

The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

December 2014



Parting

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

By now most of you will have heard that I accepted a call to do ministry at another United Methodist Conference in Texas. While I believe that this is God's calling for me and my family at this time

in our lives and ministry, it is also with great sadness that I tell this you.

Patchogue UMC has been a great place to do ministry, but also my home for the past five years. I have grown and learned and been blessed by the community of Christ in this place. And I am grateful—almost beyond words, if that is even possible for me to say. Perhaps it isn't. I have more!

You have all been a vital part of the growing up years of my children, who were nurtured in faith here. It was in this place where they learned about forgiveness and resurrection and community and service. You all loved them and I am thankful. You prayed for and supported and comforted Ivette and me in ways that you don't even imagine. I am grateful.

We have shared so much. We have shared life with all of its celebrations and sorrows; we have laughed and cried, argued and encouraged each other. We have been the very human body of Christ serving with the gifts we have been given and discovered in each other. I am grateful. It has been one my greatest privileges to have been your pastor during this time in the life and ministry of Patchogue UMC.

Sadly, Christmas Eve Wed. Dec. 24, will be my last worship time with you. As I look forward to new learning and adventures in following the Lord Jesus, I anticipate the same for Patchogue UMC and will keep you in my prayers that the Spirit of Christ will continue to guide, encourage and comfort you all!

—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez,
Ivette, Abdiel & Jelixa

WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

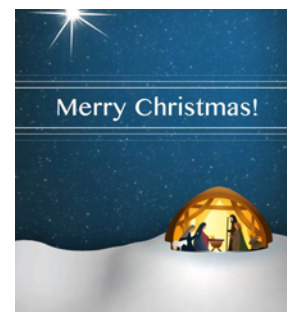
Dec. 7—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *"The Beginning of the Good News"*, Psalm 85:9-14, Mark 1:1-8.

Dec. 14—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *"The Morning Sun-Shine"*, Isaiah 61:1-2a, John 1:6-8, 19-28.

Dec. 21—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *"A Joyful Burden"*, Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 6:25-34.

Dec. 24, 7:00 PM—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *"A Rose By Any Other Name"*, Isaiah 9:1-6, Matthew 2:1-14 (15-20).

Dec. 28—Guest Speaker Ernest Ipke, Psalm 148, Luke 2:22-40.



Circle of Concern

For Joys:

Adoption and Baptism of Crystal Paige and Josh Thomas Jansson, Louis Diamond has a new job in the computer field.

For Bereavement:

The family of Al Eid, The Collins' family, family of Harold Klages, family of Bob Venator.

For Guidance and Healing:

The Phillips family, Jack Hein, Laura Diamond, Susan Heller, Helen Melissakif, June Barile, Heidi Lyman,.

These Who are Hospitalized:

Charles Peterson, Leona Kramer, George Roessler's mother, Roselyn.

These at Home:

Flo Miller, Laura & Louis Diamond, Mike Burns, Ellie Marie Goyco, Diane Keller, Ron Bose .

These who are in Rehab or Nursing Care Facilities:

Leona Kreamer in Brookhaven Memorial Hospital, Brookhaven, NY.

Alice Zahnd in Affinity Skilled Living, 305 Locust Ave., Oakdale, NY.

Esther Davies in Brookhaven Health Facility, 801 Gazzolla Drive, E. Patchogue, NY.

Ed Dew in Sunrise Assisted Living, Holbrook, NY.

Gertrude Roessler in Stony Brook Hospital, Stony Brook, NY.

Mark This Date

Sunday, Dec. 14, 3 PM

George Handel's *The Messiah* performed by the Choral Society of the Moriches under the direction of our own Martha Campanelli.

Club News

Kids Club and Breakfast Club (formerly Sunday School) focused on missions for the months of October and November. We raised \$137 for Raise the Roof, an organization which builds village schools in Africa. Our project for November was Operation Christmas Child which uses gift-filled shoe boxes to share God's love in a tangible way with needy children around the world. On Nov. 23 we had our packing party during Kids Club time and managed to put together a total of 20 boxes!

In December we'll start rehearsals for our annual Christmas pageant which will be on Dec. 21 during the worship service. We will be rehearsing during Club time but may need to have the children stay a little later one Sunday to practice in the sanctuary. Elizabeth Biederman and Brenda Klinge are the directors for the pageant.

The clubs are planning a Souper Bowl Sunday mission project to benefit our own food pantry. We'll be asking the kids and the congregation to bring in cans of soup on Super Bowl Sunday, which is Feb. 1, and also on the Sunday before, Jan. 25.

We're hoping to revive our acolyte ministry soon. This will involve having a child from 3rd-6th grade light the candles at the beginning of worship each week.

If your child or youth has a musical or other talent which they would like to share with the congregation during our worship service, please let Raquel or me know.

We are using the Grow, Proclaim, Serve curriculum for Kids Club. I invite you to visit their website; there is a special section of the website for parents. You can also download the

Grow, Proclaim, Serve app to your Apple or Android phone/device.

There have been some questions about the policy regarding the church nursery. The church nursery is for children under the age of three. It is child-proofed to protect the safety of this age group. In the past the older children played in the church nursery during coffee hour, often without adult supervision. This led to two incidents where children were harmed.

Our concern for the safety of our babies, toddlers, and older children led to the present policy.

Raquel Miller will be providing a space on the stage with toys and activities where the children may gather during coffee hour. However, please be aware that once Kids Club ends the children are the responsibility of their parents or the adult who accompanied them to church.

There have been times during coffee hour when young children have been found wandering upstairs or other places in the church unaccompanied by adults. We are concerned about the safety of these children since the church is a public building and our open doors mean that there is access to the church for anyone who wishes it.

Please make sure you know where your child is at all times for their safety.

—Debbie Kolacki

The deadline for the January issue of **The Link** is Dec. 19. Please email your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

United Methodist Church of Patchogue

December 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7:00 p.m.—AA	2 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	3	4 7:30 p.m.—Choir	5 9:30–11:30 a.m.—ESL Class UMW Fair Setup 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	6 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.—UMW Christmas Fair
7 10 a.m.—Communion Worship/Kids/Breakfast Club 11:30 a.m.—SPRC 2:00 p.m.—House of Worship Tour 2:00 p.m.—Chrysalis 6-8 p.m.—Pentecostal MF	8 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7:00 p.m.—AA	9 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	10	11 7:30 p.m.—Choir	12 9:30–11:30 a.m.—ESL Class 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	13
14 10 a.m.—Worship/Kids/Breakfast Club 11:30 a.m.—Finance 3:00 p.m.— <i>The Messiah</i> 6-8 p.m.—Pentecostal MF	15 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7:00 p.m.—AA	16 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	17 7 p.m.—Youth Group Advent	18 7:30 p.m.—Choir	19 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	20
21 10 a.m.—Worship/Kids/Breakfast Club Christmas Pageant 6-8 p.m.—Pentecostal MF	22 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7:00 p.m.—AA	23 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	24 Church Office closed through Jan. 4 7:00 p.m.—Christmas Eve Service	25 	26 Christmas Wesley Dinner 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	27
28 10 a.m.—Worship/Kids/Breakfast Club 11:30 a.m.—Trustees 6-8 p.m.—Pentecostal MF	29 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7:00 p.m.—AA	30 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	31			

the Way

May God's peace be with you!

For those of you who are fortunate enough to remember black & white television—you know, channels 2 through 13, the TV repairman with the truck full of tubes, and no remote control—think back to the comedy/game show program “You Bet Your Life”, hosted by Groucho Marx. Perhaps you remember the duck and the secret word. If a contestant said the word during the show, the duck would drop down and the guest would win a \$100 bill.

Sometimes being a Christian is like being one of those contestants. We go through life, hoping to say or do the right thing, never knowing when or even whether we're going to hear the secret word—and yet, in my experience, God's still, small voice never fails to deliver what I need, exactly when I need it, to fortify my spirit for my walk with Jesus Christ. I used to think I could help God a bit with the timing (and of course I still try), but really, how can you improve on perfection? Case in point:

About a month ago, Kathie and I went to a fundraiser breakfast on a Sunday morning at the Boys & Girls Club in Bellport. We have a friend with a daughter who is a member there, and wanted to show our support. Historically, I have been known to support this sort of event with money but not my time, but this time the Spirit moved both of us to be pre-

sent. And so, we showed up a bit after 9:00 and entered the building, not really knowing what to expect.

I need to mention here that I was in the midst of a mild spiritual downturn, and I felt that being a bit late for church would somehow delay my return to some semblance of balance. (Logic like that is one of the reasons I hear the phrase “You're a whack-job” from my beloved rather more often than I would wish). It wasn't anything I could put my finger on at the time, I just knew that I wasn't right with God at that moment. Even on the drive over to the breakfast I was telling Kathie about my continuing, frustrating need to judge others. But as I said above, God's timing is always perfect.

We were met inside by as nice a group of young ladies as I could ever want to meet. We were fed a generous (and very tasty) breakfast, and our needs were attended before we even had to ask. We asked one of the teenage girls about her experience in the club, and she sat down with us and shared eloquently not only about some of the fun things they do, but also her participation in several service events—events that were very Christ-like in their outreach and compassion.

One young girl—I suspect she was the youngest one there—was cleaning off the table next to us, and I grinned at her and said “boy, they give you all the hard jobs, don't they?” She said “yeah”, but then she smiled and kind of danced her way into the kitchen. Another girl dropped off a comment card, and said she hoped we would fill

it out, so that they would know how they had done—and she meant it. And before we left, they gave us information on upcoming events, all with sincerity, and all with a smile.

I have been known (only on very rare occasions, of course) to have a cynical outlook on things, especially the future of our country in the hands of young people whose sole reason for existence seems to be the smart phone. But by the time we got back in the car and headed over to the church—a few minutes late, as I had expected—my spiritual malaise had vanished, thanks to meeting some kids who believed in themselves, in doing service, and in a higher and nobler purpose of life. And I felt something I had not experienced for a while: hope.

Wow, I must have said the secret word. Here comes the duck.

Yours in Christ,

—Tom Bracken

December Birthdays

- Dec. 3** Megan Schwartz
- Dec. 8** Rebecca Chapman
- Dec. 8** Krista Smith
- Dec. 9** Chelsea Loris
- Dec. 10** Katelyn Schaaf
- Dec. 11** Jean Hoppe
- Dec. 12** Joel Hingle
- Dec. 14** Steven Rice
- Dec. 16** Jane Brenner
- Dec. 16** Robert Bonfe, Jr.
- Dec. 18** Matthew Layton
- Dec. 19** Anthony Nicholson
- Dec. 20** Brian Maxey, Jr.
- Dec. 21** Joshua Martino
- Dec. 21** Michael Layton
- Dec. 24** Janden Keeley
- Dec. 25** Stephanie Bonfe
- Dec. 26** Thomas Mansfield, Sr.
- Dec. 31** Charles Magill, Jr.

United Methodists Praise President's Immigration Order

President Barack Obama's immigration plan offers "a word of mercy and a measure of justice," said United Methodist Bishop Minerva Carcaño, co-chair of the denomination's interagency task force on immigration reform.

The plan means undocumented immigrants who have lived in the U.S. for more than five years and have children who are U.S. citizens or residents "can now come out of the shadows," said Carcaño, episcopal leader for the California-Pacific Conference.

The United Methodist Council of Bishops has long supported immigration reform and encouraged local communities "to participate in ministries of mercy and justice," said Bishop Julius C. Trimble, co-chair of the interagency task force on immigration reform and episcopal leader of the Iowa Conference.

Trimble said critics have attacked the president's action before, saying reform is the responsibility of Congress.

"Nevertheless, the question remains unanswered as to why the House of Representatives will not act on a Senate-approved bill," he said.

The United Methodist Board of Church and Society's top executive, the Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe, has written a letter to Obama commending him on extending deferred status to more than 5 million undocumented immigrants. But she emphasizes that this is just "a critical first step."

The letter thanks the president for shutting down the Secure Communities program that has "increased racial profiling" and further increased an atmosphere of fear among immigrant

communities.

Obama said the immigration system has been broken for decades and he challenged Congress to pass his plan or "Pass a bill."

Answer to prayers

At Christ's Foundry United Methodist Church, a Hispanic congregation in Dallas, about 200 people gathered at a watch party for Obama's address.

They applauded at times, and afterwards held hands and sang "We Shall Overcome."

The Rev. Owen Ross, who leads the church and was a Peace Corps worker in Ecuador, praised Obama's actions.

"A lot of our prayers were answered tonight," he said. "It's a great first step, and a great night for America."

Ross pointed to an undocumented woman in his congregation named Rosa, a single mother whose young daughter does have legal status.

"She is who the president is doing this for," he said, noting that she shares a room with her daughter in another family's house, and has had trouble keeping a job due to her lack of legal status.

Rosa, speaking through an interpreter, said she's looking forward to being able to move about without fear of deportation.

"My sister died last year in Mexico, and I was not able to go," she said. "So many families have been separated."

Ross said he was disappointed Obama's order did not cover the parents of undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as children and who through a 2012 executive order got temporary relief from deportation and work permits.

"That would be another large group," Ross said.

But he repeated his appreciation for the president's new actions. And he said Christ's Foundry United Methodist would be helping Rosa and others fill out the paperwork necessary to gain legal status.

Continuing support

Carcaño urged United Methodists to call and send letters to their congressional leaders supporting the president's plan. She also called on United Methodists to contribute to the cost of legalization processes for immigrant families.

"Immigrants are some of the hardest working people in this country yet they are also among the lowest paid," she said. "Immigration application fees must be set within their economic reach. We have seen this need as we have encouraged young people to apply for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). Many qualify but have not applied because they cannot afford the application cost."

Eligible immigrants will need a "massive level of assistance" in the months that follow, agreed Rob Rutand-Brown, director of United Methodist National Justice for our Neighbors.

"These vulnerable immigrants will be targeted by unscrupulous people eager to take their money," he said.

Brown said the national organization which offers free legal assistance to immigrants will be stepping up its efforts

"We will strengthen our partnerships—both within The United Methodist Church and beyond—throughout the cities we serve," he said.

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A Prayer for Christmas Morning

The day of joy returns, Father in heaven, and crowns another year with peace and good will.

Help us rightly to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the doors of hate and open the doors of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

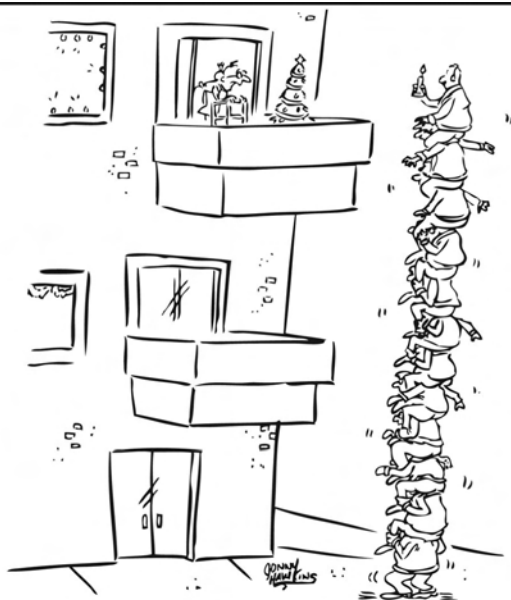
Deliver us from evil, by the blessing that Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clean hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children,

And the Christmas evening bring us to our bed with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus sake.

Amen

—Robert Lewis Stevenson



Cass Park Church's carolers were always ready to make necessary adjustments.

Immigration Order (From Page 5)

Justice for millions more

The executive order is a cause for celebration, but there are still more than 7 million left out of the plan, said Carol Barton, United Methodist Women. She coordinates the Immigrant & Civil Rights Initiative.

Barton said that includes the Central American women and children who arrived this summer fleeing violence, only to be detained, forced to wear electronic ankle bracelets, or served pending deportation papers.

“That includes the parents of DREAM students, who have risked so much for this day only to be disappointed. That includes those who have committed non-violent crimes in the past, have paid their debt to society, are important members of our families, yet face deportation. As Christians we believe in forgiveness and restorative justice, not perpetual punishment,” Barton said.

The executive action is also partial and temporary, Barton said.

“It does not guarantee permanent status, nor health care and social welfare benefits. It can be revoked at any time. Thus, as we work to assist all those eligible for deferred status, we will also continue to advocate for just immigration reform that includes all currently in the U.S. and addresses future flows of migration.

“And we will continue to accompany those facing more intense criminalization, detention and deportation, until they, too, can celebrate,” she said.

—Kathy L. Gilbert and Sam Hodges, UMNS

I am who I am because of The United Methodist Church

My parents met in nursery school at First United Methodist Church in Tifton, Ga. Every year we traveled to southern Georgia to spend Christmas and summer vacations with my grandparents and extended family. All four of my grandparents were leaders at church and in the community: teaching Sunday School, serving on the School Board, founding Meals on Wheels, serving as communion steward, leading women’s circles and serving on the Board of Trustees.

My grandparents’ professional, personal and familial choices modeled a commitment to God and the common good.

My maternal grandfather would insert his lessons of faith into conversations while we watched baseball, as he blessed our meals, as we talked about current events and as he greeted every person with whom he came into contact.

As the son of a sharecropper who was also an abusive alcoholic, “Daddy T.” knew firsthand the impact of poverty, addiction and abuse. He taught me that every person is a child of God to be treated with dignity and respect.

Bountiful Christmas packages

“You tithe 10% before you pay for anything else,” he told us regularly. At Christmas time, the packages for a family in the community were as bountiful and extravagantly decorated as those for us.

My parents raised us with the same values that we saw in our grandparents’ homes.

My paternal grandmother had publicly testified in opposition when Tift County threatened to close all public

schools in the 1950s rather than desegregate.

Similarly, when Wake County Public Schools began a magnet-school system where children were bused to increase the equity among students of color and white students, my parents opted to keep me in public schools rather than enroll me in a private school as many white parents did. My parents openly spoke out about racism and fear they heard expressed in private.

I learned from my parents and our United Methodist Youth Fellowship (UMYF) counselors that Jesus expected us to ask questions when we noticed that a person or group of people being mistreated.

Increasingly concerned

In high school and college, I became increasingly concerned about racism and the ways it caused divisions in my peer group, some created socially and some administratively, such as which students were selected for awards, honors classes, etc.

In high school, marching band became the equalizer where friendships were developed outside the defined parameters of neighborhoods, churches and classrooms. UMYF became the safe haven where I was loved unconditionally and encouraged to deepen my walk with Christ.

After a college career focused on biology/pre-med and community engagement, I moved to Washington, D.C., to volunteer in a medical clinic. During this year, I was called into deep relationships with people of many faith traditions, races and ethnicities, and socio-economic groups. I realized that God was affirming my love for education that transforms fear and hate into love and solidarity.

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 Meghan Vanderhoof, Administrative Assistant
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 Fellowship Coffee Hour—11 AM
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Address Service Requested



A Methodist (From Page 7)

Through a graduate program in counseling and education, I became a student of the burgeoning service-learning movement. For several years, during and after graduate school I worked with faculty on several different campuses to design and implement service learning as part of their curricula.

I recognized that the mission of the school often determined which parts of my call I was able to incorporate into my work. On one campus, I could talk about the intersection of faith and service, and on another service and civic engagement.

'Justice and mercy and faith'

Through a Peace with Justice newsletter sent to my father, I learned of a job opening with the General Board of

Church & Society (GBCS). Later that summer, I began working with its United Methodist Seminar Program on National & International Affairs. Because of our Wesleyan traditions of justice, I had finally found a place where I could serve wholeheartedly as an educator who encourages people of all ages to follow Jesus' call (Matthew 23: 23-24) for us to live lives of "justice and mercy and faith."

God's call on my life from my earliest visits to my grandparents' homes to the present day has been to increase my own consciousness to "stay awake and keep watch" so that I am lessening the ways and frequency with which I perpetuate injustice. God asks me to encourage consciousness-raising with young people, parents, teachers and pastors that builds knowledge and skills promoting justice.

In my current position at GBCS as Director of Women's & Children's Advocacy, the question I wrestle with every day is this: If we truly believed that all people are children of God with sacred worth, would the issues for which I am responsible — human trafficking, rape, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS, child marriage, lack of access to comprehensive sex education and reproductive health care, and heterosexism — devastate so many families, communities and nations?

—Susan Burton, UMNS

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