

any just to make sure you are receiving our emails. If you have expressed an interest in supporting the New York Conference, don't forget to add cornerstonedistrict@unyumc.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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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.

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.

February 10

The **Dewittville-Hartfield** & **Mayville** Churches. **Rev. Mark Parsons**, his wife Jan and their family.

Prayers for the family of **Esther Smith**, who died January 19. Prior to retirement, she was employed in the District Superintendent's Office of the United Methodist Church for 18 ½ years. She was an active member of Christ First United Methodist Church, where her funeral will be held at 1:30 p.m. Friday, January 25.

Please keep **Pastor Carol Dill** and her family in your prayers. Carol's father, Sam Grey, Jr., died Wednesday, January 16. If you'd like to send Carol a card or note, please send to 8228 Reed Hill Rd., Cattaraugus, NY, 14719.

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 - Announcement from the Bishop
Upper New York Area Resident Bishop Mark J. Webb is pleased to announce his intention to appoint the **Rev. Suzanne Block** as **Superintendent of the Cornerstone District**, effective **July 1, 2019**.

Rev. Block currently serves as pastor of Christ United Methodist Church in Olean. Rev. Block will succeed the Rev. Dr. Sherri Rood as Superintendent of the Cornerstone District. Rev.

Rood will return to pastoring a local church after eight faithful years serving as the Cornerstone District Superintendent.

Click [here](#) to read more about this change and Bishop Webb's reflection on both the Rev. Rood's time as District Superintendent and his excitement for what's to come for the Cornerstone District with Rev. Block serving as DS.

You Don'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**.

Rev. Dave Masland, UNY Conference Director of New Faith Communities, will lead a conversation about **New Faith Communities: What We Are Learning From 100+ New Places for New People.**

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



NEW - Training of Trainers on March 16

As part of our **5th annual Learning Day for Laity & Clergy**, Carol Barnes, Safe Sanctuaries coordinator for the Upper New York Conference, and Roberta Anderson, a member of Cornerstone's Safe Sanctuaries Training Team, will lead a **Training of Trainers**. The all-day training (9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) is open to those who have completed the basic 3-hour Safe Sanctuaries Training since 2016 in the standard learning station format facilitated by a certified UNY Safe Sanctuaries trainer.

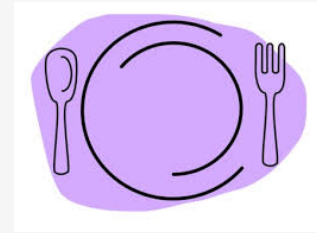
There is no cost for the training; **advance registration is required**. The training is limited to 20 participants and priority is given to those who wish to serve on the District's Safe Sanctuaries Training Team.

Please register by using the form in the brochure or online at www.cornerstonedistrict.com/Resources/2019 Training Day.

Questions? Please call or email the District Office.

NEW - Roast Beef Dinner at Little Valley

A dinner to benefit the Missions Fund at **Little Valley United Methodist Church**, 109 Court St., will be held from **4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.** Saturday, **January 26**. Meal includes roast beef, mashed potatoes, vegetable, salad bar, dessert & drink. Dine in or take out; cost is a donation.



A homemade pie sale will be held during the event: choice of chocolate peanut butter or apple pie.



NEW - Soup & Song at Brocton

Join the folks at **Brocton Tri-Church Parish**, 41 E. Main St., for a family-friendly time of inspiring, fun and joyful music!

Mike Staley will entertain with contemporary Christian songs and some of his original parodies on **February 10** from **4 p.m. to 5 p.m.**, followed by a soup & sandwich supper. A free will offering will help support music programs and singers in our local churches.

DEADLINE EXTENDED - 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**.

It is hoped that lay leadership as well as clergy will prayerfully consider taking part in this retreat.

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 25, 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.



NEW - Way for Young Adults to Connect

Maya Smith, a member of the Upper New York Conference Young Adults, recently created a Facebook page. She and the members of the Young Adults committee believe this is a great way for churches and young adults in our district to keep up on what the UNY Young Adults are doing in the conference and beyond.

The Facebook page will have postings about events, gatherings, Bible studies, etc. hosted/organized by the YA committee. The goal is to get more young adults throughout the Conference involved.

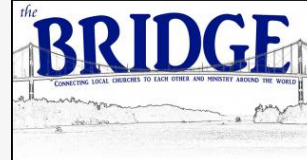
Please help [spread the word](#) about the Facebook page. If you have questions, suggestions or would like more information, please contact Maya at unyoungpeople@gmail.com.

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.



Fellowship

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!

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.

Deadlines for AC Petitions, Resolutions & Reports

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.

[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.



Overview of Statistical Reports for 'CORNERSTONE' District

Not Started - 90%
Working On - 7 %
Completed - 3%

Churches: Please remember that the **deadline** to enter 2018 statistics is

Friday, February 15.

The church's **User Name** and **Password** should be the same, the church's **6-digit GCFA number**. If you have trouble logging in, please call or email the District Office.

All entry is online. The District Office can provide you access to a computer and/or help you with data entry if you need it. Please call the office (716-665-2423) to schedule a time for hands-on help between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday (office is closed on Friday).

This doesn't have to be a "painful" process. If you need help, please don't hesitate to ask.

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). 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.

NEW - How to Prepare for 2018 Audit

The Book of Discipline requires every United Methodist congregation to conduct a **church audit** (due March 15, 2019), but that doesn't



have to be a big expense or an insurmountable obstacle. Ken Sloane, director of generosity at Discipleship Ministries, will lead a **free webinar** that will walk you step by step through the Local Church Audit Guide. The guide, prepared by the General Council on Finance & Administration, is available **free** for United Methodist churches.

The webinar, "**The Church Audit: You Can Do This,**" will be at **7:30 p.m. EST on February 7**. To register, go to <https://bit.ly/2RBbX2U>.



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.umcsgiving.org/mission-moments/july-24-disability-awareness-sunday>

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

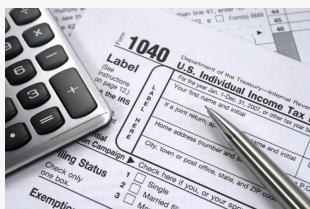
<https://www.umdisabilityministries.org/dasunday/>

<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.**



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.



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.

NEW - Online Series Coming This Spring

A new **online video teaching series** from Discipleship Ministries is coming this spring. The **free** series, called **See All The People: Discipleship Begins with Relationship**, will include three sessions featuring the Rev. Junius B. Dotson, General Secretary (CEO) of Discipleship Ministries, and Rev. Jacob Armstrong, pastor at Providence Church, a United Methodist congregation in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee.



The series, which launches in March, will teach the basic principles behind See All The People to clergy and lay leaders. **Registration begins in February** at www.SeeAllThePeople.org.

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.



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/>

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

To register for Casowasco: casowasco.campbrainregistration.com

To register for Sky Lake: skylake.campbrainregistration.com
To register for Skye Farm: skyefarm.campbrainregistration.com

Check out our retreat offerings throughout the year, including summer, at Asbury Retreat Center. To find out more, visit asburyuny.org.



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.

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.



Rev. Sherri Rood
District Superintendent
sherrirood@unyumc.org

Rich Preston
District Lay Leader
rnpreston@hotmail.com

Cathy Hall
Administrative Assistant

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