

The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

January 2021

All Things New In The New Year

There is something unique about the word “new” when it is placed before the word, “year.” When these two words are joined together spelling “New Year”—it somehow invokes new possibilities, a new start, closing the chapter on the previous year and looking forward to the days and months ahead with enthusiasm.

And, friends, if we ever needed such an outlook, I think all would agree it is now. I don’t have to regurgitate all that we have been through in 2020 to drive home that point. I think all of us, including the global community, can agree that 2020 was one of the most challenging years in all of history—or, at least our history.

Some folks are considering starting off the new year by going on a diet and losing some extra pounds. I can tell you that for myself during those quarantine months I had put on the COVID-20 plus pounds.

However, I didn’t wait until the new year to do something about it. Once we started in-person worship again, I went on a diet—and, praise God, thus far I have lost twenty-four pounds. It has really made a difference in my stamina, alertness and just plain feeling good.

Perhaps you may want to join me in getting rid of some COVID-20. It has not been easy—but it is well worth it.

Maybe you can commit during this new year to reading more books and watching less TV. I have started that as well.

Presently, I am reading *Caravaggio: A Life Sacred*

and *Profane* by Andrew Graham Dixon. It is a biographical view of one of the most influential artists of the 16th century. I even discovered that his real name is Michelangelo Marisi who came from Caravaggio.

You see, reading will enlarge your knowledge—not that anyone will ever ask me a question about Caravaggio. But just in case, I’m prepared.

Whether it is losing weight or reading more books, these are goals that we set for ourselves in the hopes that we will be a better person.

Continued on Page 2

WORSHIP IN JANUARY

Jan. 3—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, John 1:(1-9), 10-18

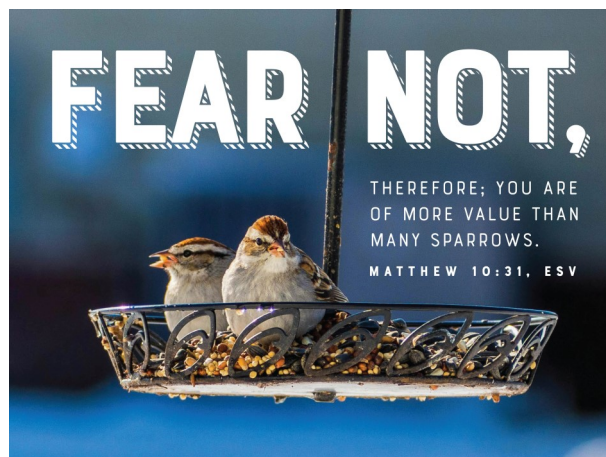
Jan. 10—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 1:4-11

Jan. 17—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, John 1:43-51

Jan. 24—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 1:14-20

Jan. 31—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 1:21-28

Because of COVID-19 restrictions there are, until further notice, no congregated services or other meetings in our building with the exception of Food Pantry. A live service is live streamed each Sunday 10:00 AM at PatchogueUMC.org.



Circle of Concern

Healing

Brenda Klingel continues to fight infection from the site of her surgery. (Ed Klingel)

Nicholas Grazopolous (7 year old fighting brain cancer) has an upcoming scan to determine if Christmas Eve was his last chemotherapy. Prayers that he wins this fight! (Kathy Halliwell)

Pastor Ricardo, Pam Queen's brother, was recently sent to a skilled nursing facility for rehab from his stroke. Prayers for a full and complete recovery. (Pam Queen)

Mary Lichtenhagen struggling with several health issues. (Pam Queen)

Dawn Monsell is waiting to have a breast biopsy to determine if she has active cancer (Barbara Lyons)

Covid Healing

Maritza Cruz (Martha Campanile)

Anthony Negron

Bundra Family (Pam Queen)

Joshua (Pam Queen)

Helen and Sal Bruno (Pam Queen)

Geoffrey Hoag, Erik & Jack (Geoffrey Hoag's stepsons). Prayers that Janice, Josie & David remain safe. (Gail Hoag)

Debbie McClure, sister of Jennifer Higbie. (Jennifer Higbie)

Harry Higbie, showing symptoms of Covid. (Jennifer Higbie)

Tony LaPinta has Covid and prayers that his elderly mother stays healthy. (Kathy Halliwell)

Evette & Charlie Everest (Evette is in hospital)

Heather DesRoches diagnosed with Covid. (Church office)

Ryan and Heather Kelly and their five children have Covid.

The family of **Steve & Joanne Shadbolt** who all are recovering from Covid 19. (Peter Halliwell)

Georgiana Leal, an ESL student, tested positive for Covid. (Barbara Becker)

Bernice Campbell who has 3 family members sick with Covid. (Bernice Campbell)

Concerns

Peter Brenner, Lorraine's son, has joined the Armed Forces. Hoping to have him home soon. Prayers for Peter and the troops. (Lorraine Brenner)

Conrad Queen's father and brother who are isolated this holiday season due to the pandemic. (Conrad Queen)

For all the **small business and restaurant owners** that are suffering financially during this pandemic. (Pastor Chuck)

Continued Prayers

Anita Helfst, Kimberly Helfst, Helen Joyce, Mary Joyce, Nancy Schaff, William Schaff, Suzanne Tierney, Richard Rubino, Felicia Fuentes, Liz Smith, Bruce Kirschner, Gary E. James Kelly, Diane Dain, Jim Graham. Fred & Mary Arita, Grace Bohler, Joyce Gabrinowitz, Pastor Dwight Wolther, Lee Hollowell, Linda Coleman, Monico Doctor, Kenneth Krygier, Travis Gentile, Tom King, Kevin Kearns

—Compiled by Kathy Halliwell

*Please email Kathy—
keats1002@gmail.com with any
additions or deletions.*

These in Rehab or Nursing Care

Geri Sheridan, Robert Krawzak in Brookhaven Health Care Facility, 801 Gazzola Dr., East Patchogue, NY

New Year (From Page 1)

Therefore, I am not suggesting that you diet while reading—but do set some goals for yourself that are reasonable and attainable. What is most important is consistency in whatever we attempt to achieve.

Our goals need to be a habit. So, you can't watch your carbs and calories all day and then end the night with a huge slice of chocolate cake topped with two scoops of vanilla ice cream. I think you get the picture.

Starting off a new year also reminds me that it is a great time to increase and improve on my spiritual disciplines. Yes, the Bible calls our bodies the temple of the Holy Spirit—so losing weight is a good way to take care of our temple. Paul tells us in Romans that we need to renew our minds, so reading more books, even books about Caravaggio, helps to keep our minds sharp.

Thus, what is left is to now sharpen our spiritual lives, thus making the complete circle of body, mind and spirit. So, consider reading a passage or chapter of scripture each day. Then, pause for a moment to pray. Consider making a prayer journal where you list all your prayers. What I find most beneficial in doing that is that when you look back you will be amazed at how many of your prayers were answered.

Dear friends, let us put our hands to the plow and move forward into this brand-new year filled with enthusiasm, hope, goals and good habits. Over time, 2020 will begin to look smaller and smaller in our rearview mirror. In His Grip,

—Pastor Chuck

United Methodist Church of Patchogue January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 10:00 a.m.— Live Stream, YouTube Worship	4 Office Closed	5 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry	6	7	8	9
10 10:00 a.m.— Live Stream, YouTube Worship	11 Office Closed	12 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry	13	14	15	16
17 10:00 a.m.— Live Stream, YouTube Worship	18 Office Closed	19 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry	20	21	22	23
24 10:00 a.m.— Live Stream, YouTube Worship	25 Office Closed	26 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry	27	28	29	30
31 10:00 a.m.— Live Stream, YouTube Worship						

Understanding Epiphany

Epiphany is the day Christians remember the coming of the Magi to visit Jesus, bringing their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.



It occurs on Jan. 6 every year, the 13th day of the Christmas season. The word "epiphany," from the Greek word *epiphania*, means appearance or manifestation.

The arrival of these visitors was a sign that the incarnation of God in Christ had been made known and was recognized by the heavens to the whole world, so that even Gentile wise men from the East came to pay him homage. This is an observance of great majesty, solemnity and awe. An even more ancient Christian celebration than Christmas, Epiphany originally focused on the nativity, God's incarnation (God made flesh) in the birth of Jesus Christ, and Christ's baptism. After the late fourth century, as Advent developed as a season of baptismal preparation in addition to Lent, Epiphany became associated with baptism. This is why we see images of the three Magi on many older baptismal fonts.

In many Hispanic cultures, Epiphany is a day of great rejoicing and celebration, often kicked off by a parade the night before in which people dressed as the three kings or carrying statues of the three kings pass through the towns and villages throwing out candy and small gifts to all around. Families and children alike look forward to *Día de Los Tres Reyes*

(Three Kings Day) as a time for presents, feasting and celebration. Attending church services that include the celebration of communion is also common in many of these cultures, even for those who may not attend worship regularly.

In England and some other European cultures, Jan. 5 is known as Twelfth Night, the culmination of the 12 days of Christmas feasting and partying. On Twelfth Night, many families gather in homes to celebrate with friends, food, singing and gifts. It is at these Twelfth Night celebrations that "Chalking the Door," asking God's blessing on those dwellings and upon all who live there, is most often observed.

In New Orleans, Twelfth Night begins another season of celebrations that comes to fulfillment at Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday). Epiphany itself, Jan. 6, becomes the kickoff day for that season, but is also often observed with a full celebration in church, complete with incense, elaborate processions, choral celebrations, and Eucharist. Some United Methodists in the United States, who are not part of these rich traditions, tend to recognize Epiphany on the Sunday nearest Jan. 6. There may be a pageant of the three kings as part of worship that day and a small party afterward.

In whatever ways you decide to celebrate Epiphany, remember at the heart of your celebration are the Magi kneeling, worshipping and offering gifts to Jesus, Messiah for all people.

—UMNS

Our Public Discourse Should Model The Life of Jesus

Recently I have been in communication with two friends who have different responsibilities for processing and governing the recent presidential election. Due to the work and decisions they made, which were guided by the law, they now require personal security because of threats against them.

The 2020 election was one of the most divisive campaigns I have experienced. As someone who grew up in Philadelphia, I have experienced some pretty divisive elections, but they pale in comparison to this one.

Over the last several years we have experienced divisive rhetoric and even bullying during political campaigns. When leaders act this way, it gives approval for people taking it upon themselves to change things they do not like through fear tactics, harassment, threats and physical harm.

I take these things very seriously. I serve in New Jersey, and in the last year an individual came to a federal judge's home seeking to kill her because of a ruling she made. When the killer did not find the judge, he killed the judge's son and shot and wounded her husband.

I recently heard a United Methodist share that they voted for a candidate not because they agreed with the candidate's character, but because the candidate shared their values on particular issues. I have always found that values inform and shape our character — not the other way around. I have experienced that when we choose

leaders with serious character issues, it not only affects their leadership, but it affects the organization or nation they lead.

The election became as divisive as it did not because of differences in values but the character of some of those campaigning, as well as the willingness of supporters to set their own character aside in how they treated people with opposite views. I am calling all United Methodists to engage in public discourse that models the life of Jesus and to intervene when you hear or witness hate speech, bullying and people inciting others because of different political beliefs, faith understandings, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender. I am calling on United Methodists not to support but to hold accountable leaders whose character seeks to divide rather than honoring and respecting people with different values.

I am fortunate to serve the United Methodists of Greater New Jersey who, while not always agreeing, have come to respect and genuinely love one another in the midst of their political, theological, ethnic and racial diversity. This is the witness the world needs to see and experience.

—Bishop John Schol, UMNS

The Church Is Not Yet A 'Great Multitude'

My maternal grandfather, Juan, died in 1947. My father, as was customary, joined other men of the family in digging the grave.

I tagged along and noticed there was a fence next to the gravesite. I

saw that there were gravestone markers on the other side in a weed-choked field. I asked my dad, "What is over there across the fence?" He replied that it was the "Mexican" cemetery. I then asked, "Why are we over here on this side where it is so nice with no weeds?" He replied that it was because Uncle Juan, Grandfather's oldest child, had bought the lots on this side of the fence.

Many years later, as a young adult, I would pursue the question with my dad about the fence. He explained that an Anglo friend of Uncle Juan's had bought the gravesites from the church cemetery association and then sold them to my uncle at his request. "Mexicans were not allowed to purchase gravesites on the side where white people were buried," my dad said.

In the early 1990s, I visited another church cemetery in Texas, part of a historic site for Hispanics. It was at this church that the first person of Mexican descent was ordained into the Methodist ministry in 1871.

On my visit, my father accompanied me and we walked into the cemetery behind the church building. I noticed that there was one section of the cemetery that was separate from the rest. The names on the markers were Hispanic. I then asked the pastor about whether African Americans were buried there as well. He pointed to a site beyond a dried creek bed — that was the African American section of the cemetery. A flood many years before had destroyed that section.

I commented to my father, "Same as back home in Grandfather's cemetery, the Mexicans and the Blacks are

not good enough to live near our white brothers and sisters in life or in death!"

In 1955, a new Spanish language hymnal, *Himnario Metodista*, was published. It was in response to the calls for a hymnal by congregations of the Rio Grande Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in the states of Texas and New Mexico. The conference committee that developed the hymnal had approached the Methodist Publishing House about preparing such a hymnal but there was no response.

After more than a century of Methodist mission engagement with the Hispanic peoples of the southwestern United States, the agency of the church established to meet the publishing needs related to the church's mission turned a blind eye and a deaf ear to the Hispanic leaders. The essential message of the Methodist Publishing house was: "We serve most Methodists, but not your kind of Methodists!"

The committee of Rio Grande Conference Clergy and Laity had to approach the Spanish Baptist Publishing House based in El Paso, Texas, for help in publishing the 1955 hymnal. The needed funds were raised by the conference and the hymnal, with the Methodist orders of service, was soon circulating in local churches as well as other parts of the U.S. and Latin America.

In 1966, a group of Mexican-American farmworkers from the Rio Grande Valley in Texas decided to march to the state capitol of Texas to

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The deadline for the February issue of **The Link** is January 22.
 Please email your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

The Church (From Page 5)

bring attention to the unjust working conditions, wages and extreme poverty of hundreds of thousands of workers in the Texan fields. Their 400-mile march started on July 4 and ended at the state capitol in Austin on Labor Day. I marched with and supported those workers.

During that scorching summer, not a single predominantly white Protestant congregation welcomed or offered hospitality to the workers and their supporters. The only local churches that did so were two Methodist Hispanic churches and dozens of Roman Catholic parishes.

The Social Creeds and Social Principles of the Methodists and other denominations affirmed the rights of workers to organize for collective bargaining. Yet, very few laity and clergy from the Protestant churches raised their voices or made public their support of the right of the working poor to organize and seek justice. It made many in my generation ask, "Are poor Mexican-Americans not worthy of our church's care and support?"

I have chosen to share three examples of the institutionalized racism and discrimination that was evident in the practices of the church during my childhood, my youth and during my ministry as a pastor. There were occasions when I was subjected to personal comments and actions that reflected discriminatory, demeaning and racist attitudes toward me as a Mexican American.

However, it is more important to share about the continuing and entrenched racism that pervades the

organizations and institutions of the church when it comes to including, welcoming and serving persons without regard to color, language and heritage.

The choir in Revelation 7:9 calls us to practice on Earth as it will be in heaven: "After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes, and peoples and languages standing before the throne and before the lamb with palm branches in their hands."

May we all get ready for that choir.

—Bishop Joel Martinez , UMNS

A Prayer to Keep God First This New Year

Dear God, Thank you that you make all things new. Thank you for all that you've allowed into our lives this past year, the good along with the hard things, which have reminded us how much we need you and rely on your presence filling us every single day.

We pray for your Spirit to lead us each step of this New Year. We ask that you will guide our decisions and turn our hearts to deeply desire you above all else. We ask that you will open doors needing to be opened and close the ones needing to be shut tight. We ask that you would help us release our grip on the things to which you've said "no," "not yet," or "wait." We ask for help to pursue you first, above every dream and desire you've put within our hearts.

We ask for your wisdom, for your strength and power to be constantly present within us. We pray you would make us strong and courageous for the road ahead. Give us ability beyond what we feel able, let your gifts flow freely through us, so that you would be honored by our lives, and others would be drawn to you. We pray that you'd keep us far from the snares and traps of temptations. That you would whisper in our ear when we need to run, and whisper in our heart when we need to stand our ground.

We pray for your protection over our families and friends. We ask for your hand to cover us and keep us distanced from the evil intent of the enemy; that you would be a barrier to surround us, that we'd be safe in your hands. We pray that you would give us discernment and insight beyond our years, to understand your will, hear your voice, and know your ways. We ask that you would keep our footsteps firm, on solid ground, helping us to be consistent and faithful. Give us supernatural endurance to stay the course, not swerving to the right or to the left, or being too easily distracted by other things that would seek to call us away from a close walk with you.

Forgive us for the times we have worked so hard to be self-sufficient, forgetting our need for you, living independent of your spirit. Forgive us for letting fear and worry control our minds, and for allowing pride and selfishness wreak havoc over our lives.

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10 Church St., Patchogue, NY 11772

The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Pastoral Minister
 Camille Flynn, Administrative Assistant
 Office Phone: 631-475-0381 | Fax: 631-475-3132
 Email: PatchogueUMC@Yahoo.com
 Office Hours: Tues-Friday, 9 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
 Worship Video Live Streaming at PatchogueUMC.Org
 Previous services available.



New Year Prayer (From Page 7)

Forgive us for not following your ways and for living distant from your presence. We confess our need for you...fresh...new...again. We ask that you make all things new, in our hearts, in our minds, in our lives, for this coming year. We pray for your refreshing over us.

Keep your words of truth planted firm within us, help us to keep focused on what is pure and right, give us the power to be obedient to your word. And when the enemy reminds us where we have been, hissing his lies and attacks our way, we trust that your voice speaks louder and stronger, as you remind us we are safe with you and your purposes and plans will not fail. We ask that you will be our

defense and rear guard, keeping our way clear, removing the obstacles, and covering the pitfalls. Lord, lead us on your level ground.

We ask that you would provide for our needs, we ask for your grace and favor. We pray for your blessings to cover us, we pray that you would help us to prosper and make every plan that you have birthed in our heart to succeed. We pray that others would take notice of your goodness and could not help but to say, "These are the ones that the Lord has blessed."

Help us to be known as great givers, help us to be generous and kind, help us to look to the needs of others and not be consumed by only our own. May we be lovers of truth, may the fruits of your spirit be evident in our lives - your love, joy, peace, pa-

tience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Shine your light in us, through us, over us. May we make a difference in this world, for your glory and purposes. Set your way before us. May all your plans succeed. We may reflect your peace and hope to a world that so desperately needs your presence and healing. To you be glory and honor, in this New Year, and forever.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

—crosswalk.com

January Birthdays

- Jan. 3** Florence Carde
Jan. 9 Joshua Capobianco
Jan. 19 Abagael Weber
 Thomas James Farrell
Jan. 27 Michael Jansson