THE CHIMES

Dec. 4, 2020

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The Church Office will be closed from Dec. 25 through the following week and will reopen Monday, Jan. 4.

Articles for The Chimes must be submitted by noon on the deadline day and can be sent to: media@uumcsyracuse.org

Alicia Wood, Pastor Tom Boll, Editor

Making Advent, Christmas Eve happen during a pandemic

With Thanksgiving in the rearview mirror, we're already through the first week of Advent, one that will be like none in the past.

In-person worship has been suspended as the church building is in the Orange alert zone because of a rise in COVID-19 cases. The online service on our Facebook page and YouTube continues at 11 a.m.

The Christmas Eve service also will be online and broadcast twice that evening, Dec. 24, at 6 and 8 p.m. on Facebook. You're likely to see images of Christmas Eves past. There will be 30 minutes of music before each broadcast starts.

Pastor Alicia is encouraging families to watch it together while simul-

taneously being on Zoom.

Our Advent worship series, fitting for the end of this extremely difficult year, is "I Believe Even When..."

Instead of acting out from the fear that comes from pain, we are called by this series to a different response — transformation and reconciliation through hope, love, joy and peace.

The themes of the four weeks are: Nov. 30, "I Believe in the Sun: Hope for Tomorrow"; Dec. 6, "I Believe in Love: Daring, Right Relationships"; Dec. 13, "I Believe in God: Ode to Joy"; and Dec. 20, "I Believe in the Light: Illuminating Peace."

Pastor Alicia encourages us to See **ADVENT**, Page 7

Financial report through September: good news

Ronald Denby, chair of the Finance Committee, has updated us on the church finances through the end of September.

The news since his last report as of the end of May is brighter. The year isn't over yet, but the bottom line shows the church with positive income instead of a projected deficit.

Net income after all adjustments was up 140%, as UUMC had net income of \$21,594 instead of a budgeted loss of \$54,458.

You, the members and friends of UUMC, deserve many, many thanks for the support you've given the

Year-End Giving

As 2020 draws to a close, please keep UUMC in your thoughts and consider a year-end donation.

The IRS is allowing a \$300 itemized charitable donation on your 2020 return, even if you don't otherwise itemize.

church during this extremely difficult time. You also should know that people from the community also have been making donations as word of the good work done here has

See INCREASED, Page 6

UUMC is a special place and needs to stay where it is



As we entered 2020, first, I never imagined a pandemic or everyday life changing so dramatically.

Alicia Wood Second, as we entered 2020, the leadership of the church was wrestling with the direction of our church.

We wondered if the building is too large and required too much upkeep.

We wondered what we would, long term, be able to afford regarding the building, staff and ministry.

This November was a tough one for me. I'm tired of the pandemic. It seems to constantly be a heavy weight on my shoulders. I'm worried I may get sick or worse get one of you sick.

Then, Thanksgiving came along. I was honored and humbled to work the Thanksgiving meal giveaway through the Food Center @324.

It was wonderful to interact with our guests. They were so thankful.

The week following, I received emails and texts from several community leaders thanking us for all we do for our neighbors.

It is not uncommon for people to ask what we are doing every Friday, coming out of their houses or driving down the street, but this was special.

Given the rollercoaster of emotions of November and much throughout the next years too. prayer, I've found the courage to

I truly believe University UMC is a special place. Every time I walk into the sanctuary I am blown away by the beauty and the Holy Spirit.

My uncle, a United Methodist pastor from Ohio, visited our church once, and he emailed me the next day sharing his overwhelming feeling of the Holy Spirit in our church.

This church has been known by our city and neighborhood for more years than I've been alive.

It has been known for its outstanding music, outreach and stand for social justice.

Today, we are known for our belief that all people are beloved children of God by our banners outside.

Teach-Ins, our consistent attendance at rallies and marches speaking out against oppression and, of course, our feeding ministries on Friday and Sunday mornings.

All this to say, I believe we need to stay a vibrant Spirit-filled community of faith on this corner of the city.

Our building use has changed during the pandemic. Thank God for the building and the space to fill 300 boxes with food every week.

Our building use will contin-

ue to change and shift as needed

The building is also an exshare my thoughts on our church. pensive burden. I know that more now than ever since we do not have a building superintendent and much has fallen on me.

> I feel the building has more life and Spirit than negatives. The building and the people who worship and serve from it are known for their openness and love.

We have been a church for 150 years. In order for us to continue this legacy we'll need to build the endowment so that the earned income can be a part of our budget for life and ministry.

I pray we rent or receive some income from the second and third floors, but the legacy through the endowment is crucial. There will be more to come on this subject in 2021.

Even though I am tired of dealing with the pandemic, I am so energized by the ministry that is about to happen through all of you in 2021 on this corner of the city.

As we prepare for Jesus this Advent and look to 2021, let's remember this from the Gospel of Matthew 19:26, "Jesus said, 'Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible."

Happy Advent and Merry Christmas!

> Peace, Pastor Alícia

SPRC seeks congregation's input for annual review of pastor's performance The Staff Parish Relations Committee conducts an annual review of our pastor's performance. The committee would appreciate your feedback on these questions:

- What do you find most effective about Pastor Alicia's ministry?
- Do you have any suggestions for Pastor Alicia to improve her effectiveness? Please email your responses to SPRC member Ellyn Gale at egale@twcny.rr.com or mail them to her at 118 Norwood Ave., Syracuse NY 13206 by Dec. 15. All responses will be kept confidential.

Outreach Ministry

Huge line at Food Center now a regular weekly occurrence



Galyn Murphy-Stanley

Please know that the photo at right represents our new reality.

The staff and our Food Center @324 volunteers ongoingly strive to meet many of the needs of our community's people in an extraordinarily difficult time in what looks to be a very tough winter ahead. We have no end date on our current efforts.

The historically marginalized among us are absolutely the most affected by hunger, poverty and desperation, and their numbers swell weekly.

We still use a federal food chain/distribution model that was put in place during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Americans who currently use Emergency Food systems have exceeded the most "poor, hungry" year of the Great Depression in 1933 when Emergency Food Access programs were in their infancy.

Although we don't see many of you, know that we are here. We labor to be our best selves, meet UUMC's mission of Feeding God's People: Body, Mind and Spirit and networking with our local and state agencies to ensure we can continue our daily exertions and meet the needs of Syracusans.

We care for ourselves, each other and our church to the best of our ability in keeping us all safe, healthy and strong. I wish



Food Bank line in the 1930s, left, and Food Bank line today in Texas.

November 2020 Emergency Food & Diaper Distribution

Date	House holds	Adults	Children	Seniors	Families w/ Children	Bagel Breakfast	Pet Food
11/6	290	550	760	55	210	55	4
11/13	270	445	500	65	170	62	3
11/20	335	585	555	95	220	60	2
						11/22 65	
						11/29 60	
Total	895	1,580	1,815	215	600	302	9

- Total Individuals who received food from UUMC's Food Center-3,912 (Food distributions & breakfasts) At our COVID-safe Emergency Food/Thanksgiving distribution on 11/20/20 we saw a record number of guests for this event. We were able to provide 335 households with a total of 1,235 individuals Thanksgiving foods and a turkey.
- Total number of families served who have children: 600
- Babies who received diapers on Nov. 4: 360, This equals 18,000 diapers distributed in 2 hours
- Total guests who visited UUMC for Sunday breakfast: 300. This event continued throughout the month, without interruption, each Sunday

the same for you each: Stay strong, stay safe and healthy, wear your mask, wash your hands and share good energy with others. We all need it. See OUTERWEAR, Page 8

People & Prayers

DEATHS



Longtime member
Roger MacDonald
died Nov. 28 at the
age of 94. A memorial service will be
held at a later date.
Here is a link to his

obituary: **OBITUARY**



Ted Guercio died Nov. 21 at the age of 97. His calling hours and service have been held. Ted was proud of his World War II service and spoke

at many public schools about it as he did July 1, 2018 at UUMC. Here is a link to his obituary: OBITUARY

PRAYERS REQUESTED:

For Those in Military Service:

 Chance Lawson, Austin Payne, Ian Enderle, Nic Weah, Asani Mauridi

Sunday, November 8

- Barbara Fought: For Starke, who is recovering at home
- Kathy Cleary: Prayers to my family on the passing of my Uncle Peter, who died of COVID last Tuesday
- Kim Kromer Murphy: Prayers for those with cancer
- Barb Weaver: Continued prayers for my father, Carus Olcott
 Sr.
- Kenna LaPorte: Pray for my mom, Norma, who struggles with the loss of her husband of 60 years.
- Don: Prayers for his family, Cira and Kids
- Sue Bates: Those with health issues

- Jackie Sadowski: Healing prayers for her sister Barbara
- Prayers for Kim Kromer Murphy's move
- Prayers for Harry Miller's knee surgery recovery

Sunday, November 15

- Ed: For the family of Dennis
 DeStefano, who died a week
 ago Saturday
- Lee Potter: For goodwill and respect for the future of our country.
- Barbara: For our country
- Sue: Those with health issues
- Jackie: Everyone's safety
- Alicia: Healing prayers for Brittany and Tom
- Peace and understanding about the concerns facing Vera House and all those involved with leadership and support.
- Stephanie Hitztaler: Prayers for my dad, whose health is declining
- Ted Finlayson-Schueler: Pray for families making decisions about Thanksgiving.
- Carol Boll: For Bethany, who was exposed last week. We'll be quarantining until she gets results of her tests.
- Let us continue to pray for Harry Miller's knee healing.
- Please pray for Kenna LaPorte's niece and family and the state of Wisconsin as they struggle with COVID.
- Prayers for a successful carpal tunnel surgery for Nelson Price
- Let's pray for Sue Bates as she returns to the doc for her foot. Prayers that her foot is healed enough to forgo foot surgery.

- Healing prayers for Jeanne F-S and Jayne Humbert
- Prayers of sanity and peace as Kim Kromer Murphy packs up one home and moves to a new home.
- Healing prayers for Ginny Bartow and prayers for her family
- Pastor asks for prayers for our church. First, a prayer of gratitude for the way in which the church shares God's love by feeding and clothing people. Second, a prayer for increased financial security.
- Prayers for Mac Sabol
- Sharon Smith asks that we pray for her friend Darren and his struggles in California
- Let us pray for Ericka Vitthuhn and her ankle.
- Let us pray for Kenna to complete her dissertation edits with joy and peace and relief once complete.
- Prayers and action needed that our church may create a new COVID care team so that if anyone contracts COVID our church may be able to provide meals and run errands as families quarantine.

Sunday, November 22

- Sue Bates: Prayers for people with health issues.
- Gail Tyndall: Prayers for Barbara Silverman
- Jackie Sadowski: Prayers for Starke Donnally
- Lynn and Kellie: Prayers for Lynn's Aunt Barb, who has health issues and is in rehab in Florida, and Kellie's mom, who is having a procedure on Tuesday.

See PEOPLE, Page 5

People & Prayers

CONTINUED from Page 4

- Lee Potter: Family of John Noble waiting possible ALS diagnosis.
- Jana Telfer: Prayers for all those across the country working extended shifts in ICUs to care for the growing numbers of seriously ill.
- Barb Weaver: Continued prayers for my dad, Carus Olcott Sr., and his caregivers.
- Stephanie Hitztaler: For my father, whose health is so fragile. Also, for God's grace in my job search.
- Barbara Fought: Let's pray for families grieving -- the people missing at the table this year, the ones who have passed on. •
- Jayne Humbert: May the brilliant light of God flood America with love and healing and drive out ignorance and fear.
- Sharon Smith: Pray for my friend struggling with addic-
- Kim Kromer Murphy: Please pray for my neighbors, who are struggling.
- Connie Myers: Pray for those struggling with decisions about how to celebrate, especially if their families are distant
- Prayers for **Beth Quick**, who is recovering from COVID
- Keep Barb Gilbraith in your

prayers

- Waiting for COVID results: Galyn Murphy-Stanley and **Paul Gunnison**
- Family and friends of Ted Guercio, who died last weekend
- Pray for Peg Leonard's brother

Sunday, November 29

- Barbara Fought: Prayers for Devine (in Syracuse) and his wife, Naomi (in Liberia), who are expecting a baby in March. Also prayers for Nels' step-granddaughter and her husband, Jason, also expecting in March.
- Margaret Leonard: Keep my brother Fred in prayer. He is still having issues around his leukemia therapy.
- Barb Weaver: Please pray for Paul Gunnison, who tested positive for COVID-19. Also pray for Erika, Bob and me. We all are in quarantine.
- Sharon Smith: For Darren in his rehabbing
- Kim Kromer Murphy: May there some day be peace
- Alphonso Cooper: Please pray for the cure for this virus that is taking a lot of lives.
- Prayers for Pastor Alicia
- Prayers for Kellie and Lynn

Prayers for the family of Roger MacDonald

<u>JOYS, THANKS & PRAISE</u> Sunday, November 8

Carol Boll: Joy for the end of the election and hope

Sunday, November 15

A joyous report from Barbara Fought. Her friend Christie has felt our prayers and is now continuing her recovery from home.

Sunday, November 22

- Barbara Fought: Big thanks Joyce and Galyn and all who coordinated that Thanksgiving giveaway
- Martha Sutter: Blessings for Janet and Vito!

GRADUATION

Congratulations to Paola Marin, who will graduate Dec. 12 with a master's degree in biomedical health and informatics from SUNY Oswego. Paola is a native of Mexico and has participated in the young adult Connections group the past two years. She begins a full-time job in January, working in the Computer Science Department at SUNY Oswego at the metro campus in Syracuse.

Send cards of appreciation to those caring for community during this tough year

Pastor Alicia is encouraging us to send thank you/holiday cards to members of our community we've depended on in this pandemic year, such as firefighters and health care workers.

In the past, before the station closed, UUMC thanked firefighters staffing the station on

East Fayette Street near Universiat area hospitals: ty Avenue.

The two fire stations now closest to UUMC are as follows: Station 10, 2030 E. Genesee St., up the hill from our building, and Station 1, 900 S. State St.

She suggests sending cards to staff at the intensive care units

Upstate University Hospital, 750 East Adams St., Syracuse 13210; Crouse Hospital, 736 Irving St, Syracuse 13210; and St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, 301 Prospect Ave., Syracuse 13203

Increased donations from variety of sources made the difference

CONTINUED from Page 1 spread.

As expected, room use fees were down, 80% now, with the building closed for several months because of the pandemic - \$1,075 received, while \$5,417 was budgeted.

That might improve a bit over the last quarter as some groups have been using the building this fall.

Income from Peace Inc. was down 16.2% - \$27,237 vs. \$32,500 budgeted. Peace Inc. ended their lease with UUMC as of September 2020.

Here are the details of the good news:

Income from contributions stewardship — was up 7% \$179,022 received vs. \$166,667 budgeted.

Non-pledged contributions were up 73% - \$28,766 received are up because of staffing changvs. \$16,667 budgeted.

Total Ministry income was up 22% - \$229,447 received vs. \$187,750 budgeted.

Outreach income was up 19% - \$73,472 received vs. \$62,000 budgeted.

Total income is up 14% --\$404,303 vs. \$354,000 budget-

Total expenses were down 6% - \$382,709 vs. \$408,458 budgeted.

Areas of decline were: Outreach, 15%; Security, 54%; Payroll, 6%; Building, 2%; and Other, 100%.

Areas exceeding the budgeted amount: Office, 37%; Custodial, 49%; and Maintenance, 64%. In his report, Ronald said:

"Custodial and maintenance es and the effects of the COVID-19 protocols in place. The building manager resigned earlier in the year.

This required hiring of a consultant and adjustment in pay for others in the staff who are absorbing the responsibilities of the building manager.

This is partly, but not completely, offset by the savings in the salary of the prior building manager and the savings in security."

The investment portfolio balance was \$1,678,074 as of Sept. 30, up from \$1,544,065 at the end of May.

Thanks to all who helped make food distribution to 335 families for Thanksgiving a huge success

As we have done for many, many years as a congregation and turkey to each family who walked as a way of feeding God's people. on Nov. 20 we helped needy families in our community have a lovely Thanksgiving meal to look forward to.

Unlike in the past, the challenge of meeting the needs of our neighbors was much greater this year (335 families were provided with food vs. our usual 150 families at Thanksgiving) and was complicated by COVID and the safety measures required to keep everyone as safe as possible.

While we would have preferred a more personal way of connecting with folks as we shared food and wishes of "Happy Thanksgiving" with all, we distributed 335 boxes of canned goods

plus a box of fresh produce and a up or drove up in their car and waited patiently to receive their food.

This was a huge undertaking and was only possible with the generosity of the UUMC family, some donations from other groups and the incredible organization and volunteer group coordinated by our amazing Outreach coordinator, Galyn.

Thanks to all who helped make this special by writing Thanksgiving cards for each family. It is wonderful to be part of such a giving and supportive church family.

 Joyce Flynn, coordinator Thanksgiving Food Project

Donations meet mark for stone honoring life of Peter Swords

The inscribed stone honoring the life and witness of Peter Swords mentioned in the November Chimes has been fully subscribed.

The stone will be part of the entry paying of the Peace Council building and the funds will help underwrite upgrades to the building, including an elevator to make it accessible to all.

Thanks to all who contributed. We'll keep you posted.

If you still want to contribute, make your check payable to UUMC with a note on the memo line, Peter's Memorial. All contributed funds will go to the Peace Council.

- Nelson Price

Advent traditions are modified for safety

CONTINUED from Page 1

have Advent wreaths at home so we can light the candles as they are lit during the online service.

Advent traditions will continue to be observed, although modified to keep them safe.

This Sunday, Dec. 6, is this year's "Bringing in Christmas" observance. Pastor Alicia will be blessing the warm outerwear donated for our Food Center guests. Donations can be made throughout the winter by calling the church office to schedule a dropoff time during the week.

The East Genesee Regent Association, made up of neighborhood businesses, property owners and residents, can't hold its yearly Christmas party for local children at UUMC.

But they still need help. Volunteers are needed at 9 a.m. Dec. 16 at the church to wrap presents for the children and prepare goodie bags for them. Please let the church office know if you can help.

There won't be a **Neighbor-hood Christmas Dinner** this year. But our Emergency Food Distribution on Dec. 18 will substitute for it. As happened on Nov. 20 for Thanksgiving, the food distribution on Dec. 18 will include items for a Christmas dinner.

Money donations are needed to help this cause. Please write "Christmas Food Project" on the memo line of your check.

See FOR, Page 8

Thanks from ACTS for congregation's donation

Dear Friends at University United Methodist Church,

ACTS sincerely appreciates your donation as a congregational member in the amount of \$500. Our interfaith social justice network is strengthened when we work together for our community.

With the COVID epidemic impacting our daily lives and with the ongoing upheaval due to the police killing of George Floyd, we at ACTS are challenged more than ever with seeking justice in our community.

Your support is very timely since we were unable to hold our annual Spring Banquet, our major fundraising event. The Spring Banquet is now scheduled for April 6, 2021.

The demands for social justice, particularly to deal with racial inequalities, in our community and society is now reaching a tipping point. ACTS is pursuing changes

through advocacy activities of its corps of volunteer activists and our community organizer.

Our Criminal Justice/Policing Task Force and our Clergy Caucus have been front and center in the protests and efforts to reform policing as a culture and an institution.

Our other projects such as promoting equity in public education, changing white privilege consciousness (Race Matters Book Club) and replacing I-81 with the community grid continue to have impact for critical changes in our community.

Once again, please accept our heartfelt thanks for the congregation's support and involvement to achieve greater social justice. We are better together!

Best,

Peter Sarver, Board Chair for Financial Sustainability

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

ACTS reorganizes

A meeting of the Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse Leadership Council was held Nov. 17 on Zoom.

ACTS has been working on restructuring many aspects of the organization so that it is more relevant to the needs of the community.

It is reviewing the core mission of the organization and how it can be a catalyst for change and healing. All aspects of the organization are being examined.

ACTS has been active in Black Lives Matter, police reorganization and the Floyd George incident.

All not-for-profit organizations are looking for ways to fund their organizations.

ACTS was successful in its financial appeal, thanks to donors like UUMC, but work is ongoing to ensure the financial stability of the organization.

-Ginny and Bob Dewey

Finance Corner

Pledging Update

2020 total pledges: \$217,360 Total Pledges Received \$194,690 Non-pledge contributions \$30,742 **UUMC PPP Loan (CARES Act)**

\$36,365

SUMM PPP Loan (CARES Act) (Pastors' Salaries) \$31,888 **Trustees Bathroom Renovation** Fund \$27,825 Thanksgiving Offering \$580

Sounds of the Spirit Visual Fund

Donations received \$95.991 Expenses paid \$88,891 Current balance \$7,100



Feeding God's People: Body, Mind and Spirit 1085 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13210 Phone: 315-475-7277 Fax: 315-475-8995 www.uumcsyracuse.org

Email: office@uumcsyracuse.org www.facebook.com/UUMCSyracuse Twitter: @UUMCSyracuse

Put Stamp

Return service requested Dated material

For daily devotionals during Advent and beyond, try Terry Hershey

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Advent devotionals, and devotionals throughout the year can be found on the website of Terry Hershey, an ordained minister who conducted a workshop and preached on Palm Sunday in 2017 at UUMC.

He has a Sabbath Moment each Monday and then daily devotionals Tuesday through Friday, called Sabbath Moment Daily Dose.

You can sign up for his Sab-

bath Moment at his homepage, terryhershey.com, and for his Daily Dose at https:// terryhershey.securechkout.com/

sabbath-moment-daily

Outerwear donations accepted; bagel breakfast to move inside

CONTINUED from Page 3 Peace.

Coat Donations: Goodwill of the Fingerlakes will make two large donations of winter coats in We are gearing up to host and December that contribute significantly to the offerings of winter outerwear we can make available to our guests.

Our intention is to make these available to our Sunday morning breakfast guests and as requested by other folk who are interested in visiting our clothing closet.

Please remember, Pastor Alicia will bless our gathered outerwear during our annual "Bringing in Christmas" winter outerwear campaign on Dec. 6. If our website <u>uumcsyracuse.org</u>

you would like to make a donation of gently used, clean outer- Galyn Murphy-Stanley, wear, please email me at Outreach Coordinator outreach@uumcsyracuse.org to schedule a time when I can receive your donation.

Christmas Food Distribution: provide our Christmas Emergency Food Distribution 10 a.m. to noon Friday, Dec. 18. This will look similar to our Thanksgiving/ every Friday Emergency Food Distribution.

We will fill these boxes heavily with wonderful, nutrient dense foods that will be impactful for various groups of folk.

Please consider donating to this effort by mailing a donation to UUMC 1085 E. Genesee St., Syracuse, NY 13210 or visiting

where you can make a donation with your credit card (scroll down & look for Give to UUMC).

Sunday Bagel Breakfast:

This moves inside this week into UUMC's Narthex for the winter. With a carefully constructed, COVID-safe plan, we are thrilled to provide our guests with hospitality, bathroom access, warmth, a to-go breakfast, coffee and perusal of our outerwear donations. If you are interested in volunteering for this effort please email

outreach@uumcsyracuse.org or register for a volunteer time slot on this on-line scheduling tool https://www.signupgenius.com/ go/10C0D45AEA728ABFCC43uumc

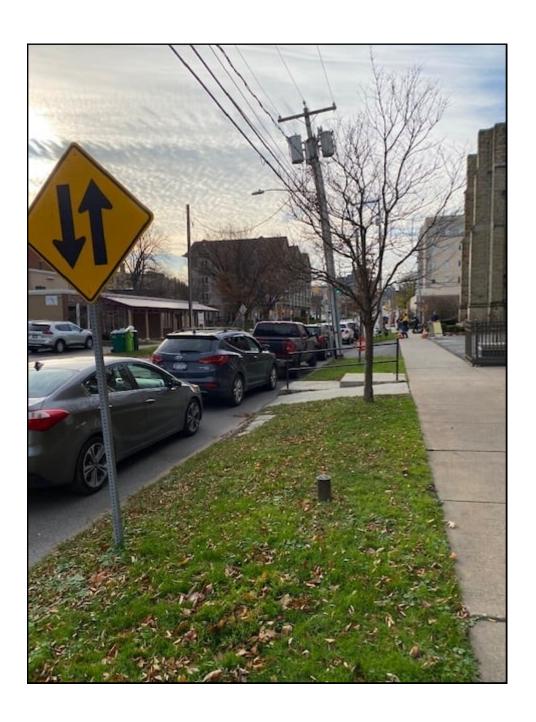
Our Friday

Emergency Food (for Thanks-giving) and Sunday Breakfast Distributions















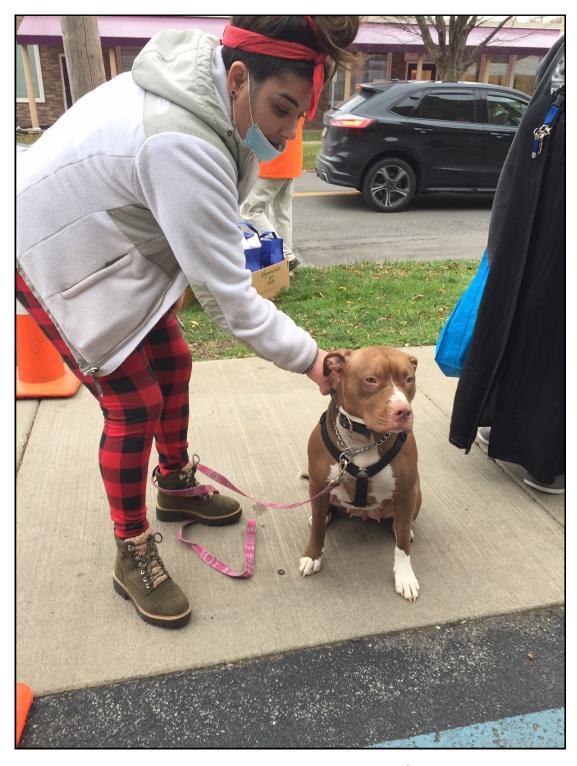




UUMC on a bright, sunny morning with Christmas trees in the planters on the front steps.



One of many signs outside the church inviting the public to find and join us online.



Dogs sometimes accompany their owners for our Emergency Food Distribution