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First UMC *The Reporter* July-August 2021

Celebration of Life for Doug Fielder 7/24 3 pm

Our church family was saddened to learn of the death of faithful member Doug Fielder on April 28th, after a decades-long battle with Parkinson's disease. All are invited to join in a Celebration of Life for Doug on Saturday, July 24th at 3 pm in the sanctuary, concluding with inurnment in the Columbarium. We will greet Scott, Todd, Nina, Rosie, and family at a reception afterward in the Embury Room. The service may also be viewed on zoom using the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87101681684>. Or on your phone, dial +1 646 558 8656; meeting ID: 871 0168 1684.

All are Invited to an Open Meeting for Consensus Building July 11th

The leadership (broadly defined) of our church gathered for an initial assessment with our consensus-builder, Rev. Mark Marino, the evening of Tuesday, June 22nd.

Now we are ready to invite all members of FUMC (recusing staff) to gather for an open meeting in the sanctuary on **Sunday, July 11th from 1 – 5 pm**. Our consensus-building process will be most effective if participants come in person, but a zoom option will be available.

The agenda for the open meeting is as follows: discussion of FUMC's stability and productivity; expectations clarification; diagnosing a conflict; creating a plan; and moving toward a solution. Please contact Pastor Marti if you would like a copy of the power point presentation from the initial meeting and to RSVP for the open meeting. Thank you!

Message from our Pastor

“Summer!”

Summers are always beautiful in the City of the Hills, but this year life is especially grand! The sound of the wind in the trees; the smells of flowers in bloom, the green of the mountains that ring our little city: our gracious Creator has blessed us with beauty. Now that many are vaccinated, it's so wonderful to be able to be together in person! We're still masking for worship, until children are eligible for shots, but just to be able to sing together has been a profoundly spiritual and healing experience these past few weeks. Hallelujah!

We've had a few meetings in person, as well. Recently the Sunday School Team met on my front porch and planned some in-person gatherings especially for our younger families. We did not offer Sunday School at all last year, so we have some catching up to do! Can't wait!

On four Thursdays this summer (July 8th and 29th and August 12th and 26th) from 4:30 – 7 pm, children and parents are invited to gather at the Wilber Park playground for cold drinks, snacks, and conversation! (Bring picnic food if your family wants to eat during that time.) We've had several families start coming to our church during the pandemic, and not all our younger families have even met each other yet. Come when you can and stay as long as you like (weather permitting).

And on two Sunday evenings during August (8th and 29th) you're invited to an intergenerational Family Campfire Sing-along at 6:30 pm in the church courtyard (again, weather permitting). We'll borrow a fire pit (don't worry, as long as it's above ground, it's legal) and sing camp songs and roast marshmallows. S'mores, cold drinks, bubbles, and sidewalk chalk will be supplied! Bring a blanket to sit on. All are welcome!

Happy summer!
Yours in Christ,
Rev. Marti Swords-Horrell
Pastor

Worship Themes for July & August

Sunday, July 4th—Peace with Justice Sunday: On the day when we celebrate our nation as “one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all,” it's fitting to recommit ourselves to our ministry of peace with justice with our special offering for Peace with Justice ministries here in our Conference and around the world. As Pope Paul VI said, “If you want peace, work for justice.” Please read: Romans 8:12-17 and Mark 6:1-13. Communion will be celebrated; if you are worshipping virtually, please have a piece of bread ready, and something to drink in a cup.

Sunday, July 11th—Seventh Sunday after Pentecost: Today we start a new series exploring the letter to the Ephesians: “Geared Up for Life.” Ephesians has been called the “Queen of the Epistles” by no less than Dr. William Barclay. Written by a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ in the school of Paul the Apostle, Ephesians contains some of the most beautiful and inspiring language in the entire Bible. The lectionary for today is: 2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19; Psalm 24; Ephesians 1:3-14; and Mark 6:14-29.

Sunday, July 18th—8th Sunday after Pentecost: “Christ Has Broken Down the Wall.” Ephesians has been called “The Epistle of Peace.” When it was written, the early church was facing divisions and controversies: sound familiar? Revel in the beautiful language of chapter 2! Readings include: 2 Samuel 7:1-14a; Psalm 89:20-37; Ephesians 2:11-22; and Mark 6:30-34, 53-56.

Sunday, July 25th—9th Sunday after Pentecost: “Rooted and Grounded in Love.” Ephesians chapter 3 shows us the foundation of our life together in Christ: being loved into wholeness in the embrace of the community of faith. Please read: 2 Samuel 11:1-15; Psalm 14; Ephesians 3:14-21; and John 6:1-21.

How to Worship

1. All are invited to join in worship in person in the sanctuary, at 8:15 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. on Sundays. No reservations are required. Please wear a mask and enter through the Church Street door. There will be no child care, no coffee hour, but yes: live music and reading and sharing peace with your neighbors and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ! If you feel the need to sing during worship, please make sure that you are seated at least twelve (12) feet from any other worshippers.
2. Both the 8:15 and 10:00 a.m. services will continue to be livestreamed. Occasionally there are problems with broadcasting on Facebook Live, so sometimes it is not reliable. So, at least for now, both Sunday services will be broadcast via zoom, using the same link as was used previously for the 10:00 a.m. service. We will attempt to broadcast on Facebook live and see how it goes.

3. At 8:15 and/or 10:00 a.m. on Sundays, please connect with Zoom by computer: <https://zoom.us/j/195736049>; or call on your phone: 1- 646-558- 8656 Meeting ID: 195 736 049. You will be admitted from the “waiting room.”
4. In order to provide as safe a space as possible for all worshippers, FUMC will continue to follow the masking and social distancing practices that have been in place until the New York State Department of Health reviews the new CDC guidelines and delivers recommendations to the state's residents. Thank you for your patience as worship practices evolve with the pandemic.

Bible Studies and Small Groups

Tuesday Spiritual Study: Tuesdays, 2:00 – 3:15 p.m. The group will be viewing and discussing a resource from The Work of the People entitled *Materiality as Resistance: Neighborliness and the Role of the Church*. Rev. Walter Brueggeman will discuss our faith and our responsibility to one another, and how churches can model collaborative social structure. He “invites us into reimagining together with a focus on the materiality of the gospel in regards to the neighbor, and how we can create new ways of living that brings everyone’s needs into focus so that we, together, become the center.” Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/864787949> You will be admitted from the waiting room.

Lectio Divina is taking a break until September.

The United Methodist Women’s Book Group: We have just started discussing *Gum Moon* by Jeffrey L Staley. This is a remarkable coming-of-age story of a Chinese-American girl growing up in the early 1900s in California. We are only meeting once in July on the 15th over Zoom to discuss the book. We will meet in person on the 12th of August and meet on the 26th on Zoom. Please join us! If you have questions, please call Sharry Strait-Carey 434-5234.

Annual Conference ReportMargaret Parish, Lay Member Upper New York Conference

The Upper NY Conference of the UMC met recently via Zoom. This is the organizational body of the United Methodist Church that meets annually. Clergy and laity coordinate and conduct ministries and business of the church; present reports, past and ongoing; adopt future goals; and present the next year’s budget. Every four years (not this year) it recommends person(s) to the Jurisdiction Conference for consideration for Bishop.

During the budget discussion it was reported that there were 15 church closures. Four were in the Oneonta District: Mt. Vision, Hartwick, Middlefield, and Westville. As a Trustee of the UNY Conference, Joyce Miller was assigned to the four Oneonta District churches to shepherd them through getting rid of “stuff,” putting the properties in the hands of a realtor, and signing all the legal paperwork.

Also during the budget discussion we were notified that the Director of the Resource Center is retiring and will not be replaced. There will be no monies allotted to the Resource Center for new additional resources. The present resources in the center will still be available for use, but the details on how to access them is still in discussion.

Several petitions were approved. These include one on Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel, an administrative fair process for local pastors, and several supporting positions already in the Senate on police matters.

There was a petition for greater transparency and greater participation of members of the Annual Conference in mission planning and another petition for a proposal to form a study commission on the Readiness of the UNY Conference for Implementation of the Protocol of Reconciliation on Grace Through Separation. This is in response to the passage of the Traditional Plan adopted at the Special General Conference held in October 2019.

A declaratory decision on a Bishop’s ruling that the Book of Discipline prohibits nominations to the Board of Ordained Ministries from the floor is being forwarded to the Judicial Council (the UMC’s Supreme Court). This is being done because of the Bishop’s removal of Rev. Richelle Goff from the Board. Rev. Goff is pastor of Fairport UMC, a reconciling congregation outside Rochester. Their congregation recently voted openness to

allow and celebrate same-sex weddings in the sanctuary. Because of this decision she was told by the Bishop she was not going to be re-appointed.

Saturday closed with a Juneteenth Service in the morning titled “You Will Know the Truth, and the Truth Will Set You Free” wherein Pastor Marti was one of five or six giving a reflection. The Conference closed with the Ordination of four Elders, three Deacons, three Commissioned Elders, and one Commissioned Deacon.

Next year’s meeting is scheduled to be June 2-4 in Syracuse and will be in-person.

Facility Updates..... Jeff Gardner, Business and Facilities Manager

The replacing of the installation around the steam pipes (removed as part of the asbestos abatement) will begin in early July. Hopefully, this will help to keep the rooms a little cooler. It is the final step in order for us to start to put the nurseries back to order, thus allowing us to host DSS visits while preparing for potential childcare and Sunday School in the fall.

Also in July we are hoping to replace a 12-ft square piece of carpeting at the Church Street door entrance. There has been significant wear and tear and it needs to be replaced. It has held up well and has outlasted its life expectancy. It has been in for 10 years and gets used a lot by foot traffic as well as carts. This replacement is possible through an anonymous donor.

Over the next several weeks, there also may be some shifting and adjusting of pews in the sanctuary to allow space for the organ console and choir when they return on the courtyard side of the sanctuary. In addition, the Trustees are working on a creative way to maintain the aesthetics of the sanctuary while providing spaces for wheel chairs and those who need special accommodations.

For several months, Chad Winne, our heating and plumbing contractor, has been gathering information regarding the heating system. He met with the Trustees to share his findings and concerns. To start with, the boiler is 18 years old and is set-up with six heating zones currently. It works very hard and is running probably at least partially 8-9 months out of the year. It produces several hundred BTU’S of heat even if only one zone may be calling for heat. Although the boiler may only be 18 years old with a 20-25 life expectancy and came with a 10 year warranty, the pipes and many of the steam traps, etc., are original to the building. We have maintained and replaced some along the way but, like many materials, parts for a steam heating system are becoming harder and harder to obtain.

There are multiple concerns with the current boiler. First, there are more efficient and economical boilers that can be installed. Second, the possibility of the boiler crashing in the midst of the coldest day in winter and not being able to get parts or a replacement boiler creates problems. It is not logical or practical to replace it with a large boiler and it would be extremely costly to bring a company in with a portable heater for any length of time.

The proposal and plan would be to start to replace the one huge boiler by installing smaller more economical boilers in strategic locations so that FUMC can avoid a potential disaster. We would be converting the current steam system to a hot water system. We will look to start with placing one in the Parish House basement. The Trustees will be obtaining a second bid from a local contractor to go along with Chad Winne’s bid. This will allow FUMC to write a grant request to a local foundation which requires more than one bid. They both must be from local contractors. A generous and anonymous donor has contributed a total of \$1,500 in memory of Aneila Mead, in memory of Doug Fielder, and in honor of Scott Fielder to start a Boiler Replacement Fund. They have suggested and requested that they would like to see this matched by donations from the congregation. This is also important when applying for grants—being able to show foundations that the congregation is also supporting the replacement.

Another project that the Trustees are taking on is having NYSERDA do an energy study to see what additional ways we can become more efficient and economical with our resources. This is just in the beginning stages with the application deadline being June 30th.

Financial Updates..... Jeff Gardner, Business and Facilities Manager

I would like to start off this section with a big thank you to every member, constituent, visitor, friend, guest, and donor. I hope I haven't left anyone out. The volunteer time that you give to FUMC and/or the monetary gifts you provide help so many people in so many ways that are beyond words. When asked you respond. In many cases even before being asked you take the initiative to see what is needed and step up to the plate.

With the uncertainty and anxiety that COVID has created, our annual giving through pledging, non-pledging, and loose plate are still slightly above the budget for five months into the year. For the year, we budgeted \$17,028.50 monthly, or \$51,085.50 quarterly, for these three revenue streams. As of the end of May, FUMC has received \$89,698.52 in giving or 43.89%. About 44% of the revenue we need to cover monthly expenses comes in through these three sources. At this point, 10 of the 76 pledging units have paid their full pledge or more. Another 19 have more than 44% with 13 of those paying 50% or more. Another 27 have given 41-43% of their yearly pledge.

In addition to those pledging units, we have received donations from 30 other people for a total of \$9,984 or 46.44% of what was budgeted for the year. I hope this trend continues!

Both the Main Endowment Asset Portfolio (MEAP) and Patrick Endowment continued to see positive trends. They are up 2.011% and 7.07% respectively YTD, a little above \$326,600 in total. The MEAP is up \$429,292.78 from May 31, 2020 while the Patrick has seen net growth of \$640,824.97 since the same time last year.

Each year the United Methodist Church designates six Special Sundays for local churches to take collections. Peace with Justice Sunday, originally scheduled for Memorial Day weekend, will be taken on July 4th instead. (An envelope is enclosed with the Reporter.) A special collection for UM Student day was taken on Sunday June 20th as we celebrated our students who have reached milestones in their lives. A total of \$53.00 was collected. If you would like to increase this total, you may still do so by indicating so on your check or giving envelope.

Message from the Green Team..... Threats to our Marine Creation

“God’s marine creation both faces disproportionate risk and importance as the Earth experiences the climate crisis. Heat and excess carbon dioxide have damaged the chemical balance of the ocean, making it more acidic. This imperils the diversity of life therein. When life in the ocean is in danger, food security and livelihoods of millions around the world are also in jeopardy. Furthermore, warming ocean waters are linked to more frequent and dangerous weather events such as hurricanes. These severe weather events imperil the physical safety of coastal communities and threaten to impoverish millions who lose their homes and businesses amidst the harsh winds and floods. The time to act is now.” *(from Creation Justice Ministries)*

THE PATH AHEAD: To protect God's beautiful creation, we must restore coastal ecosystems and protect healthy oceans. Here are some actions you can take to help preserve God's marine creation.

- Call your elected officials and encourage them to support legislation that maintains marine protected areas, including marine sanctuaries and marine national monuments.
- Limit your plastic usage and encourage your community to prioritize plastic-free options. Buy reusable items to store food. Ask your local restaurants about switching to metal or paper straws rather than plastic.
- Educate your local community and encourage local government to address issues like rising sea level, coastal drilling, and climate change.
- Engage on social media by sharing articles, following ocean-protection accounts and participating in sign-on letters related to oceans issues you care about.
- Submit public comments to federal agencies proposing new rules and regulations that will impact our marine creation.

- Be cautious of the chemicals you use. One of the biggest sources of pollution occurs as a result of runoff from land and includes chemicals, oil, salts, pesticides and fertilizers. These pollutants damage marine habitats and endanger marine wildlife.
- Support the youth in your life in advocating for protecting this wonderful marine creation for future generations. Help them share with their youth groups, classmates, and peers encourage each other to become ocean champions themselves. <http://www.creationjustice.org>

~ Caring and Sharing ~

Please remember that if you or a member of your family is hospitalized, it is necessary for you to contact the church if you wish a visit or listing on our prayer lists as that information is not readily (or legally) shared by health care institutions.

Bill Pharr, Focus Rehab 1445 Kemble Street, Room 207, Utica, NY 13501

Kathryn Roffe, Fox Nursing Home, Room 318, 2 Norton Ave, Oneonta, NY 13820

Sympathies

Our sympathies to Phil and Violet Wade on the death of Phil's mother on June 8.

Phil Young to Exhibit "Onsite Insight" at Fenimore Art Museum, July 2021

Phil Young will exhibit artwork including new and recent pieces at the Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, NY, from July 2-25, in a show he calls "Onsite Insight." The multimedia works were created on location or in studios in response to what he sees as "ritual spaces in the body of the land." They are places of disclosure, embodiment, and sacred to him. He believes working on-site yields the deepest insight.

He is Professor Emeritus of Art at Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York where he taught for 35 years beginning 1978. Despite his upstate New York residence, he notes that "the red clay of Oklahoma still runs in my veins."

Young (Scots/Irish/Cherokee) was born and raised in Oklahoma with an ongoing love and reverence for the land. He is blessed with resistant/resilient/remembered family stories of humor and healing. The imprint of various communities of faith, art, academia (especially colleagues and students), and Multiple Sclerosis support, bear indelible marks.

He is recipient of a Millay Colony Residency, Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant in Painting and Sculpture, and a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Sculpture, as well as teaching and research awards from Hartwick College.

Young's work has been exhibited at the Heard Museum, William Benton Museum, Munson-Williams Proctor Museum of Art, Atlanta History Center, Art-in-General and the Swiss Institute in NYC, University of Arizona Museum of Art Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, in addition to local and regional venues. Among National exhibitions is the four-year traveling show, ARTRAIN, USA "Native Views, Contemporary American Culture: Contemporary Native American Art."

His art has been reproduced in On the Beaten Track, The Lure of the Local, Undermining: A Wild Ride through Land Use, Politics, and Art in the Changing West, Visit Tee-Pee Town, The New Art Examiner, Akwe:kon Journal, Stone Canoe, and in numerous catalogues and reviews.

The exhibit will be in the Community Gallery, 2nd floor, Fenimore Art Museum, until July 25.

The deadline for the September Reporter is AUGUST 20!!

BOOK SALE

We are having a book sale to benefit the budget and with a donation to RMN transgender work. It will run every other Wednesday from 9am to 3pm in the Art Room. If you wish to purchase books, please bring your own bag.

July 7

July 21

August 4

August 18

September 1

~~ We cannot accept any more book donations ~~

The donation to the Reconciling Ministries Network will be used for work with the transgendered youth ministry. At a time when health services are being denied to transgendered people all over America, it compels us to help where we can. If you would care to make an individual donation please send your contribution with “RMN transgendered youth” in the memo. We haven’t had a membership drive for becoming an individual Reconciling Member for some time, so if you are new to the church or feel now is the time to let your voice be heard, please go to rmnetwork.org and select “join us.”

—Thank you, The RMN Task Force

Church Rummage & Bake Sale

Thursday, September 16, 9 AM — 6 PM

Friday, September 17, 9 AM — 1 PM

(Friday - \$2 bag sale)

Our Fall Rummage Sale helps not only the community with clothes and goods at low prices, but YOU benefit by cleaning out your closets and cupboards of unused items and the CHURCH benefits by the profits generated! True recycling! You may bring your donations to the stage in Fellowship Hall. **Please only bring in clothing and household goods that are usable and in working order.** If clothing is ripped or stained, or appliances don’t work, we just have to dispose of the items which fills up the church dumpster. Thank you for your cooperation!

You may begin bringing in items starting July 6th, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 9 -12 or by appt. Please call the office (432-4102) to make sure the doors are open for your delivery. Put items on the front of the stage. Please do not bring in any books at this point!

Don’t Forget about Our New Mission The Helping Hands Community Thrift Shop

At the April FUMC Council meeting, a new mission was approved: a thrift store! It will be located in the first floor of the Parish House.

The store will offer a very special shopping experience: Women’s, Men’s, Infant’s, and Children’s clothing hanging on racks, sorted according to size; books; a few household items; and of course a jewelry corner. Everything will be very neat and tidy and inviting. It will be totally run by volunteers from FUMC and the community. Ninety percent of the proceeds from the store (except sales tax that goes to New York State) will go into the church budget. We will tithe 10% of our monthly proceeds back into the community, to benefit various non-profits and charities, as determined by the store’s volunteers.

We are accepting donations. They can be picked up if necessary. Call or text Angela at 607-434-2435 so that we can discuss the type of donation you have and when it can be picked up. We have been working these past several weeks to set up the shop. This new mission will require the love and labor of many volunteers. Stay tuned! We hope to open in late summer. If you like to volunteer, please contact Angela. There will be an orientation soon.

United Methodist Women

1. Two of UMW's busy mask makers, Margaret Green and Irene Morrissey, sewed a total of 84 small, medium, and large masks for the children of Riverside Elementary School in Oneonta. Until these youngsters can be vaccinated against Covid-19 they will need to wear masks at school and in other indoor settings. School Nurse Catie Lane sends a big THANK YOU to UMW!

2. All-natural tick spray is available from the UMW Cream Team all summer. A 4 oz. spray bottle costs \$5, and is safe for infants, kids, adults, and dogs. To order, contact Sharon McCarthy at skmccarthy@stny.rr.com or call 607-433-2185.



First United Methodist Church – Oneonta, New York

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Ordained Minister: Rev. Marti Swords-Horrell
Co-Lay Leaders:..... Gail Niles & Peter Paluch
Director of Music Ministries:..... John Jurgensen
Business & Facilities Manager: Jeff Gardner
Communications Coordinator.....Amy Burnsworth
Sexton:Randall Wilson
Secretary: Leslie Bauer
Volunteer Caretaker: Christopher Brashear
Child Care:Keshia Genzardi