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JOYS & CONCERNS

Please include these prayer requests in your weekly church bulletin, in your prayers during your Sunday worship if you have a time of "pastoral prayer" and keep these pastors, their families and the Church families in your prayers throughout the week.

December 23

The **Charlotte Center & Pleasant Valley** churches. **Chuck Wittenbrook**, his wife Kelly and their family.

December 30

The **Cherry Creek** Church. **Pastor John Dedloff**, his wife Liz and their family.

January 6

The **Conewango Valley** Church. **Carl Isler** and his family.

January 13

The **Cornerstone District Office**. **Rev. Sherri Rood**, her husband Bob and their family.

Please keep the family of **Barbara Jean Linza** in your prayers. Barbara, 81, died on December 15. She was married to the Rev. Raymond Linza, who served several Upper New York churches, including Charlotte Center, Jamestown: Brooklyn Heights, and others. The funeral was held at Jamestown Nazarene Church on Tuesday, December 18. Condolences

can be sent to Rev. Linza at 1 Summit Avenue, Jamestown, NY 14701. Click [here](#) to read a full obituary.

We pray for healing and returning strength to **Pastor John Arter Jackson**, who had triple bypass surgery on Friday, December 7, at UPMC Hamot Medical Center in Erie. If you'd like to send John a card, please send it to him at PO Box 52, Chautauqua, NY, 14722. He and Juanita appreciate your prayers!

Congratulations to **John Dedloff** (Cherry Creek UMC) on being licensed as a local pastor! We pray that he and Liz continue to be blessed in their ministry.

As we move closer to the special session of **General Conference February 23-26, 2019**, we invite everyone to pray and ask for God's guidance. If there is ever a place where we can be one, it's in the space where we meet God.

Also be in prayer for **all** who are in need of physical healing, burdened by stress, living with grief, and more.

Give An Invaluable Gift - It's Absolutely Free!

You're not the only one who is super busy and stressed out this Advent Season. Chances are your Pastor is too--with extra worship services and perceived pressure to minister to the higher than usual volume of worshippers in church at Christmastime. Be a gift to your pastor today and throughout the year by lifting her or him in prayer!

[Click here for suggestions.](#)

PLEASE NOTE - Ministry Shares Deadline

The deadline date for 2018 Ministry Share payments will be **Tuesday, January 8, 2019**. After that date, any payments received for 2018 will be reflected in 2019 listed as Prior Year Ministry Share Payments on your monthly statement.

This is the Final Around the Corner for 2018!

The Cornerstone District Office will be closed for the Christmas and New Year's holidays **December 21 through January 1**. Email/telephone calls to the office will not be answered until Wednesday, January 2, 2019.

In case of emergency, please email Sherri directly sherrirood@unyumc.org or call her at 585-217-3359.

NEW - Put Out the Welcome Mat!

People are checking out businesses and organizations online before visiting them in person. This means that your church website is the new front door of your church! Learn how to extend a warm welcome to your virtual guests by listening to a recent episode of the





Test Your Knowledge!

United Methodist Communications invites you to take a short quiz about the music and beloved hymns of "The most wonderful time of the year." We encourage you to share [the link](#) with others, especially fellow choir members, and compare your scores! After you take the quiz, review the [complete answers](#) and learn more about the sounds of the season.

[Download](#), print and share this Advent & Christmas Music Quiz with your church, family and friends! Test your knowledge with our other quizzes, especially our [Advent Quiz](#) and [Christmas Quiz](#).

NEW - Transforming Conflict in the Local Church

The Finger Lakes District of the Upper NY Conference extends an invitation to laity and clergy throughout the Conference to participate in a two-part professional development & spiritual growth opportunity, **Transforming Conflict in Communities of Faith**.

Part 1 of the retreat, Transforming Conflict as a Spiritual Practice, is scheduled **February 1 & 2, 2019 (laity)** and **February 6 & 7 (clergy)**. Laity and clergy will meet together for Part 2, Facilitating Effective Participation in the Heated Church Meeting, on **March 28 & 29**.

Co-facilitators will be **Rev. Jeffrey C. Shepherdson**, a Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation and UMC elder on Honorary Location and **Rev. John McNeill**, Community Mediator and UMC Elder in full connection.

Cost is \$350 per person including two overnight stays and six meals at Casowasco Camp & Retreat Center. **\$100 of the total is due by January 15, 2019** with the remainder due by February 1.

A flyer with additional information may be downloaded [here](#). Questions/registration should be directed to Rev. Jeff McDowell, 315-781-0188 or JeffMcDowell@unyumc.org.



Important Dates for Your Calendar!

As we begin to think about the year ahead, please **make note** of these dates and **share them with your church family**:

Saturday, January 12

Maya Smith, secretary of the UNY Young Adults Committee, extends an invitation to young adults throughout the Conference to a **Young Adult**

Gathering. Please see details [here](#).

Wednesday, January 30

Pre-Lenten Day Apart for Cornerstone Pastors

Panama United Methodist Church, 22 E. Main St.

Please save this date; details will be shared in January.

Saturday, March 16

5th Annual Learning Day for Laity & Clergy

Bemus Point United Methodist Church, 4954 Bemus-Ellery Rd.

Morning & afternoon learning opportunities, inspiring worship and a great time of fellowship together. Brochure will be coming soon!

NEW - Clergy Robes to Give Away

Lavern Terrill, who once served as a local pastor in our area (now retired), has two robes (one black, one white) to offer to anyone who might need them. If interested, please contact him directly, 716-665-8535.

Bishop Webb Names Abdella as Conference Chancellor

Last month, Scott DelConte was elected to the New York State Supreme Court. With this new commitment, he will no longer be able to serve as Chancellor to the Upper New York (UNY) Conference. Effective December 15, **Peter Abdella**, current Vice President of the UNY Board of Trustees will be the new Chancellor of the UNY Conference.

A life-long Methodist, Peter can trace his "roots" to **Christ First United Methodist Church** in Jamestown. Please click [here](#) to read more about Peter.

Learn More About Your Community

Church leaders and pastors across our district recently have updated their online **Church Profile**. Did you know that the Upper New York Conference also offers all churches access to a **free** tool that provides important information about the communities where they are located?

Mission Insite is a web-based demographics provider for local church use. In planning ministry, it is important to know the context. Mission Insite provides demographic data that is updated on a regular basis. The reports are user-friendly to the novice or experienced demographer.

In order to access the website you will need to register your local church. The links below provide instruction for you to register and establish user name and password for your local church.

- [How to Register](#)
- [User Guide for Demographic Information Service](#)

To log on to the Mission InSite web page, click [here](#).

NEW - Prepare for 2019

As you look forward to 2019 and the possibilities for ministry it holds, the new year is an excellent time for church leaders and volunteers to expand skills and knowledge. Consider enrolling in one of United Methodist Communications' online training courses that support outreach and communications:



- Social Media for Churches
- Welcoming Ministry
- Internal Church Communication
- Launching Your Church Website
- Church Marketing

[Enroll now!](#)



Webinars to Check Out!

Thursday, January 10 at 7:30 p.m. EST

We start each new year with this webinar that is focused on the new members of the stewardship team, finance committee, or church council - those who are looking to get a strong start right from the first week! Updated each year, the webinar explores many of the technical issues these teams face: reporting, internal controls, audits, access to giving records, and much more. We also offer ideas for building a spiritual foundation for the work of your group. Bathe your work in prayer. Remember, you are not alone; there are places to find help! Click [here](#) to find out more/to register.

Monday, February 11 at 11 a.m. EST

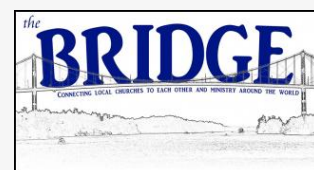
Clergy face some unique challenges when it comes to things like social security payments, estimated tax payments, housing allowances or exclusions, and reimbursed expenses. Your corner tax preparer may not understand the unique situation of clergy, and finding a tax preparer who does understand your situation can save you substantially in money and aggravation. Join us as the Rev. Don Joiner, a certified financial planner, helps us navigate the preparation of taxes under the new tax laws as well as plan for a sound financial future. Register by clicking [here](#).

These webinars and a variety of other helpful resources are provided without cost thanks to your church's generous support of the Word Service Fund Apportionment! Thank you!

Go to <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/>

Make Copies of The Bridge!

The **December Issue II** copy of the *Bridge* is now available for download. It is available in both color and black & white formats. [Click here](#) to select the version you prefer and make copies as necessary.



This issue a fun quiz to test your knowledge of Christmas history and traditions. Also, learn about the Conference Leadership Team's latest meeting, where they were encouraged to give God their best as they worked together to map their way from today through 2025.



The staff of United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, KS, are excited to share a unique opportunity for churches to equip and strengthen their leaders through two different conferences held concurrently at Church of the Resurrection on April 4-5.

Churches are invited to send their hospitality & welcome ministry leaders AND/OR their care ministry leaders to one of two conferences held April 4-5: **The Art of Radical Hospitality** and **Empowered: A Model of Care**.

Details and registration will be available in January. Stay tuned for details and find a registration link at ShareChurch.com.

UPDATE - Golden Bucket Award

The Golden Bucket Award challenge is in full swing at the **Upper New York (UNY) Mission Central HUB**.

Results for November are in! So far, 800 UMCOR cleaning kits have been assembled all over the UNY Conference.

The Crossroads District donated the most buckets for the month of November and the Mountain View District made the largest monetary donation to purchase supplies.

Your District has plenty of time to win the coveted award. Don't forget to label the buckets dropped-off with your church and District name.

[Click here](#) for an updated UMCOR cleaning kit supply list.

[Click here](#) for more information about the challenge, which runs through May 25, 2019. All UMCOR cleaning buckets will be used to help our neighbors near and far who are affected by natural disasters.

Thanks to all who have acted as the hands of Jesus through their work at the HUB this fall: Sparta Center UMC, Faith Journey UMC, North Ontario UMC, Alton UMC, Sodus Point UMC, Liverpool First UMC, Immanuel UMC, Tully UMC, Rush UMC, Endwell UMC, Saratoga Springs UMC, **Brocton Tri-Church Parish**, and all others who have given time, donations, or prayers to support the work of the Upper New York Conference Mission Central HUB.

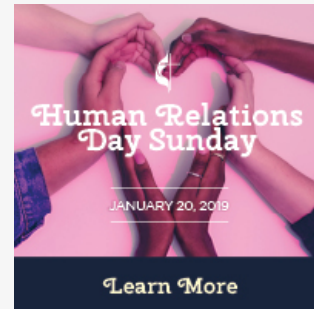
The 2019 EZRA statistical reports (www.ezra.gcfa.org) will be open on January 1, 2019 and close on February 15, 2019. The 2018 forms are not yet available on the website; please use the 2017 reports as a guide.

There will be an additional line in the Membership Table this year. There are Spanish and Korean tables available. Please contact the district office if you need one of those forms. If you have any questions in the meantime regarding EZRA statistical reports, please contact Erica Wentworth at ericawentworth@unyumc.org.

Human Relations Day

Please help spread the word and encourage your church to celebrate and give to Human Relations Day on **January 20, 2019**.

Human Relations Day is a day for United Methodists to celebrate everyone's potential to do great things. A day to empower those living on the margins of society. A day to invest in at-risk youth. A day for United Methodists to make a difference together.



A [library of resources](#) is available for you to use and share including a podcast, worship songs, a reading list, youth activities and discussions - along with the social media graphics and videos. They are ready to use and available FREE today.



The **Special Session of General Conference** will be held from February 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis, MO. Upper New York Area Resident Bishop Mark J. Webb has created a **series of videos** that can help prepare you for what will be taking place at General Conference. The videos review the report created by the Commission on a Way Forward that will be presented at General Conference - they can be viewed individually, used for group discussions, and more. Each video can be downloaded as well.

In addition to Bishop Webb's videos, the Upper New York Conference has also compiled other resources to help you prepare for Special Session, including Bishop Webb's Way Forward PowerPoint Presentation, an overview of the three church plans, and more. [Click here](#) for all resources.

Important 2019 Dates

- January 8, 2019 - Last day to submit 2018 Ministry Shares
- February 15, 2019 - UNY Annual Conference Reports are due
- Late February 2019 - The 2020 UNY Narrative Budget Booklet will be available online

- March 15, 2019 - UNY Annual Conference Petitions and Resolutions are due
- Mid- to late March 2019 - The 2020 UNY Budget Booklet will be printed
- Mid- to late April 2019 - The UNY Journal will be available
- June 4-8, 2019 - The UNY Annual Conference will be held at the OnCenter in Syracuse

Mark These Dates on Your Calendar

This year's **UNY Local Pastor's licensing school** will be held **May 5-11, 2019**. This is an earlier date than in years past. The venue is unknown at this time.

Volume II of UNY Journal Now Available

The 2018 Upper New York Conference Journal, Vol. II is now available for download as a free PDF and for purchase through online publisher Lulu.com. This comprehensive book provides all the details of Annual Conference for the year of 2018.

Please view or download the **2018 Upper New York Conference Journal, Vol. II** for free by first visiting the Conference website [here](#).

To purchase it for \$16.86 (plus shipping and applicable sales tax) from Lulu.com, [click here](#).

There is still space for YOU at one of our winter or spring gatherings - explore the opportunities available at our **Camp & Retreat Centers**. Head to www.campsandretreats.org for more information or to sign up/register, contact the site directly, or contact the CRM Central Office at 315-898-2026 with any questions.



Asbury:

January 4-6, 2019: Youth Winter Retreat (Youth & their Adult Leader(s))

Casowasco:

December 30-January 1, 2019: Retreat: Camp Echo (Ages 7-18)

January 25-27, 2019: SOLID: Youth Retreat (Youth & their Adult Leader(s))

March 1-3, 2019: Women's Chocolate Getaway (Women)

April 11-14, 2019: Quilt by Faith: Spring (Women)

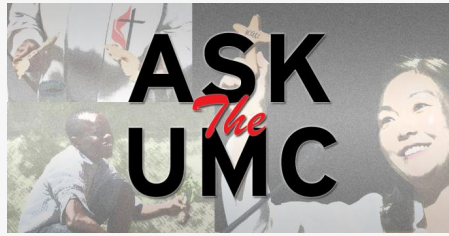
May 12, 2019: Mother's Day Brunch (Families & Adults)

Sky Lake:

January 3-5, 2019: Special Needs Winter Retreat (Ages 18+ with Special Needs)

January 18-21, 2019: Family Winter Weekend (Families & Adults)

February 15-18, 2019: Family Winter Weekend II (Families & Adults)



Do you have questions about The United Methodist Church? Need help deciphering the hows and whys of who we are or what we believe? Maybe you have a faith question you've been pondering? We invite you to Ask the UMC.



Cornerstone District

Upper New York Conference

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