear example of truth-telling ... of where we — and the city churches as a whole — are. Much hard and good work has happened during the past six years ... work largely aimed at birthing a new future for this congregation ... work that has produced some very significant, positive and tangible results.

But at the end of the day (or at the end of 2,192 days), the need for revitalization or redevelopment is more pressing than ever.

That's a hard truth to speak and hear. Hard for

See **ARE WE**, Page 4

Leading Through Service group enters third phase



Deb Virgo

Thought I'd catch you up on what the Leading Through Service group is up to.

We are on our third phase of this project, supported by a grant from the Reaching Our Neighbors ministry of the Annual Conference.

We are gathering after the Food Pantry closes on Fridays, eating lunch and talking. With the funding we have been able to try takeout from a variety of local restaurants. About 10 people come each week.

Building on what we learned from previous groups, we are revolving the group discussion around a book, the Bible and a video series.

The book is called "City of God: Faith in the Streets" by Sara Miles. She also had that video about what Communion looks

like in her church. What we liked from her video is the idea of holding pantry inside the sanctuary and even on the altar.

What struck me was that it was such a radical departure from the organized, rule-driven way that we run our own food pantry. I can't imagine the chaos, but it is also appealing.

I am finding that, in working with people in poverty, it is all too easy to assume the worst in people trying to take advantage (he is pantry-hopping, she is going to sell the food, they are lying, or stealing) of the system. And, as a food pantry, we are part of the system.

What would we do differently if we assumed the best about people?

And is it surprising that this group revolves around food? Maybe not. Lunch is served after a long morning working in the pantry and, well, we are hungry.

It's not a meager meal of leftovers from the pantry itself,

but is a full meal where we enjoy trying new foods and have a chance to talk. I would like to try Korean takeout from the little place around the corner next week.

Oh, and we are supposed to be a book club! That, I admit, isn't happening. Maybe the book is too similar to "The Weight of Mercy" by Deb Richardson-Moore, which we all loved. It just hasn't grabbed us.

But the video series, "Gospel in Life: Grace Changes Everything," has facilitated a good discussion about what it means to be a community of faith.

Each week we have had a small Bible study and then a discussion about a related topic. This group finishes up in a couple of weeks. We'll see what form it takes this summer.

And whether they like Korean food.

— Deb Virgo

Interim Friday Community Coordinator

Rethinking Syracuse Methodism to have Missions and Nurture working groups

Editor's Note: This is excerpted from a submission by Mike Nevin of Erwin First UMC. Beth Drew represents UUMC on the Leadership Team. Nelson Price is an alternate member.

The "Rethinking Syracuse Methodism" effort has been blessed so far with tremendous participation from each of our eight Syracuse churches.

This article provides a brief summary of activities so far and a quick look forward.

The Leadership Team created as part of the effort started to

meet during May. The team includes laity from each of the eight churches, our clergy team, our district superintendent and Rev. Lauren Swanson, who is acting in a consulting role.

The team is working together to understand and navigate through the change that is upon us now in the form of a new structure and new appointments. The team met twice in May.

Two working groups established by the Leadership Team will start meeting soon to look at Missions and Nurture. Early on

the Missions Group will help us find some simple ways to bring us together as we serve Syracuse. Eventually, the group will develop a larger strategy for Missions and Outreach in our city.

The Nurture Group will also start finding some ways to bring us together for worship and fellowship opportunities while beginning to develop plans for the future in these areas.

Looking ahead:

The Leadership Team will develop a clearer understanding of
See **COMING**, Page 5

More information on UNY Annual Conference actions

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please take note.

- ◆ Youth attendees passed around notices for “save the date” and “very much encourage anyone and everyone that is interested in coming to experience the youth in action at our fall events in November, as well as our spring event in April.”
- ◆ The Committee of Native American Ministries had a table with information as well as presentation time. I will plan to attend the next scheduled small-group training session in September. The UNY Conference is in process to prepare for a Service of Repentance & Healing Relationships with Indigenous Persons in 2015.
- ◆ Pastor Craig, as co-chair with Christine Doran, reported for the Africa 360 Task Force chartered by Bishop Webb at the 2013 UNY AC. The task force core purpose explained from the pre-conference booklet is “rallying the Annual Conference behind two key initiatives: providing permanent, endowed scholarships for students at Africa University, and joining the denomination’s

Global Health Initiative aimed at eliminating malaria in sub-Saharan Africa.”

- ◆ Ted Finlayson-Schueler is on the UNY UM Committee on Sexual Ethics.
- ◆ Vito Sciscioli is on a committee on conference properties.
- ◆ Christine Doran received the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence from the United Methodist Men.

Please go to the conference website for more news of the conference activity that is well documented and professionally written: <http://www.unyumc.org/pages/detail/2140> or, I am happy to assist if you would like printed information. Please contact me at 256-7668.

In the final plenary session appointments were announced and no additional news or change was announced about the Syracuse Clergy Cooperative-Parish appointments of what was written in the last Chimes.

And so ended my conference experience, spirit-filled, worship-filled, news-filled and much to meditate on of the work that lies ahead for United Methodists!

Yours through Christ,
Gwen Tillapaugh-Fay

UNY office ‘not adequate’

Another important report from the UNY Conference trustees affects UUMC significantly.

As explained in the May 31 UNY Advocate: “Wendy Deichmann, chair of the New Conference Task Force that formed about a year ago, discussed the work of the trustees to find a new space for the Conference, Episcopal and Crossroads District offices, which are currently housed at University UMC in Syracuse.

When the Conference first formed and was seeking a site for the offices, Dr. Deichmann said, the trustees faced two challenges: a short timeframe and limited financial assets, as the assets of the former conferences had not been completely liquidated.” ... “Still, she said, the space is not adequate for the Conference’s current needs.”

Pastor Craig and UUMC members were asked to stand and be recognized for our “warm and wonderful hospitality” and our work of reconfiguring church space for Upper New York’s offices to use during the transition from four conferences merging into one.

— *Gwen Tillapaugh-Fay*

Are we and our United Methodist brothers and sisters prepared to hear and speak the truth?

CONTINUED from Page 2

me as a pastor. Hard for capable and hard-working church leaders.

Hard for faithful and devoted church members. Because we imagine we’ve failed somehow.

But the truth is just that. Not an accusation. Simply a wakeup call and a call to action.

Are we — and our sisters and brothers in other churches — ready to hear the truth, as well as speak

it? I’ll be praying for that — and each of you — while I’m away.

— *Craig*

A Thank You from Craig:

Over the years, I have been envious of clergy colleagues whose congregations took time to recognize some significant milestone in their ministerial career. No more! You outdid yourselves on Sunday, both in marking my 40 years in ministry and sending me off on my sabbatical in such a supportive and upbeat way. I

am deeply appreciative ... and will carry your words and faces with me over the next two months.

I am grateful, too, for the gift of the Celtic cross and wall plaque, and look forward to hanging them in my study, when I return.

Most of all, I very much appreciate how you made the morning not all about me, but a genuine celebration of our life and ministry together.

We have much to look forward to.

People/Prayer Connection

JOYS

Sundays, May 11 & 18

- Thank you, God, for this lovely day. Strengthen our spirits.

Sunday, May 25

- **Robert James:** Thanking God for the recovery of health for **Mary Wilson**.

PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR:

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

Sundays, May 11 & 18

- **Cheryl:** Prayers for my surgery
- **Peter Swords:** Strength to hang onto the truth that can free us all from the tyranny of oppression and bring us together in peace.
- Healing for all who need it
- I'm asking the church to pray for **P** and my children.
- The city churches
- **Meredith,** struggling with severe health issues.
- To finally get my lights and gas turned on. I have been without both for one month now.
- Safety for the bishop's event and a good turnout at the Elks Club on Newport Road.

Sunday, May 25

- **Elise:** Prophet Jesus, I praise you for giving memories to improve myself, to help others who need help most!
- **Keith:** Pray for **Donna,** as she has knee replacement Tuesday morning.
- **Peter Swords:** The **Grooter family,** who lost their brother **John Grooter** last week suddenly.
- **Ralph:** A prayer for all those who have lost loved ones.

May they find peace and comfort.

- **Claudette Brown-Smythe,** for healing of a respiratory irritation.
- **Matt** to find an apartment.
- Those in continuing medical treatment.
- I am leaving Syracuse in September to move to Fort Mills, S.C. Give me your blessings. Thanks, God bless.

Sunday, June 1

- **Jeanette:** **Jim Thomas,** for his bird to return home and for **Bill Pray Sr.,** who is suffering through illness.
- **Peter Swords:** Thanks for safe travels of **Alicia Swords** to & from Peru, and prayers for a safe trip for **Sol & Eileen** to Japan and back
- Those grieving.
- Our newborn son, **Matthew,** who is in the hospital.
- My friend **George** (at age 95) has respiratory issues.
- Please guide **Tim** in his decision as to whether or not to stay in Afghanistan as asked.

CARE AND SHARE MINISTRY

ASKS PRAYERS FOR:

- **June 1:** Diane Butler, Vicki O'Neill, Lisa St. Denny
- **June 8:** John Dick, George Hart, Sungsu Lee
- **June 15:** Nyasha Boldon, Leslie Perkins, Anneke Vasquez
- **June 22:** Shaun Althouse, Derrick Johnson, Lessie Newton
- **June 29:** Ray Ashwood, Karen Quick, Joe Trainor
- **July 6:** Lottie Appleton, Nate Appleton, Ellen Bacon, David Bacon

Coming together

CONTINUED from Page 3

how we operate in the structure created by our new appointments. The appointments have us continuing as independent churches while working together in a new structure. The Leadership Team hopes to clarify how the new clergy structure will work with our still independent churches.

The infrastructure will be developed to provide improved communications. We hope to have a website in place by the fall that will start by providing information on our "Rethinking" process itself, worship, programs and missions. We also expect that weekly worship bulletins and monthly newsletters will start to contain more collective information.

The Working Groups will provide some opportunities to come together in mission, worship and fellowship. We will all start to see emerging plans for our future.

The "Rethinking" effort will ultimately need to consider where God is leading us in order to serve our city and nurture our faith communities. Developing a successful plan will continue to depend upon our churches, working groups, leadership teams and our clergy coming together in faith as we consider our future.

Please keep the City of Syracuse and our "Rethinking" effort in your prayers. Coming together and finding a path forward is difficult but filled with opportunity.

May God give us the faith to make some difficult but necessary changes and the wisdom to understand God's will for us as we journey together.

Finance Corner

Pledging Update

2014 total pledges: \$230,877

Paid to date: \$121,266

Non-pledge contr.: \$8,317

Sounds of the Spirit Campaign

Donations received \$70,843

Expenses paid \$70,589

Current balance \$254

July birthdays

2 - Israel Toe

3 - Kate Drew

4 - Kelsey Youmell, United States of America

6 - Matt Fischer, Dr. Mark Zimmerman, Linda Oertel,

Ed Tillapaugh, Ping Hemphill-Wu

8 - Jon Boll, Esther Weah

9 - Sol Swords

10 - Jeff Foley

14 - Elizabeth Bradshaw, Esther Livingstone, Richard

Schemichen, Eli Weah

15 - Lee Potter, Margo Kotten

16 - Ellen Bacon, Timothy

Damron

17 - Deirdre Zimmerman

18 - Elisa Sciscioli

21 - Harold Britton, Afton

Kapuscinski

22 - Tajmier Brackett

24 - Dorothy Logan

25 - Rebecca Youmell, Peter Sciscioli

26 - Corrie Fagut-Pratt

28 - Jayne Humbert

29 - Jackie Simmons

30 - Helena Weah, Rev. Tom Wolfe

Creation Stewardship

Creation Stewardship books, pamphlets and DVDs have been added to the bookshelves in the Chappell Room.

Returning Soon

Stephanie Hitztaler and Oliver send word they will be back soon from their stay in Finland.



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

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Dated material

WEEK OF JUNE 15

Sunday the 15th

9:30 a.m. Contemporary Issues

10:30 a.m. Worship, Alicia Wood preaching

11:45 a.m. Fellowship, Gathering Room

Noon Soup and Sermon Chat

Noon Orchestra rehearsal

Wednesday the 18th

11:15 a.m. Staff Meeting

Friday the 20th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

WEEK OF JUNE 22

Sunday the 22nd

9 a.m. Community/Church Breakfast

9:30 a.m. Contemporary Issues

10:30 a.m. Worship, Rev. Robert Hill preaching

11:45 a.m. Fellowship, Gathering Room

Noon Soup and Sermon Chat

Wednesday the 25th

11:15 a.m. Staff Meeting

Friday the 27th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

WEEK OF JUNE 29

Sunday the 29th

9:30 a.m. Contemporary Issues

10:30 a.m. Worship, Rev. Jim Wiggins preaching

11:45 a.m. Fellowship, Gathering Room

Noon Soup and Sermon Chat

Wednesday the 2nd

11:15 a.m. Staff Meeting

Friday the 4th - Independence Day

Church Office and Pantry Closed

WEEK OF JULY 6

Sunday the 6th

10 a.m. Contemporary Issues

11 a.m. Worship, Alicia Wood preaching

12:15 p.m. Fellowship, Gathering Room

12:30 p.m. Soup and Sermon Chat

Wednesday the 9th

11:15 a.m. Staff Meeting

Friday the 11th

10 a.m. - noon Friday Community

Guild Meeting

The next meeting of The Guild will be a salad luncheon at noon Wednesday, June 25 in the Pettengill Center at UUMC. Bring a dish to pass, with the recipe. All are welcome.

Altar Flowers

Altar flowers were given by the

Altar Guild, Ken and Bobbie Craig and Brad and Judith Bowers.

Flowers were given to Martha Sutter, Dennis Triggs, Roger MacDonald, Cheryl Brown and Lee Greene.

Flowers were delivered by Ed and Lee Potter and Judith Bowers.

Pentecost June 8, 2014 (2 photos)



The congregation lays hands on Rev. French at the end of the service, sending him off on his sabbatical/study leave with our blessing.



Erick and Jasmine are baptized.



Margo Koten arranges the Peale Entrance window as Don watches.



A new red Connective Corridor sign has been installed in front of the church, directing visitors to the Medical Complex, Syracuse University, Carrier Dome, SUNY-ESF and Syracuse Stage.



The Win Gaskin Memorial Garden in bloom.



Our Learning Through Service group members enjoy lunches from the Eastern Farm Workers Association fundraiser. The EFWA used our kitchen to prepare the lunches they sold.

Before-and-After Photos Rev. French's Office (8 photos)

















Community Garden Planting May 24, 2014 (11 photos)























Community Garden Blessing and Picnic May 25, 2014 (5 photos)











Community Garden June 9, 2014 (2 photos)



