

Why just a minute ago, and you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in supporting the New York Conference. Don't forget to add [cornerstonedistrict@unyumc.org](mailto:cornerstonedistrict@unyumc.org) to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



## 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.

### January 20

The **Cuba** Church. **Pastor Becky Worth**, her husband William and their family.

### January 27

The **Delevan** and **West Valley:St. Paul's** Churches. **Pastor Dawn Quesenberry**, her husband Michael and their family.

### February 3

The **Dunkirk 1st** Church. **Rev. Jim Bailey**, his wife Linda and their family.

Please keep **Pastor Carol Dill** and her family in your prayers. Carol's father, Sam Grey, Jr., died Wednesday, January 16. Visitation is scheduled from 12 noon until 2 p.m. Saturday, January 19, at Mentley Funeral Home in Little Valley. Service will follow visitation. If you'd like to send Carol a card or note, please send to 8228 Reed Hill Rd., Cattaraugus, NY, 14719.

Please continue to be in prayer for the **Schroon Lake Community Church** (Genesee Valley District), their pastor, **Lynnette Cole**, the Schroon Lake community, and those reaching out to them in loving care after the devastating fire on January 2 that consumed the church building and attached parsonage.

Please offer prayers for **Rev. Sandra Lasher** (retired elder) who has been undergoing treatment for cancer. Notes/cards may be sent to her at home, 3274 Maple Ave., Allegany, NY, 14706.

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.

**NEW - You Won't Want to Miss This!**  
**5th annual Learning Day for Laity & Clergy**  
**Saturday, March 16, 2019**  
**Bemus Point UMC**  
**4954 Bemus-Ellery Rd.**



Join us and discover:

How your church can be "guest ready" in **5 Things Your Visitors Are Thinking But Won't Ask** led by Jason Moore, nationally known worship coach and author.

How your spiritual gift (yes, you have one) might help your church with Susan Hardy, UNY Conference Lay Leader, in **Spiritual Gifts Discernment**.

What exactly is a "**new faith community**" and why do we need them when some of our churches are struggling? Learn more from Rev. Dave Masland, UNY Conference Director of New Faith Communities.

Click [here](#) for the brochure or go to [www.cornerstonedistrict.com](http://www.cornerstonedistrict.com) (click on Resources, then choose 2019 Learning Day for Laity & Clergy) and register online.

**The District Office will be closed**  
**Monday, January 21,**  
**in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.**



**NEW - Change of Venue**

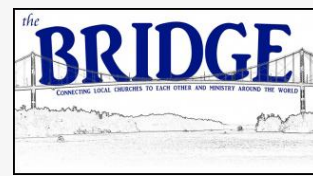
The Bible study/Christian fellowship group that meets on **Thursday mornings** (Fast Lane Warriors, the Neighbors Cafe prayer group) wants you to know that they have moved!

**Fellowship**

Please join them at 8:30 a.m. every Thursday at **South Dayton United Methodist Church**, 327 Pine St. If you have questions, please call Pastor Wes Tessey, 716-640-9883 or Pattie Lukaszewski, 716-338-8429.

## NEW - Make Copies of the *Bridge*!

The **January 2019** 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 focuses on everything you need to know to be prepared for Special Session of General Conference, which will be held February 23-26 in St. Louis, MO.

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### UPDATE - Human Relations Day Sunday

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

The **Upper New York Conference Commission on Religion & Race** (CCORR) has worked together to develop a [resource](#) for clergy to use on Human Relations Day. It includes a liturgy,

prayer and video link.

Human Relations Day Sunday 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.

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### NEW - Annual Conference Petitions, Resolutions & Reports Deadlines

The **Committee on Petitions and Resolutions** is charged with overseeing the submission, review, and presentation of petitions and resolutions to the Annual Conference.

All resolutions and petitions for the 2019 Annual Conference session (June 4-8, 2019) must be submitted to the Committee **no later than** March 15, 2019. Submissions should be emailed to the Petitions and Resolutions Committee at [petitions@unyumc.org](mailto:petitions@unyumc.org).

[Click here](#) for writing and submission guidelines as well as a petition and resolution template and sample document.

All reports and materials to be published in the Journal Vol. I are due on **February 15, 2019**. These items should be submitted to the Connectional Ministries' office at [DCMOffice@unyumc.org](mailto:DCMOffice@unyumc.org).

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### UPDATE - Enter 2018 Statistics!

The EZRA system for submitting your church's 2018 statistical information online is open and available for reporting at [www.ezra.gcfa.org](http://www.ezra.gcfa.org). If you need login

information or help with data entry, contact Cathy in the District Office. For other specific questions, contact Erica Wentworth, 315-898-2004 or [ericawentworth@unyumc.org](mailto:ericawentworth@unyumc.org).



All statistics for 2018 must be submitted by **February 15, 2019**. This report is completed and submitted **online only** - no hard copy should be sent to District Office.

### UPDATE - Changes, Tips for Completing 2018 Statistics

- There is a **new line in Table 1 - Membership**. Line 6c has been added this year, its title is Non-Binary and includes direction/definition. It will NOT create an error if it is not filled. It is below the Female and Male lines and will auto-total into Line 6. If you have any questions about it, please contact Erica Wentworth ([ericawentworth@unyumc.org](mailto:ericawentworth@unyumc.org)). This line was approved at Annual Conference and is required to be part of the gender options in Ezra.
- Churches will be required to input their **FEIN** (Federal Employee Identification Number) this year. This is to ensure that all churches know their FEIN and have it on hand and to ensure that the Conference has a list of accurate FEIN numbers.
- This year, **Lines 52a through 52t on Table 3** will give a **warning** when the line has an **increase or decrease of more than 15%**. An explanation will need to be given in order to submit the report. It is hoped that this puts more emphasis on accuracy and understanding of why increases or decreases in income are important.
- Please note the **Directions for Line 52d on Table 3**. Churches are required to report any money that is transferred in from savings or trustee accounts that is going towards the annual budget and spending plan of the church. If a church transfers money from their savings/trustee accounts to pay for Ministry Shares, it is then expected to be reported as income on line 52d.
- When logging in to Ezra, please make sure that the **User Profile** is correct and up-to-date. If you have trouble updating the information, please contact Cathy in the District Office or Erica Wentworth for help.



Disability Awareness Sunday



At the 2018 Upper New York Annual Conference, held at Onondaga Community College's SRC Arena in Syracuse, a petition was adapted for local churches to hold a **Disability Awareness Weekend**.

Submitted by Rev. Missy McCarthy and the Accessibility Committee, the petition recommends that local churches designate the **first weekend in February** (February 2-3, 2019 or another weekend chosen by the local church) as Disability Awareness Weekend. The purpose of the weekend is to promote awareness issues as well as ministries that provide fuller inclusion of people with disabilities. A special collection to support those ministries is suggested.

The following links offer a variety of ideas and resources for your church:

<http://www.umcgiving.org/mission-moments/july-24-disability-awareness-sunday>

<https://www.umdisabilityministries.org/>

<https://www.umdisabilityministries.org/dasunday/>

<https://www.umcmmission.org/find-resources/conference-events-124resources-for-disability-awareness-sunday>

<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/disabilities>

**Rev. McCarthy also recommends the book, *Amazing Gifts: Stories of Faith, Disability and Inclusion* by Mark Pinsky. The book offers examples and stories of inclusions of persons who are disabled.**

**The UNY Communications staff invites you to share how your church will honor Disability Awareness Weekend: [News@unyumc.org](mailto:News@unyumc.org).**

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### **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.**

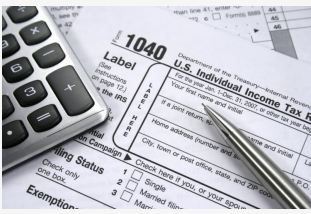
Part 1 of the retreat, Transforming Conflict as a Spiritual Practice, is scheduled **February 1 & 2, 2019 (laity)** and **February 6 & 7 (clergy)**. Laity and clergy will meet together for Part 2, Facilitating Effective Participation in the Heated Church Meeting, on **March 28 & 29**.

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](mailto:JeffMcDowell@unyumc.org).

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## NEW - Tax Form Reminder

The **Conference Council on Finance & Administration** (CF&A) wishes to remind all

church treasurers and persons responsible of the finance work of the local church, that pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code, clergy compensation

is reported to clergy on a **Form W-2**. The payroll report due date is **January 31**. Forms 1099 are not applicable for clergy compensation.

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## 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**:

### Wednesday, January 30

#### **Pre-Lenten Day Apart for Cornerstone Pastors**

Panama United Methodist Church, 22 E. Main St.

Please save this date!

### Friday, February 15

Please send the following reports (email, FAX or snail-mail) to the District Office by this date: **Report of the Trustees, Report of the Finance Committee, 2018 Year-End Financial Report** (church's own format), **2019 Church Budget** (church's own format).

### Friday, March 15

Please make sure that the District Office has your church's **2018 Local Church Financial Audit** by this date. Please click [here](#) for the form.

### 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. Click here for registration information.

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## UPDATE - From the Media Resource Center

If you've never used the **Media Resource Center** before, your church is invited to give it a try. Funded by your Shared Ministry dollars, the Media Resource Center can supply you with small group discussion materials, Bible studies, children and youth curriculum, adult curriculum, and a myriad of subjects such as stewardship, evangelism, social issues and VBS materials, just to name a few.

Click [here](#) for the Media Resource Center's January newsletter.

Please note that there will be **limited service** from the Media Resource Center from **January 28 through February 8**; only online orders will be filled during this time. Click [here](#) to place an online order.

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## 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](#).

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## New Skills for a New Year

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!

**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/>

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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](http://ShareChurch.com).

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### **NEW - Register for Summer Camp!**

Registration for Summer Camp 2019 is now OPEN! **Upper New York Camp & Retreat Ministries** is pleased to offer a wide variety of fun, exciting, and meaningful programs this summer including classic favorites and brand new adventures!



Whether you want to live on the edge and experience all the fast-paced action we have to offer, or something more relaxed and laid-back is your style, we have a program for you!

All of our programs offer opportunities for spiritual growth and renewal, and diverse styles of meaningful worship experiences. This year we will learn how God calls us to be Agents of Change in our communities, and how we can transform those communities through Generosity, Compassion, Inclusion, Justice, and Forgiveness.

Come experience how a week at camp can Transform Lives! We can't wait to see YOU this summer!

To register for Aldersgate: [aldersgate.campbrainregistration.com](http://aldersgate.campbrainregistration.com)

To register for Casowasco: [casowasco.campbrainregistration.com](http://casowasco.campbrainregistration.com)

To register for Sky Lake: [skylake.campbrainregistration.com](http://skylake.campbrainregistration.com)

To register for Skye Farm: [skyefarm.campbrainregistration.com](http://skyefarm.campbrainregistration.com)

Check out our retreat offerings throughout the year, including summer, at Asbury Retreat Center. To find out more, visit [asburyuny.org](http://asburyuny.org).

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.

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## Delegate Chair Looks to Special Session

As we celebrate the beginning of a new year, we are also at the doorstep of the **Special Session of General Conference**, which will take place February 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis, Missouri. What are various Conference delegate chairs saying about their Conferences' thoughts and concerns as we approach General Conference? Click [here](#) to read a story highlighting several delegate chairs, including Upper New York's delegate chair, the Rev. Bill Allen.



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.

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## 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.

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## 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



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Upper New York Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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