We’re on a journey...

“Are We There Yet?” Christmas is less than three weeks away, but there’s still a ways to go.

That complaint from bored children on a long trip is the theme for our Advent worship series, as we journey to Christmas. But instead of a whine, let it be a call to work and worship in this season of light.

We stopped at “Peace” on Dec. 1. Future destinations are “Hope” on Dec. 8, “Joy” on Dec. 15 and “Love” on Dec. 22.

Many events are still to come in this season of anticipation.

This Sunday, Dec. 8, is the annual tradition of “Bringing in Christmas,” the day we contribute warm winter outerwear — coats, hats, gloves, scarves — as well as socks, that will go to our Food Pantry guests.

Also this Sunday, is the Advent Potluck Luncheon after worship in Fellowship Hall. Bring a dish to pass and your place setting, if you are able. Bring an instrument if you have one, so you can join our “Pickup Orchestra,” which will play carols for the rest of us to sing.

For Dec. 15, our choir will be presenting a Lessons & Carols program by composers J.S. Bach, John Rutter and Robert Lau, with organ, trumpet and drum accompaniment.

The very next day, Dec. 16, is our annual Neighborhood Christmas Dinner. Volunteers are needed to serve and contribute desserts.

Our Handbell Choir will perform on Dec. 22 in worship.

An Advent Bible Study began Dec. 6 on the Gospel of Luke, but you can come to the two remaining sessions Dec. 13 and 20 at 12:30 p.m. in the Chappell Room.

The Christmas Eve pageant, with the children portraying the Christmas story, has a new starting time this year: 6 p.m. Dec. 24. Rehearsal is 10 a.m. to noon Dec. 21 in the sanctuary.

There’s also a combined service with Erwin First UMC and UUMC at 10 p.m. Dec. 24 at Erwin First.
Let Christ child’s light shine through during dark days

Happy Advent!
I’m very excited about Advent and the Christmas season this year!
Getting ready for Christmas can overwhelm us with our long to-do lists and even larger list of expectations we put on ourselves.

If we can take a breath, and reflect, on the long, dark month of December, the Advent message will shine through.

We sometimes focus so much on Christmas we forget Advent reminds us of how to live a Christian life.

The Advent message of peace, hope, joy and love while keeping our focus on Jesus is the way we can live all year.

I’ve been watching the Netflix show The Crown. It is a show based on the lives of Queen Elizabeth and her family. The latest episode I watched featured the family watching the astronauts and Apollo missions.

It struck me to see the family around the TV watching something so historic.
For some it was a spiritual moment. When the broadcaster said, “This may give a new perspective of unity and cohesion that may cause a shift in us,” it took my breath away.

1968 and 1969 were years of chaos much like this year has been. We need a shift in us now. The image of the Earth from the moon was so beautiful and awe-inspiring. The Earth was one. The people from one common place. A planet called Earth.

The Christmas Eve message from Apollo 8 was the creation text from Genesis. How fitting. God knows creation as good. Jesus was born to remind us of our goodness. He taught us how to live with peace, hope, joy and love.

As we move through Advent and the Christmas season, let’s not focus on to-do lists and expectations of the “perfect” Christmas but keep in mind God’s creation and its goodness with our focus on Jesus.

Let the light of the Christ child shine through the dark days of December so that we are awe-inspired and moved to live in this Christmas Spirit year round.

Peace,
Pastor Alicia

P.S. Here are some links to remind us of the message of the Apollo Missions:
https://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/lunar/apollo8_xmas.html
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gL66BkJ0QTY
A photo of Earthrise taken by the astronauts on Apollo 8 as they orbited the moon.

Alicia Wood

A photo of Earthrise taken by the astronauts on Apollo 8 as they orbited the moon.

From our pastor...

P.S. Here are some links to remind us of the message of the Apollo Missions:
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Alicia Wood

Zach and Bethany Markley

Paola Marin

Bryce Linehan and Jules Colantonio

About a dozen young adults enjoyed a Thanksgiving dinner at the Nelson Price/Barbara Fought home Nov. 17.

Bell Johnson and Nneka Eke
Final Thanksgiving Bag Project total: 188 families served

On Tuesday, Nov. 26, University United Methodist Church distributed 170 Thanksgiving Bags to 170 households.

These bags were brought home to people’s families, which includes 274 adults and 190 children.

Another 18 bags were distributed to “standby” folk, making it 188 households. (We do not have a good assessment of how many folk these 18 bags fed).

Minimally, 482 UUMC neighbors were given food for their Thanksgiving holiday.

Much of the food gathered for this event was gotten through the Food Bank of CNY, which acquires seasonally appropriate foods via offerings through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Once foods have received their USDA indicator, these foods become free for national emergency food access sites.

In the end, about 80% of the foods gathered for UUMC’s Thanksgiving Bag distributions was free due to these USDA foods.

Obviously, this saves us a huge amount of money, but it also saves a lot of physical labor as these food products are moved from the Food Bank truck into UUMC only once.

This is one way Joyce Flynn and I have worked to streamline and make more efficient the Thanksgiving Bag distribution program.

Wegmans and Price Rite both made significant donations and price cuts to additional products that were needed. You all, the congregation, wrapped up our needs with the offerings you brought in.

What is particularly significant about UUMC’s Thanksgiving Bag distribution is that there are very few like it in Syracuse.

Although folk can enjoy a hot, cooked meal at other Syracuse locations, it is very difficult to gather an entire meal that can be created at home with one’s family.

We easily had 20 volunteers on Tuesday to assist our guests in gathering their food, and another 20 congregation members helped out on Sunday, Nov. 24, to pack the bags.

The majority of the Hunt/Flynn family came in on Saturday, Nov. 23, to organize Pettengill and Fellowship Hall for these efforts.

As we look forward to next year, we will continue to tweak and adjust to ensure more folk can receive Thanksgiving Bags in the most efficient, generous way.

Change is presenting itself to our food pantry. It is likely that there will be more folk using our pantry next Thanksgiving.

More folk wanting to create a Thanksgiving meal with their family. We look forward to meeting this need and welcome all to UUMC.

Galyn Murphy-Stanley, Outreach Coordinator

Thanks to Galyn and congregation for making bag project a success

On Nov. 26, the congregation of UUMC, with help from the Food Bank of CNY, Price Rite Supermarket, Wegmans and Walmart, provided 188 families in our neighborhood and surrounding community with the makings for a complete Thanksgiving dinner.

From 9 a.m. until the last bag was picked up at 12:15 p.m., it was a busy, chaotic and wonderfully upbeat atmosphere as the many volunteers did their best to help everything move smoothly.

We invited our neighbors and guests to enjoy coffee, fresh fruit and snacks as they waited patiently in our Hospitality Center for their turn to pick up their bag & turkey.

Fresh produce was available for all — both vegetables and fruits — and was much appreciated.

Volunteers assisted guests back upstairs and outside with their bounty as wishes for a “Happy Thanksgiving!” were exchanged by many.

Tremendous thanks to our incredible outreach coordinator, Galyn, for hustling so much free and low-cost food from the Food Bank, arranging for fresh produce through grocery rescue and the annual potato pickup and for all of her hard work in helping with planning, setup, cleanup, etc.

Thanks also to the congregation for their generous donations of time, food and monetary donations to help give 188 families a Happy Thanksgiving.

— Joyce Flynn
THANK YOU
To the Congregation:
Thank you for the lovely altar flowers sent to me as I recover from my fall.
Thank you, also, to Margo Koten for delivering them to my home.
Ginny Dewey

CONTINUING PRAYERS
• Sherri Cullen: Kathy Dewey, Heidi Wise, Billy and Family, Patti Fasulo, Jeanne, Patti Walker and family, Melanie, Annette and her family and mom, Grace; Marc Therrien; Maria and her mom
• Erika: Maria Storto, Ann Leduc, Barb and Bob Weaver
• Barb and Bob: Alayah Green, Mary and Carus Oscott Sr., John Quiggle, Frank Clish, Mary Ellen Will, Fay Kingery.
• Sue: My family, those with health issues

PRAYERS REQUESTED:
For Those in Military Service:
• Chance Lawson, Austin Payne, Ian Enderle

Sunday, November 10
• Rest in Peace. Eddie Nunn.
• Please pray for those struggling with addiction
• Angela: Ann and Tom Owens, health issues.
• Willie: For all that have an illness, I hope they recover.
• In remembrance of the Rev. Thomas B. Shepherd, first pastor of this church, see plaque in narthex for complete list through Hal Garman
• Rhonda: Prayers and blessings to UUMC pastor for such a warm welcoming greeting when I travel Oswego to Syracuse for Sunday service

Sunday, November 17
• Will the school shootings ever end? Comfort the grieving, give them strength and courage.
• Let kindness prevail among all people

For all who despair and need healing.
• My friend Julia O. Giles, who is having surgery tomorrow, and my friend Joan, who will be having surgery soon. Also, that God send the church tenants for the rental space.
• Connie Myers: Those working to interrupt racism.
• Sue: My family, those with health issues.
• Tom Owens, Sue Bates, Esther Pardue.
• Prayers of love and healing for Starke Donnally. Prayers of joy and celebration of hearing the bell choir.
• For Ann Price, dealing with breast cancer a fourth time.
• Please pray for “Birdie” Carmen, who has pancreatic cancer.
• Please pray for healing and a return to health for our friend, Tony EPpolito.
• Elise: Prophet Jesus: Bless the congregation, for they helped me, by aiding in things that mattered most!
• Kim Kromer Murphy: Prayers for healing within families
• Chuck McBride: Prayers for my girlfriend, Linda, who is undergoing surgery for breast cancer on Friday
• Joyce Flynn: Prayers for Stephen Tedford and family, as they cope with his recent brain cancer diagnosis

Sunday, November 24
• Please bless my family and friends, keep all of them healthy and safe and full of peace and joy.
• Joyce: Prayers for mom Kelli and her 6-month-old daughter, Harper, as they recover from surgery; Kelli donated part of her liver to her daughter Harper.
• Jeanne and Ted F-S: 5-year-old Lily, who has viral encephalitis.
• Vito and Janet: Frank Scalise, Vito’s brother-in-law, died last week.
• Joeviet, Eva, Joel, Erick and Juliet: For my family, the church, and Nelson and Barbara.
• Prophet Jesus: Bless the workers on these farms, for they nourish the hungry and those in need.
• I wish our members of the church pray peace for DRC because we all can work together.
• For healing within families.
• Don Koten: For my cousin who has been diagnosed with cancer.

See PEOPLE, Page 5
People & Prayers

CONTINUED from Page 4
- **Peter Swords:** For the SU community and for safety, health and human rights for all. Let’s pray for change in the narrative that causes hate crimes and oppression.
- **Willie:** A prayer that my sister-in-law is feeling better and all have a safe Thanksgiving.
- **For positive family experiences during the holidays**
- **Vito and Janet:** May our brother-in-law Frank Scalise rest in peace.

**Sunday, December 1**
- **Peter Gale:** Pray for Timmy Case
- **Prophet Jesus:** I plead to you for the sick and injured, to comfort and strengthen their physical healing.
- **Peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo**
- **For Guy Williams** dealing with cancer.
- **Barbara Gilbraith:** For those traveling today – may they return home safely.
- **For nations including the U.S., “never prepare for battle again.”**
- **Jeanne:** Continued prayers for my mom, Marylou, and Ted’s little cousin Lily
- **Jim** asks that we pray for the people and family affected by the shooting at Destiny. Prayers for peace, not fear, as we shape and live our lives.
- **Greetings from Marg McDivitt**
- **Good morning, Family,** as the holiday season grows near, be grateful for another day. Someone did not wake up this morning. God bless everyone! In joy, Happy Birthday to me for another year.
- **Prayers for Mike** as he awaits a transplant. Help him to remain strong and hopeful.
- **For Don Koten,** who fell and broke his hip.
- **Sharon Smith:** Prayers for all dealing with addiction. Safe travels for everyone. Those having surgery.
- **For healing of relationships in and between family members.**
- **Praise to God for safe travels during two work trips and the great opportunities to engage in work. To visit family and reunite with good friends along the way. Thanks for a small, peaceful Thanksgiving with Oliver and Vera and a short road trip.**

**THANKS & PRAISE & JOYS Sunday, December 1**
- **A joy!** We got to visit my eldest cousin, who is 100 years young.

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**January birthdays**
1 – David Lund, Samuel Weah, Pablo Weah, Joeviet Cooper
2 – Maria Pedro
4 – Autumn Kerr, Ken Craig
9 – Joseph Smythe
11 – Jim Samuel
20 – Ebony Wilson-Selmon
21 – Jacob Upcraft
22 – Diane Swords
23 – Eboni Marshall, Judith Bowers
24 – Seineh Weah
25 – Lara Chappell
26 – Fred Adams
27 – Colleen Magowan
30 – Eros Marshall, Gwen Tillapaugh-Fay
31 – Neil Damron

**Altar flowers**
Altar flowers were given by:
- Jim and Deb Virgo in remembrance of Jim’s parents, Dorothy and Roderick Virgo.
- Nancy Hough in memory of her husband, W. Howard Hough, and her parents, Raymond and Margaret Laing.
- Dr. Cynthia Steinem in memory of her parents, Dr. Joseph and Mrs. Judith Steinem.
- Flowers were given to Holly Austin, Starke Donnally, Janet Thorna and Ginny Dewey.
- Flowers were delivered by Nancy Hough and Margo Koten.

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**Potato Drop:** Ted Finlayson-Schueler, Galyn Murphy-Stanley, Kellie Wood and Lyn Baker picked up 3 carloads of potatoes from the UNY Conference in Liverpool Nov. 16 for use in Thanksgiving bags and the Food Pantry.

**Katz Concert:** The Nov. 9 Harmony Katz event raised $822 for Outreach. Outreach Coordinator Galyn Murphy-Stanley thanks the congregation!
**Finance Corner**

**Pledging Update**
- 2019 total pledges: $203,474
- Total Pledges Received: $182,673
- Non-pledge contributions: $18,096
- Thursday Service: $327
- Trustees Bathroom Renovation Fund: $24,625
- Blessings in a Backpack: $3,500
- Thanksgiving Offering: $706

**Sounds of the Spirit Visual Fund**
- Donations received: $95,991
- Expenses paid: $88,891
- Current balance: $7,100

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**University United Methodist Church**

**Feeding God’s People: Body, Mind and Spirit**

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**Weekly Calendar**

**Week of December 8**

- **Sunday the 8th**
  - 9 a.m. Community Breakfast, Fellowship Hall
  - 10:30 a.m. Worship.
  - 10:45 a.m. Christian education for adults with disabilities, Laubach Room
  - 11:45 a.m. Advent Potluck Luncheon, Fellowship Hall
  - 6 p.m. Fast Track II Disciple Bible Study

- **Monday the 9th**
  - 7 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Fellowship Hall

- **Wednesday the 11th**
  - 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting
  - 7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal, Pettengill Center

- **Friday the 13th**
  - 10 a.m. Food Pantry, Clothes Closet, Diapers, Fellowship Hall
  - 12:30 p.m. Bible Study, Chappell Room

**Week of December 15**

- **Sunday the 15th**
  - 9 a.m. Bagels & coffee, The Gathering Room
  - 10:30 a.m. Worship. Special choral presentation
  - 10:45 a.m. Christian education for adults with disabilities, Laubach Room
  - 11:45 a.m. Fellowship, The Gathering Room
  - Noon Soup & Sermon Chat, Chappell Room
  - 6 p.m. Fast Track II Disciple Bible Study

**Week of December 22**

- **Sunday the 22nd**
  - 9 a.m. Community Breakfast, Fellowship Hall
  - 10:30 a.m. Worship
  - 10:45 a.m. Christian education for adults with disabilities, Laubach Room
  - 11:45 a.m. Fellowship, The Gathering Room
  - Noon Soup & Sermon Chat, Chappell Room
  - 6 p.m. Christmas Pageant

**Week of December 29**

- **Sunday the 29th**
  - 9 a.m. Bagels & coffee, The Gathering Room
  - 10:30 a.m. Worship.
  - 11:45 a.m. Fellowship, The Gathering Room
  - 10:45 a.m. Christian education for adults with disabilities, Laubach Room
  - Noon Soup & Sermon Chat, Chappell Room
  - Wednesday the 1st—New Year’s Day

**Church Office Closed**

- Friday the 3rd
  - 10 a.m. Food Pantry, Clothes Closet, Diapers, Fellowship Hall

**Week of January 5**

- **Sunday the 5th**
  - 9 a.m. Bagels & coffee, The Gathering Room
  - 10:30 a.m. Worship.
  - 10:45 a.m. Christian education for adults with disabilities, Laubach Room
  - 11:45 a.m. Fellowship, The Gathering Room
  - Wednesday the 8th

**Church Office Closed**

- Thursday the 9th
  - 7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal, Pettengill Center

- Friday the 10th
  - 10 a.m. Food Pantry, Clothes Closet, Diapers, Fellowship Hall
Peale Entrance Window
Designed and Executed by
Holly and Seth Austin
Theodicy Jazz Collective
In Worship
November 3, 2019
Harmony Katz in Concert
November 9, 2019
Preparing Bags for East Genesee Regent Association Christmas Party for Neighborhood Children
November 15, 2019
(3 photos)
Filling Thanksgiving Bags
November 24, 2019
(10 photos)
Thanksgiving Bag Distribution

November 26, 2019

(3 photos)
Communion Service
December 1, 2019
(4 photos)

Children collect toiletries donated by members for Food Pantry guests.