

The Church Herald

Stony Brook Community Church (United Methodist), Stony Brook, New York



STONY BROOK COMMUNITY CHURCH

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Please send updates and information to
Newsletter Editor, Bob Retnauer, at
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“Go Deep”

I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. - Philippians 1:6 (NRSV)

Each time we look in a mirror, we choose the lens through which we view ourselves. We choose which aspects of ourselves - of our bodies and of our beings - we focus our attention on. Sometimes we take in our whole figure or, more often, we see ourselves as a collection of individual parts, some of which we classify as “good” and others as “bad.” We compare ourselves to our peers and to an ideal image we hold in our mind. We wonder if others see us the same way we see ourselves, if they judge us as harshly as we judge ourselves.

In my conversations with people, it always amazes me how much time we spend worrying about – even judging – the physical. If only we could spend as much time thinking about our inner being. What if instead, we choose to ask ourselves: “What about the core of our being? What about our spiritual selves?” When we look in the mirror do we see ourselves as beautiful children of God with a spiritual body and soul that also needs to be tended to, nurtured, and fed? Are we willing to go deep beneath the physical and care for what is at the heart of our life: the soul, the spirit that directs all that we are? Ask yourself, “What do I see, deep within, when I look in the mirror at my truest self?”

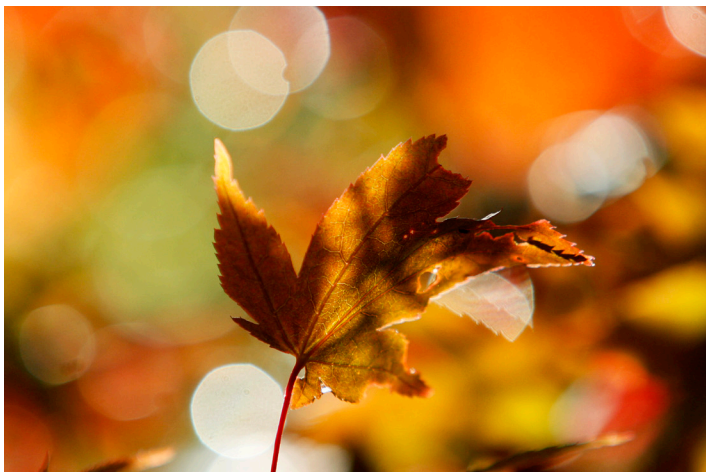


As I was thinking about the inner soul work of going deep, it reminded me of my childhood afternoons playing football in the park around the block from my house. Like many young boys, I loved to play the position of wide receiver. I can still remember the excitement when we were in the huddle making our play. I especially remember those moments when the quarterback would say: “and Chuck, you go deep.” You knew that, if you were open, the ball was coming to you in a long Hail Mary pass. What excitement! What potential!

Continued...

NYAC VISION STATEMENT

The New York Annual Conference, through the grace of God, embodies a beloved community of hope, building up a healthy Body of Christ, with heartwarmed United Methodists in mission for the transformation of the world.



September Lectionary

September 4: Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year C

Jeremiah 18:1-11

Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18 (UMH 854)

Philemon 1:1-21

Luke 14:25-33

September 11: Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year C

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28

Psalms 14 (UMH 746)

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Luke 15:1-10

September 18: Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year C

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1

Psalms 79:1-9 or Psalm 4 (UMH 741)

1 Timothy 2:1-7

Luke 16:1-13

September 25: Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year C

Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15

Psalms 91:1-6, 14-16 (UMH 810)

1 Timothy 6:6-19

Luke 16:19-31

October 2: Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, Year C

Lamentations 1:1-6

Psalms 137 (UMH 852)

2 Timothy 1:1-14

Luke 17:5-10



Apple Festival 2016

The church fair – known to all as the Apple Festival – is right around the corner! This year it's September 24th. Not only is this event a major fundraiser for our church but it's also an opportunity for us to come together as a church community. How can you become involved? Here are several ways:

Grab a few flyers on Sunday in the community room to hand out to neighbors and friends.

Take a lawn sign to display in your yard the week before.

Bake an item or two for the bake table.

Find a few "attic treasures" to sell (bring the morning of the fair, prices marked)

Volunteer to work a few hours at the fair – sign up in the community room.

Come to help set up Friday evening 9/23 at 5:30.

Help us clean up after the fair- remember many hands.....

Let's work together to make this a memorable day for everyone – church members and visitors alike!



September 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	29 7:00 (pm) AA	30	31	1 7:00 AA	2 11:15 AIAnon	3
4 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	5 Labor Day - office closed 7:00 (pm) AA	6 7:30 (pm) Finance	7	8 7:00 AA 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	9 10:00 AIAnon	10
11 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	12 Presidents Day Holiday 7:00 (pm) AA	13	14	15 7:00 AA 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	16 10:00 AIAnon	17 Denomination Disaster Training
18 10:00 Worship: Back to Church! Sunday School registration 11:00 Fellowship 1:00 Pie Day	19 7:00 (pm) AA	20 7:30 (pm) Church Council	21	22 7:00 AA 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	23 10:00 AIAnon	24 Apple Festival! 
25 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 5:00 MYF	26 7:00 (pm) AA	27 7:30 (pm) Trustees	28 1:30 and 7:30: Fruitful Practices classes	29 7:00 AA 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	30 10:00 AIAnon	31

Summer Highlights

Performing Arts Camp's production of
Once Upon a Mattress



The 2016 Vintage European Car Show

A new porch for the
Sullivan House



Our annual outdoor worship service





Greetings to our new Sunday School Coordinator / Teacher, Megan Murphy



Megan grew up in this church and was an active member of the MYF as well as being a Sunday School volunteer. After she graduated from Ward Melville High School she attended SUNY Cortland where she received a childhood education degree. She continued her education at St. Joseph's College where she received my Master's degree in special education. Megan currently work as a 3rd grade special education teacher in the Longwood School District.

Megan has long been a member of the Apple Festival Steering Committee and active church member. We are thrilled to have her join our staff as Sunday School Coordinator and Teacher.

And farewell to departing Nursery teacher Hanna Bliska

Today we say a grateful good-bye to Hanna who has kept our youngest members wrapped in their growing knowledge of God's love for them. She has staffed the nursery since the summer of 2014. We wish her all the very best as she heads off to college at Dartmouth.

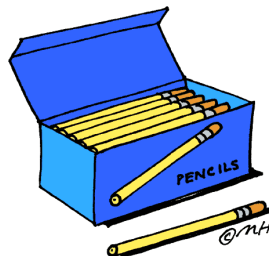


Believe it or not-the summer is over, and the kids are headed back in school. It is bittersweet to think about...but exciting to know that Sunday School will be back in session on September 18th! We are looking forward to a new year of fun and rewarding Sunday School activities. We will be enjoying bible stories, music, movies, games, crafts, and much more! Sunday School is always looking for volunteer teachers and helpers. If you would like to be a part of the fun please contact Megan Murphy at murphy.megan17@gmail.com. We hope to see you soon!



Upcoming Events:

October 22- Children's Halloween Party



"Our appreciation goes to Liz Twiss for her work on our drive for school supplies. She suggested the idea to begin with, implemented it, and then delivered the large quantity of supplies that were donated.

Thank you, Liz!"



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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My Beloved Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

Last week I jogged about a mile away from the condo where I've been living for the past 20 months to the Conference Center. As I stood in front of this building under renovation I looked up at the sky to see a full rainbow — a sign of God's blessing over this building that is only partially restored.

Could this be a metaphor for The United Methodist Church today? We too are undergoing a renovation. Yet we have a strong foundation. And surely we have the promise of God's blessing. We have come this far by faith and most assuredly God will continue to lead us into a faithful new future.

The Council of Bishops is establishing a Commission on "A Way Forward" as a denomination. We find ourselves divided by many issues, including how we live together regarding LGBTQI persons. But we are united by far more than we are divided. Can we not claim our oneness in Jesus Christ in such a way that we can be the church God has called us to be?

I was startled recently in reading *The Wright Brothers* by David McCullough. Their father Martin Wright was a bishop of the Brethren Church, one of The United Methodism's predecessor denominations. What I learned is that in the late 1800s that church split. Why? What issue would compel these faithful, committed Christian sisters and brothers in Christ to divide a denomination? They divided over whether or not to allow church members to be Masons.

We are perhaps not of one mind even today over the issue of membership in the Masons. But are our opinions so strong that we would consider dividing our denomination over this?

I can only imagine that Jesus wept when that division occurred and Jesus is weeping as we struggle with unity today. Yet out of just such struggles can come a promise of a stronger, more faithful, and more fruitful church.

Bishop Ivan Abrahamson, head of the World Methodist Council, said recently, "One of the things that I have been a bit disappointed about in the United States is the sense of pessimism, which is definitely not shared with the rest of the world communion. We stand in a great tradition. I passionately believe that the golden years of Methodism don't lie behind us, but in the future."

This is what we have to offer to the world: a passion to live as Christ lived — a life in love with God and



God's people, focusing on our spiritual **connection** and a commitment to acts of justice and mercy to the last, the lost, and the lonely.

Simone Weil and others have said that the very nature of spiritual truth is that it is paradoxical. The Great Paradox of our Christian faith is that when we give our lives in love, we receive life. The cross expresses this metaphor so powerfully. Jesus gives his life in love so that we might be transformed by love.

Can United Methodism live into this paradox? Can we love each other even while we disagree? Can we give of ourselves sacrificially, knowing that this is the way to new life? Can we accept and embrace our LGBTQI sisters and brothers as created by God and fully part of our church? Can we love those who want to uphold our clergy covenant as expressed in our *Book of Discipline*?

In other words, can we love **all** persons, whether or not they share our views? I believe that we can, and that we **must**. For love is the only "Way Forward" for The United Methodist Church and for us individually. Without love we are lost, but with love we will find our way. The rainbow hovering over our United Methodist Church under renovation is a sign of a future of hope. As Paul said, "And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

I have covenanted with my colleague bishops to pray daily for God's yearning to be fulfilled for The United Methodist Church. It is so clear that in these days we must fervently be in prayer. These are my last words to you as your Interim Bishop. God is providing well for you as you enter into a season under the leadership of Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton. It has been a privilege beyond words to serve you. I will continue to hold you, the beloved people of the New York Annual Conference, in my daily prayer. May the rainbow be a promise of God's abiding love.

In Christ's love,
✠ *Jane Allen Middleton*
Bishop Jane Allen Middleton





We Welcome Our New Bishop, Thomas J. Bickerton

Thomas J. Bickerton has been the spiritual leader of the nearly 850 United

Methodist congregations in Western Pennsylvania since he was elected a bishop in 2004. On September 1, he will officially begin his work with the New York Annual Conference.

In addition to his responsibilities in the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference, Bishop Bickerton serves as the chairperson of The United Methodist Church's Global Health Initiative which deals with the church's response to the killer diseases of HIV/Aids, tuberculosis and malaria. This effort, through the church's Imagine NO Malaria campaign, has raised over \$53 million dollars within the denomination to eliminate malaria-related death across the world. In addition to this work, Bishop Bickerton also serves as a member of the General Commission on United Methodist Men.

A native of West Virginia, Bishop Bickerton began his pastoral career as a student pastor serving a six-point charge. He later was pastor of medium and large membership churches and was serving as superintendent of the Northern District when he was elected as a bishop. As he worked in partnership with laity, the churches he served experienced significant growth in the number of baptisms, professions of faith, and members. His church in Shady Spring, W.Va., grew from 85 to 225 members in his six years there, and during his nine years at the Forrest Burdette church in Hurricane, W.Va., the membership more than doubled from 585 to 1368. The bishop remains committed to the idea that the vitality of the local church is the key to carrying out the church's mission to "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

Bishop Bickerton's life has been significantly shaped by involvement in ministry beyond the walls of the local church. His work with Volunteer-in-Mission teams in his home state, as well as in Africa, Argentina, Israel, Mexico, Russia, Cuba, and the U. S. Gulf Coast, has given the Bishop a "true global perspective on the need to be in ministry to all of God's children." Bishop Bickerton earned a Bachelor's of Arts degree in sociology and psychology from West Virginia Wesleyan College (1980), a Master's of Divinity degree from Duke University Divinity School (1983), and a Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological School (1994). He has also served as an adjunct faculty member at United, teaching Wesleyan doctrine and United Methodist polity. The bishop is an avid sports fan and enjoys travel, playing golf, and photography. He and his wife Sally are the parents of four adult children: Elizabeth, T.J., Ian and Nick.