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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 9

**Busti Federated Church. Pastor Lee O'Brien**, his wife Carol and their family.

### December 16

The **Centerville** Church. **Robert Schooley**, his wife Karen and their family.

### December 23

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

Congratulations to the **Rev. Carolyn** and **Mark Stow** on the birth of their granddaughter, **Elba Rose Pillot**. Elba arrived at 4:03 a.m. on November 17; she was 20 inches long and weighed 7 lbs 1.4 oz. Baby, Mom Jacki Stow Pillot, and Dad Pedro Pillot are doing fine!

Prayers for healing for **Elaine Damsteegt**, wife of Pastor Gordon Damsteegt. Elaine fell and broke her wrist on November 15; she is at home, recovering from surgery.

Please keep **Sandra Beard**, wife of Rev. Bob Beard, in your prayers. Sandra is dealing with Parkinson's Disease.

An update on **Rev. Steve Deckard**. As many of you know, Steve suffered a hemorrhagic stroke on September 12. After a lengthy hospital stay and inpatient therapy, he is recovering at home with outpatient therapy. Steve is doing very well and continues to improve. It will be a long journey and his spirits remain positive. His wife Pam, the Administrative Assistant for the Finger Lakes District, was at home caring for him and now has returned to work. Pam and Steve wish to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, and wishes. Truly Steve's remarkable progress is God's work and they are extremely grateful.

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.

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### **NEW - Many Thanks for Your Support!**

On behalf of the Cornerstone District, "thank you" to **Bob Ebert** at Ripley United Methodist Church for serving as our District's point person for the Shoe Boxes for Red Bird Mission project.



Thanks also to the churches in our District who participated in this effort: Christ First, East Randolph, Napoli, North Harmony and Ripley. A special thank you to Joe and Kelly Osborne's (North Harmony) daughter, Sarah, who with her Alpha Sigma sisters at Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, PA, contributed 35 shoe boxes and to Linda from East Randolph who collected items from her senior living facility in Fredonia.



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### **Food, Fellowship, Fun!**

The congregation of **Ripley United Methodist Church**, 84 W. Main St., invite their friends and neighbors to join them on **Saturday, December 8**, for the monthly **All-You-Can-Eat-and-Drink Breakfast**. The meal will be served from **7:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.** Cost is \$7 per person for pancakes, sausage, bacon, fried potatoes, made-to-order eggs (including omelets), toast, biscuits

& sausage gravy, orange juice and coffee.

Proceeds from the December breakfast will benefit Kids Konxions, Ripley UMC's after school program.

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### **NEW - Holiday Schedule**

The Cornerstone District Office will be closed for the Christmas and New

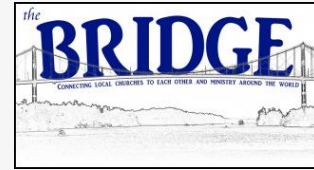
Year's holidays **December 21 through January 1**. Email/telephone calls to the office will not be answered until Wednesday, January 2, 2019.

In case of emergency, please email Sherri directly [sherrirood@unyumc.org](mailto:sherrirood@unyumc.org) or call her at 585-217-3359.

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### Make Copies of The Bridge!

The **December Issue I** 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.



Advent is here! This issue reviews **the meaning of each Sunday in the Advent season** up to the arrival of Jesus. This issue also includes information about a giving opportunity called **Christmas in the HUB** that helps support the United Methodist Committee on Relief through the Upper New York Mission Central HUB. This issue also reveals Upper New York Area Resident **Bishop Mark J. Webb's favorite Christmastime tradition** and a request for your church members and visitors to send in their favorite Christmas traditions.

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Christmas is a time of giving. During the Advent season, the **Upper New York (UNY) Mission Central HUB** is accepting both monetary and supply donations through Home Depot and Amazon, to

help those affected by natural disasters.

For every donation, an ornament will be placed on the UNY Mission Tree. Help adorn the tree with ornaments by making your donation today. [Click here](#) to make a donation and learn more.

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### NEW - 2019 EZRA Reports

The 2019 EZRA statistical reports ([www.ezra.gcfa.org](http://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](mailto:ericawentworth@unyumc.org).

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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.

### NEW - 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



### Attention, Local Churches!

There are changes that will affect Upper New York churches and employees in the new year. Effective December 31,

**New York State's hourly minimum wage rate is increasing to \$11.10.** All employers in the Upper New York Conference must pay non-exempt employees minimum wage regardless of how many people they employ. [Click here](#) to read more about the wage increase.

Beginning January 1, 2019, New York State (NYS) Paid Family Leave is increasing to 55% benefit and 10 weeks for eligible employees. [Click here](#) to learn more about the updates and changes.

Due to a new law, **every employer in New York State is required to establish and distribute a sexual harassment prevention policy.** The UNY Human Resources staff are working on this and will share more information about the policy and sexual harassment training in 2019.

If you have any questions regarding either the minimum wage increase or

New York state's sexual harassment requirements, please contact Tracy Rickett, Upper New York Conference's Human Resources Generalist, at 315-898-2017 or [TracyRickett@unyumc.org](mailto:TracyRickett@unyumc.org).

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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](http://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)

April 5-7, 2019: Church Family Getaway (Families & Adults)

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## **Help Needed with Anti-Bullying Project**

Kristian J. Snyder, a member at Ripley United Methodist Church, is making an appeal to the greater Cornerstone community to get involved with **The Be Kind Initiative**, an anti-bullying project that he hopes to introduce in schools throughout our area.

"Through The Be Kind Initiative, we want to help all kids (who are being bullied)...and give them some hope that things will be better for them, that there are people willing to help," stated Kristian. To read more about his plan for The Be Kind Initiative, click [here](#).

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### **Youth Winter Weekend**

Calling your Youth Group to come be a part of a **weekend getaway designed specifically for youth groups!** Scheduled **January 4-6 at Asbury Camp & Retreat Center**, cost is \$89

per person and includes two nights lodging, four meals and one snack. For every 8 paying youth, one adult leader may attend the weekend for FREE!



Our theme this year is **SEEKER**: come join us for a weekend full of fun spirited games and activities, dynamic worship sessions with speaker **Jay Trainer of Infuzion Ministries**, amazing food (we know how important food is!), and opportunities to discuss your relationship with Christ. Come grow closer as a body of Christ and make some new friends! Oh, and we can't forget about A Night of Gametivities and our Annual Sledapalooza! Your group does not want to miss this weekend!

Click [here](#) for a flyer that you can post at your church. Contact [info@asburyuny.org](mailto:info@asburyuny.org) or 585-237-5262 for a registration form.

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### **Golden Bucket Award**

The Upper New York Conference of the United Methodist Church **Mission Central HUB** is announcing the Golden Bucket Award to the District that donates the most UMCOR Cleaning Kits!

Monthly recognition will be shared throughout the conference with a certificate to be displayed at the District Office. The District that collects the most UMCOR Cleaning Kits throughout the period will be awarded the prestigious Golden Bucket Award!

This award started on October 1 and runs till May 25, 2019. The Golden Bucket will be awarded at the 2019 Annual Conference.

It is important to follow the [UMCOR Cleaning Kit list](#), last updated May 2018.

Any questions, please contact Mike Block, 315-898-2066 or [mikeblock@unyumc.org](mailto:mikeblock@unyumc.org).

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**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.**

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**Cornerstone District**

Upper New York Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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