

The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

February 2015

Sponsored this month by Geri Sheridan in loving memory of Bob Sheridan

And So We Begin

Happy New Year!
May God's
blessings be
with you all throughout
the year!

It is my pleasure and joy to start a new beginning at Patchogue UMC, where rich history of community for over 100 years is rooted deeply.

"This is the day that The Lord has made, be glad and rejoice in it!" I am certain that most of you are familiar with this verse, however, I would like to remind you once again as we begin our journey together.

Actually, this verse was inspired to me after reading the memo sent out to Clergies of New York Annual Conference by our new Bishop Jane Allen Middleton.

She wrote that there are many new beginnings in our lives. We could talk about this subject in various ways, in terms of both micro and macro ways; New Years, Advent for Christian calendar,

beginning of school year, wedding day, a new born baby, and Ash Wednesday as a beginning of Lent season.

For me, everyday is a blessing as a new beginning. As I wake up in the morning, I pray that it will be another GREAT day! As Immanuel God walks with us in every step of our lives, we ought to rejoice in our trivial daily lives.

What a beautiful picture of our church on a history book of Patchogue! What a wonderful stewardship you have shown to glorify God for several decades for most of you! Thank you for your devoted endeavor and I would like to express my sincere thanks to you and thank God for sending me to this community to be a part of another chapter of history.

Would you like to join me praying for the future of our church and its community? During Lent, we might be able to have a prayer vigil! Please keep

close attention to the insert of our bulletins. It is to be announced how we are going to implement this after having a discussion with the Worship Committee.

Again, thank you for your warm welcome and I look forward to working closely with you as a new minister.

In Christ,

—Rev. Hyo Jung (Dawn)
Yoon

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

Feb. 1—Rev. Dawn Yoon,
Psalm 111, Mark 1:21-28

Feb. 8—Rev. Dawn Yoon,
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c, Mark
1:29-39

Feb. 15—Rev. Dawn Yoon,
Psalm 50:1-6, Mark 9:2-9

Feb. 22—Rev. Dawn Yoon,
Psalm 25:1-10, Mark 1:9-
15



EPHESIANS 6:10

Circle of Concern

For Joys:

Baptism of Adaison Frances Belzak.

For Bereavement:

Minschke Family on the passing of Kris' mother.

Family of Rudolph (Rudy) Kroll.

For Guidance and Healing:

Marge Kassner.

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.

Pray for our church and her future directions!

Prayer cards are located at the ushers' stations in back of the sanctuary.

Your joys & concerns are important to us; let us pray for you!

Please put completed prayer cards in the offering plate or the Prayer Request Form on our webpage at www.patchogueumc.org.

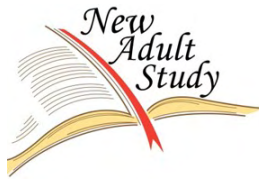
Finance Committee

We have a few changes on the Finance Committee. I am the new Committee Chairperson. Diane Adone has taken the position of Church Treasurer and Helen Smith is now the Church Financial Secretary. With the Lord as our leader, we seek to have a prosperous 2015. All of our meetings are open to church members. Feel free to attend, second Sunday of every month. Blessings,

—Pamela Queen

Lent Study Group

Our Sunday morning study group will be starting up again on Feb. 15 at 9:00 a.m. in the Cloud Room.



We will be doing a six session study called "Seeing Ourselves in Those

Confronted by Jesus" where we will learn about groups from Jesus' time, including the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots. The study will also look at who in the twenty-first-century church is like the members of these groups.

There is no study book to purchase but please let group leader Debbie Kolacki know if you're interested in participating to ensure we have enough handouts for everyone.

You may contact her at debbiekolacki88@gmail.com or 363-6499. The study will meet on Feb. 15, Feb. 22, Mar. 1, Mar. 8, Mar. 15, and Mar. 22.

—Debbie Kolacki



A Brotherhood That Transcends Race or Color

Let us pray. O God, our Heavenly Father, out of whose mind this great cosmic universe has been created, toward whom the weary and perplexed of all generations turn for consolation and direction, we come before Thy presence this evening thanking Thee for the many blessings of life.

We come recognizing our dependence on Thee. We also come, O God, with an awareness. The fact that we have not always given our lives to that which is high and noble. In the midst of all of the high and noble aspects of justice, we followed injustice. We stand amid the forces of truth and yet we deliberately lie. We stand amid the compelling urgency of the Lord of Love, as exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ, and yet we live our lives so often in the dungeons of hate. For all of these sins, O God, forgive.

And in these days of emotional tension, when the problems of the world are gigantic in extent and chaotic in detail, give us penetrating vision, broad understanding, power of endurance and abiding faith, and save us from the paralysis of crippling fear.

And O God, we ask Thee to help us to work with renewed vigor for a warless world and for a brotherhood that transcends race or color. We thank Thee this evening for the marvelous things which have been done in this city, and through the dynamic preachings of this great evangelist.

And we ask Thee, O God, to continue blessing him. Give him continued power and authority. And as we look into him tonight, grant that our hearts and spirit will be open to the divine inflow.

—Martin Luther King prayer at Billy Graham Crusade, via beliefnct.com

United Methodist Church of Patchogue

February 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10 a.m.— Communion Wor- ship/Kids/ Breakfast Club 2:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 6:00—End of Halftime—PUMY Super Bowl Party at Soler's home	2 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7:00 p.m.—AA	3 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	4	5 7:30 p.m.—Choir	6 9:30 a.m.—ESL 7:00 p.m.—Girl Scouts (Youth Room) 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	7
8 10 a.m.—Worship/ Kids/Breakfast Club 11:30 a.m.— Finance 2:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	9 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7:00 p.m.—AA	10 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	11	12 7:30 p.m.—Choir	13 9:30 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	14 4:30-8:30 p.m.— PUMY Pasta Dinner & Newly Wed Game
15 10 a.m.—Worship/ Kids/Breakfast Club 2:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	16 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7:00 p.m.—AA	17 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	18	19 5:00 p.m.—Wesley Dinner 7:30 p.m.—Choir	20 7:00 p.m.—Girl Scouts (Youth Room) 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	21
22 10 a.m.—Worship/ Kids/Breakfast Club 11:30 a.m.— Trustees 2:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	23 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7:00 p.m.—AA	24 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	25 7:00-8:45 p.m.— PUMY Meeting	26 7:30 p.m.—Choir	27 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—N/A	28

the Way

May God's peace be with you!

Because I have been putting in very long hours this week, trying to close the books 1) at work, 2) in a service organization, and 3) right here at UMC Patchogue, and because I'm barely coherent from lack of sleep at this point, I'm not sure if this will be a Lesson, a Question, or an Observation. I guess we'll all just have to wait to find out. Anyway, here is what is currently on the part of my mind not filled with various numbers.

Have you ever noticed how we position ourselves when we really want something? You saw it at Christmas-time—people lining up at stores hours before opening, in order to get what they want (at the right price) before it's gone. Look at season ticket-holders (name any sport): when seats closer to the field / floor / rink become available, others have a chance to "move up". When there is a band or artist we want to see, we push and maneuver to get the closest seats possible. Regarding this last, I myself spent money over a month ago to get 4th row center seats to see Leo Kotke in the Boulton Center in late February. Of course, THAT one is justified, because it's for ME.

Whatever the goal—objects, performances, whatever—we want the ring-side seats. If we really want something, we try to secure the best position in order to obtain or achieve it. And that's normal, and right, because we're human, and we want the best for ourselves and our loved ones. Some of you already think you know *where* I'm going with this, but I'm guessing you don't know *why*. So let's tackle the "where" first.

Picture a donut, or a bagel. In your

mind's eye, cut the bagel in half from the top down, so that it looks like half a circle. See how the substance of the bagel is around the outside, and how it thins as you get toward the center, and then there's the [half] hole in the center? (This is making me hungry). You think I'm alluding to our relationship with Jesus Christ, right, placing Him at the center of our world? Uh-uh. It's not a bad point, but that's sermon stuff, and this isn't a sermon, it's a Lesson/Question/Observation.

No, I'm referring to the way we position ourselves in the pews on any given Sunday. The benches in the back are usually well-populated, even on a "slow" day. The same with the last 5 or 6 rows of pews. Then there are the scattered knots of people as you move forward, and of course our wonderful choir in the front two rows, the inside edge of the half bagel. (Even hungrier now). In the number of times I've been on the other side of the altar rail, the view is remarkably consistent.

Now remember, L/Q/O—I'm *not* passing judgment in any way, shape or form. I sit where I sit for my own reasons, none of which involve being "holier than thou". One could argue that, no matter where one sits in the House of God, the important part is being IN that House – and one would be right. It also has nothing to do with sucking up to Teacher / Pastor, although I do like to be supportive to whomever happens to be standing at the pulpit. But now we get to the above-mentioned "why".

If a newcomer walks into our church at, say, 9:57 AM on a Sunday, this is the visual: a lot of people sitting around the back and down the sides in relatively dark areas, the scattered knots hanging out in the middle, the pastor and worship assistant sitting behind the pulpit, and the choir

behind them. This newcomer wants to find the body of Christ united in one spirit, *but the visual says something else entirely*. Once again, absolutely no judgment here, just trying to look at things from a different perspective.

I've always treasured the services we held in Wesley Hall a few winters ago. The furnace had issues, and it was really cold (didn't treasure THAT part of it!), but there was a special closeness, a feeling of family that warms my heart when I remember it.

Odd to feel that more in a hall of cement blocks and linoleum than our beautiful sanctuary. Lesson? Question? Observation? Tom's gone to his happy place?

Maybe it's just food for thought.

Yours in Christ,

—Tom Bracken

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Our Services Online
Click on the Links at
www.PatchogueUMC.org**

February Birthdays

Feb. 2 Kody Miller
Feb. 4 Juliana Wright
Feb. 10 Jonathan Alvarado
Feb. 11 Irene Brenner
Feb. 14 Geri Sheridan
Feb. 15 Kevin Carde
Feb. 15 John Yarshuck
Feb. 18 Robbie Pearson
Feb. 21 Valarie Ward

Movie 'Selma' sparks reflections on church, racism

Seeing the movie "Selma" with my family and an interracial group of viewers at a theater in Harlem brought back my personal memories of the Selma to Montgomery march.

The film offers all faithful United Methodists a chance to reflect on how the denomination of that time—with its structure of segregating African-American churches into the old Central Jurisdiction—dealt with racism. And it raises the question: What can The United Methodist Church of today learn from the film and its own history?

I was one of many clergy and religious leaders who responded to the "call" to come to Selma, Alabama, following "Bloody Sunday," when about 600 marchers were attacked on the Edmund Pettus Bridge with tear gas and billy clubs by state and local law enforcement officials.

One of the clergymen on the plane from Boston was the Rev. James Reeb, the white Unitarian minister who would be beaten and later die of his injuries. In the film, Reeb is called a "white nigger" for participating in the march. I took part in his memorial service at Arlington Street Unitarian Church in Boston.

The march was scheduled to begin the Tuesday after "Bloody Sunday," but arrangements had not been completed for police and state trooper protection, so marchers walked across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, prayed and then returned to Selma on what became known as "Turnaround Tuesday."

I returned to Boston, then rejoined the march on the day before marchers entered Montgomery, presenting money raised in Boston to support the walkers.

Harry Belafonte had invited well-known entertainers from Hollywood and elsewhere to participate in the march and a rally that night. In his autobiography, *My Song: A Memoir of Art, Race*

and *Defiance*, Belafonte describes the rain and the mud of that day and evening, and lists the names of celebrities present.

He failed to write that Gil Caldwell, a 31-year-old Methodist preacher from Boston with no musical, comedic or acting ability, but with a deep commitment to racial justice, was on the stage with the entertainers. I will never forget it.

Not a documentary

It is important to remember that the film is not a documentary. Thus, whatever squabbles there are about the portrayal of President Lyndon Baines Johnson should fade into insignificance when placed next to the portrayal of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement.

Every American ought see and then discuss this film!

It would be helpful if United Methodists and others view the film with open hearts and without anger, guilt, disbelief, denial, or a wish to revise our own history.

In 1963, just two years before the Selma to Montgomery march, two Methodist bishops were among white clergy who posted a newspaper statement in Birmingham that agreed that social injustices existed but argued that the battle against racial segregation should be fought solely in the courts, not in the streets. In a veiled reference to King, they criticized "outsiders" who were causing trouble in the streets of Birmingham.

King responded with his famed "Letter from a Birmingham Jail."

A discussion of the movie by United Methodists would be enriched by remembering, not denying or revising, the debates in Methodism over slavery and the owning of slaves that resulted in the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church South in 1844.

Relevant to current events

The movie speaks to current events, too.

The police violence in the film reminds us that many blacks view police violence against blacks through experience or awareness of history. Some do not understand why many of us respond to the killings of Michael Brown and Eric Garner as reminders a history of lynchings and violence instead of as isolated events.

Those of us who are black should allow the film to help us imagine what it is to be a white ally or advocate of blacks and the black justice journey—allies such as Reeb and Viola Liuzzo, a white mother who was killed as she drove people home from the march.

We have not spent enough time in prayer, reflection, study and introspection to understand why we do and do not do in response to race. The Apostle Paul's "good, that I do, and do not" might be a helpful text as we discuss "Selma."

Finally, viewing and discussing the movie is about more than race. It is the "much more" that people of faith bring to the table on any issue that makes us unique. Why and how have people of faith allowed race, which is a social construct, to demean, diminish and divide us in the United States?

What does this say about our biblical interpretation, theology and Christology?

The film could enable United Methodists as well as others to have an authentic moment of recognizing how our anti-black history and present have contributed to our current frustrations in all of our educational and economic life.

Using the language of the black preacher: "I have come by to tell you today, that 'Selma' is about more than race and Selma. It is about how faith-based and justice-focused human beings can turn the nation upside down so that it will be right side up, not just for some of us, but for all of us!"

Is that not what Luke 4 means when Jesus says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me"?

—Rev. Gilbert H. Caldwell, UMNS

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"And are you, Katherine, and you, George,
sure you want to open this can of worms?"



National Council of Churches: We Stand with Muslims in Condemning French Attack

The National Council of Churches joins the world in expressing outrage upon the news of the killings of the 12 employees of the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*. We condemn the killings, along with any ideology that seeks to silence voices of comment and criticism, especially with the use of extremist violence fueled by political ideology or misguided religious zeal. We also defend the rights of those who critique even that which is deemed sacred and untouchable to others, even as we ask that this critique always take place in a spirit of charity because of the inherent sensitivities.

At the same time, we fear that this defense of free expression may feed anti-Muslim sentiment and bring further division between Christians and Muslims. We are also aware that this same defense of free expression may be further misinterpreted by extremists as being against Islam itself. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, as we speak out against this act of senseless violence and its perpetrators, we join with Muslims across the globe who are also horrified by this evil.

"Around the world, millions of Muslims have struggled against oppression in their own societies in order to obtain the very rights that the Paris attackers have attempted to silence," said NCC President and General Secretary James Winkler. "These freedoms are treasured by people of faith everywhere, except by those who follow politically motivated ideologies that seek to violently stifle them and sow seeds of fear."

NCC Associate General Secretary

for interfaith relations Tony Kireopoulos said, "Freedom of expression is one of the cornerstones of a democratic society, and we condemn, not only the attack on the victims of the violence, but the attack on this fundamental right." He added: "Likewise, freedom of religion is another cornerstone of a democratic society. Therefore we also stand against those who would use this occasion to avenge this attack by perpetrating violence against Muslims in our own communities. We've seen it before, we do not want to see it again."

The National Council of Churches is a partner with the Shoulder-to-Shoulder campaign, an effort to resist Islamophobia. We also co-sponsor the National Muslim-Christian Initiative, an ongoing dialogue between Muslim and Christians.

"Tragedies like these, and the unfortunate aftermath that usually follows, underscores the importance of efforts like the ongoing Muslim-Christian Dialogue," said NCC Chair Roy Medley. "We are always pleased to work with our dialogue partners, people who show forth the true nature of faith."

One of our dialogue partners and a co-convenor of the dialogue, Naeem Baig of the Islamic Circle of North America and the Moderator of Religions for Peace USA, said in response to the killings: "All of the world's religions are founded on messages of peace and condemn violence. What makes this attack particularly egregious is its attempt to threaten the fundamental human right of freedom of speech."

The National Council of Churches is proud to join with a multitude of voices calling people worldwide to stand together and use this attack as an opportunity to engage in dialogue and peacemaking.

God Doesn't Need Defense

The recent horrific events in Paris brought to mind, in a round about way, something that the wonderful Henri Nouwen once said.

That is, "God doesn't need us to defend Him; He needs us to love Him and one another." Yet, the men who murdered the people at *Charlie Hebdo* loudly proclaimed that not only was God (Allah) great but that they were avenging insults in the form of cartoons to the Prophet Mohammed.

Who asked them to do that? What made them think that the Divine, by whatever name we humans call Him (Her) requires or condones violence, savagery, murder or mayhem in the name of the Creator of all?

Why would God of all the universes and galaxies need our small, mean spirited acts of violence against each other?

Yet, over and over and over again, human beings use that old tired justification for bad acts—"God is on our side."

Seriously, is God on every side in a conflict? Or possibly, just possibly, is God not on anyone's side, but instead yearns for us to reconcile our differences, celebrate our commonalities, find ways to exist in harmony with one another and with God.

What is the real basis for intolerance and violence against those who think or believe differently, who have different cultural practices, who look different or speak differently.

I believe it is a direct result of a destructive and intoxicating lust for power and control over others; for the need to feel that only your belief system, form of government, economic system, or cultural values are the right ones, the only right ones. Because that makes you superior to all the others and justifies your worst behavior.

Continued on Page 8

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Defense of God (from Page 5)

We see this over and over again in large and small ways.

I remember, some years ago attending a performance of Christian music. It was enjoyable and inspiring until one of the performers chose to denigrate other religions. I'm sure he thought he was praising God by putting down another form of believing. But, that way of thinking is anti-theological to the overflowing generosity of God's spirit, to the core of our own Christian teachings.

God doesn't need our defense; He needs our faith, trust and love.

—Barbara Becker

The deadline for the March issue of **The Link** is **Feb. 20**. Please email your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

The Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln

1. You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. 2. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. 3. You cannot help small men up by tearing big men down. 4. You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich. 5. You cannot lift the wage-earner up by pulling the wage-payer down. 6. You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than your income. 7. You cannot further the brotherhood of man by inciting class hatred. 8. You cannot establish sound social security on borrowed money. 9. You cannot build character and courage by taking away a man's initiative and independence. 10. You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves.

—freebase.com

A Valentine Prayer

I said a Valentine prayer for you and asked the Lord above to fill your heart and bless your soul With the precious gift of love.

I asked Him for sincere love The kind that's meant to stay Just like the generous love You give to those you touch each day.

I prayed for love from family And from every cherished friend Then I asked the Lord to give you His love that knows no end.

