

# The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

July-August 2023

## Live With Prayer

July marks my one-year anniversary as the Pastor of the United Methodist Church of Patchogue. I am so grateful that I was chosen to be the servant leader to this wonderful church.

Thank you all for embracing me and my family. As you know, a cross-cultural/cross-racial appointment has its challenges. We each have a different perspective of what worship looks like.

Despite our differences, we made it work. I truly hope that you have grown personally and spiritually through my leadership thus far. I look forward in continuing our journey together as God leads us to what is in store for us as a community of faith.

A critical component to our success as a church is prayer. Prayer is the communication link between you and God.

John Wesley informs us in *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* that God's command to "pray without ceasing" is founded on the necessity we have of his grace to preserve the life of God in the soul, which can no more subsist one moment without it, than the body can without air.

Whether we think of or speak to, God, whether we act or suffer for him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than his love, and the desire of pleasing him. All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God, without either adding to or diminishing from it by his own choice.

Prayer continues in the desire of the heart, though the understanding be employed on outward things. In souls filled with

love, the desire to please God is a continual prayer.

As the furious hate which the devil bears us is termed the roaring of a lion, so our vehement love may be termed crying after God. God only requires of his adult children, that their hearts be truly purified, and that they offer him continually the wishes and vows that naturally spring from perfect love.

**Continued on Page 2**

## WORSHIP IN JULY, AUGUST

**July 2**— Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 13

**July 9**—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 45:10-17

**July 16**—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 119:105-112

**July 23**—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 139:1-12,23-24

**July 30**—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 105:1-11,45b

**Aug. 6**—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 17:1-15

**Aug. 13**—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Matthew 14:22-33

**Aug. 20**—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 133

**Aug. 27**—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 124



## Circle of Concern

### Bereavement

Comfort for the family of **Manny Termini** (Helen Smith)

### Healing

**Richard Rubino** who is fighting throat cancer and was recently hospitalized to have a tracheostomy inserted. Prayers for his mother **Brenda Klingel** who is his primary caretaker. (Ed Klingel)

Healing prayers for **Brenda Miller**, her mother **Dolores** and also her sister **Cynthia**. (Pastor Debbie)

### Continued Prayers

Pastor Chuck Ferrara, Jessy, Daisy Hill, Michelle Parker, Fred Karr, Aiden Russell (coronary issues), Shikhan's Sister (hospital), Rob Lyons (Healing from Coronary surgery), Andrew Flynn (Family Prayers), Lorraine Cleary, Lynda Juergensen, Roy Spellin, Dexter Jackson, Baby Grace, DeAnna D'Amelio, Barbara Becker, Richard Rubino (Cancer), Claudia Mirzalli (Injured), Yvette (ALS), John (Lung Cancer), Ray Somerlad (Cancer), Baby Jude Cosimo (Retina Cancer), Louise Russo (Healing) Kimberly Helfst (RSD), Eddie Weiss (severe leg injury), Brian McMurray (pancreatic cancer) Jill Kiefer Chaskin (Cancer), Suzanne Tierney

—Kathy Keating

Keats1002@gmail.com

For these desires, being the genuine fruits of love, are the most perfect prayers that can spring from it.

Summer is upon us and many of you will be going on vacation. I will miss each one of you in your absence. The Lord has pressed upon me to get our members to focus more on prayer this summer. To build up our stamina as it relates to our prayer life and communication with God, I've asked the church to take out a minimum of 2 minutes to pray every day for the month of June. Our start date was June 11, 2023. Now that we are officially in July, we will take out a minimum of 4 minutes every day to pray and we will gradually increase as God leads us. So, in your travels or staycation this summer, make sure to carve out time to spend with God. Our prayer schedule is as follows:

Daily Prayer Schedule		
Month	Frequency	Minimum Minutes
July	Every day	4 minutes
August	Every day	6 minutes
Sept	Every day	6 minutes

Have a wonderful summer. Blessings to you all.

—Pastor Debbie



We make a monthly collection for this project. For July, it's crayons, markers and pencils. For August it's glue sticks, and spiral notebooks. All items should be new.

## July, August Birthdays

**July 8** Andrew Jacobs  
**July 16** Isabelle Christine Wenke  
**July 22** Charlie Magill  
**August 3** Penelope Weber  
**August 8** Kevin Rice  
**August 17** Natalie Morgan Palm  
**August 22** Sasha Kratz  
**August 23** Bob Prince  
**August 24** Lynn Russo  
**August 26** Lenny Pearson  
**August 31** Eleanor Prince

## July, August Anniversaries

**July 5** Pamela & Conrad Queen  
**July 11** Gail & George Hoag  
**July 12** Carol & Bruce Kirschner  
**August 24** Eleanor & Bob Prince

May you walk with God  
This summer  
In whatever you do  
Wherever you go

Walking with God means...  
Walking with honesty  
And with courage,  
Walking with love  
And respect  
And concern for the feelings of others

May you talk to God  
This summer  
And every day and  
In every situation

Talking with God means...  
Praying words of praise  
For the beauty of creation  
Saying prayers of thanks  
For friends and good times,  
Asking God's help  
In all your decisions  
Expressing sorrow  
When you have failed

May you talk with God  
Every day. Amen.

—Prayerist.com

# United Methodist Church of Patchogue July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> - Worship <b>6:00 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	3 Office Closed <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	4 Office Closed <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	5 <b>7:30 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	6 <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	7 <b>7:30 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	8
9 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> - Worship <b>6:00 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	10 Office Closed <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	11 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> - Noon-Food Pantry <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	12 <b>7:30 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	13 <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	14 <b>7:30 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	15
16 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> - Worship <b>6:00 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	17 Office Closed <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	18 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> - Noon-Food Pantry <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	19 <b>7:30 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	20 <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	21 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> - ESL <b>7:30 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	22
23 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> - Worship <b>6:00 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	24 Office Closed <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	25 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> - Noon-Food Pantry <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	26 <b>7:30 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	27 <b>4:30-6:30</b> <b>p.m.</b> -Wesley Dinner <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA	28 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> - ESL <b>7:30 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	29
30 <b>10:00 a.m.</b> - Worship <b>6:00 p.m.</b> - Pentecostal	31 Office Closed <b>7:00 p.m.</b> -AA			August 24 <b>4:30-6:30</b> <b>p.m.</b> -Wesley Dinner		

## Methodist Women Yesterday and Today

In 1869, a group of eight Methodist Episcopal women gathered in Boston for the purpose of sponsoring a woman doctor and woman missionary to travel to India and care for women there. Indian culture forbade women from being treated or ministered to by men, so it was imperative they receive female care.

Out of that meeting developed the Women's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS), which eventually became the Women's Society of Christian Service, (WSCS), then United Methodist Women (UMW), and finally the current United Women in Faith (UWF). Whatever the title, the organization of Methodist women has grown from eight to over 500,000 women in mission to women, children, youth throughout the world.

The women of our Patchogue church started our own unit as early as 1872. We have remained active, enthusiastic, committed to the goal of being in mission around the world and around the corner.

While the pandemic caused a temporary halt to many of our programs, in 2023, we are back and ready to proceed full speed ahead. Thus far, we have made a financial contribution to Brighter Tomorrows, a shelter for abused women and their children; have presented a scholarship to Robert Queen, in honor of his high school graduation; benefited from an excellent workshop, entitled 'Good to Go', presented by one of our members, Dr. Joan Curtis, and have started plan-

ning for a number of events. Here is a summary:

We will be assembling health kits to be distributed through the food pantry. These will consist of personal hygiene items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, wash cloth, bar soap, socks, band aids, antiseptic cream, etc. We will purchase the items and then assemble the kits at our August 26 meeting.

The weekend of September 22-23 will be our annual women's retreat at Camp Quinipet on Shelter Island. This is always a wonderful opportunity to learn, share ideas and concerns, enjoy the company of caring women, all in a lovely peaceful setting.

October 15 is the tentative date for a Wine and Cheese fundraiser. October 28 and November 4, we will host a two part workshop, presented by Montana Queen, on how to avoid being scammed, whether on the internet, via telephone, etc. These workshops are open to anyone, men or women.

November 18 will be our first in person Holiday Tea since the pandemic. In addition to enjoying a variety of teas and yummy baked goods, gift baskets, Christmas ornaments, a baked goods table and other items will be available. And of course, we will sing Christmas Carols and put ourselves in a joyful frame of mind for the Christmas season.

More specific information on all these events will be forthcoming. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me, Lorraine Brenner or Joan Curtis.

—Barbara Becker

## Trying To Heal After Church Disaffiliation Votes

After their church voted to disaffiliate last fall, Ed Cunningham and his wife, Jackie, tried visiting other United Methodist churches near their East Texas community.

However, he said none of those other congregations really comprehended their sense of loss.

"Unless it happens to you, you don't understand," he said. "You don't have the same feeling."

When a congregation votes to break up with The United Methodist Church, often left behind are people with broken hearts.

Across the U.S. are United Methodists who, like Cunningham, need healing after bruising battles over whether their churches should leave the denomination. The resulting polarization in the pews has strained family ties, fractured friendships and left many people feeling their faith impugned. Cunningham and his wife had almost given up on church altogether. But then they learned of a new faith community being started by people like them — United Methodists who felt evicted from their longtime church homes.

"This just felt like a natural fit," he said. "I mean, a lot of people in pain coming together."

The roughly 30 people who came together on that chilly December night included grieving members of First United Methodist churches in the East Texas towns of Mabank and Athens, both then in the process of disaffiliating. But in recounting their experiences, the churchgoers' hurt soon gave



way to hope for a new faith community.

The group has now formed Market Street United Methodist Church, which is currently meeting in Eustace, Texas. The North Texas Conference chartered the congregation on March 26.

The church is named for Market Street in Mabank, where the fellowship held that first December meeting in a music studio. Even then, it was clear the burgeoning faith community would need more space.

Market Street is already outgrowing its current space — a formerly vacant church building in Eustace. The new church is now averaging well over 80 in attendance each week and is still adding newcomers. More than 100 attended on Easter Sunday.

The congregation has plans to move back to Mabank, a growing community on scenic Cedar Creek Lake that draws some Dallas commuters. But the Eustace location has already proven crucial to the new church's development.

The Eustace building had been vacant since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and required multiple repairs, including new flooring and plumbing. For the Cunninghams and the dozens of Market Street charter members, getting the building in shape for a new congregation proved a good start to the healing process. "We did a lot of work on it," Cunningham said. "I think that's one way we got away from the experience of hate, anger and pain. We took positive actions."

But many hearts are still in need of mending and faith communities in need of restoration.

After decades of increasingly rancorous debate about LGBTQ inclusion at the denominational level, the 2019 special General Conference added a church law that allows U.S. congregations to leave the denomination with property if they meet certain financial and procedural conditions.

As a result, what largely had been a debate among denominational leaders has seeped into local congregations as well as false accusations that The United Methodist Church is abandoning core Christian doctrines.

Church exits have accelerated since last year's launch of the Global Methodist Church, a conservative, breakaway denomination that aims to maintain bans on same-sex marriage and noncelibate gay clergy.

As of mid June, more than 5,800 congregations — or about 19% of U.S. churches — have cleared the necessary hurdles to withdraw from the denomination since the church law took effect. United Methodists **expect more departures** before the church law expires at the end of the year.

The church law requires that at least a two-thirds majority of the church's professing members present vote for disaffiliation. However, not every congregational vote on disaffiliation crosses that required two-thirds threshold. Even the votes that do can still leave a sizable number of congregants who want to remain United Methodist.

"No matter what, it splits the church," said Cheryl Nekuza, a former administrative board member at First Methodist in Mabank and one of the founders of Market Street United Methodist Church.

At the Mabank church, 58 people voted against disaffiliation, including Nekuza. After the vote, she shared her grief with her friend, the Rev. Eston Williams. The retired North Texas Conference pastor committed at that moment to help the continuing United Methodists get a new church off the ground.

"Many new churches have started with fewer than 58 members," he said.

United Methodist conferences, the denomination's regional bodies, are reaching out to people who want to stay United Methodist and helping them find a place to land and belong. Multiple conferences have designated "Lighthouse Congregations" — churches committed to remaining United Methodist and providing a beacon of hope for churchgoers whose previous congregations disaffiliated. Some United Methodist churches are already growing by welcoming people looking to stay part of the denomination.

In many ways, The United Methodist Church is seeing a realignment as committed church members find ways to renew existing ministries or start new ones like the Market Street congregation. Ultimately, church leaders expect to see a reinvigorated, inclusive and more mission-focused denomination moving forward.

**Continued on Page 7**

**Ruland**  
FUNERAL HOME, INC.

**bay harbour**  
**INSURANCE**  
AGENCY, INC.

88 Waverly Ave.  
Patchogue, NY 11772

(631) 758-1550  
(631) 289-2176 Fax

Rick Braile, CIC  
Rick@Bayharbourgroup.com

**HOT BAGEL PLUS DELI**  
*100% Boiled Bagel Store*

57 South Ocean Ave., Patchogue | 631-475-4751

**Free Estimates**      **Cell: 631-578-8322**  
**Tel: 631-475-0764**

**ABEL-F** Licensed & Insured # 44868-H  
**LANDSCAPING**

- Landscape Design
- Sod & Seed Lawns
- Planting & Pruning
- Seasonal Clean-Ups
- Top Soil & Grading
- Lawn Renovations
- Snow Blowing
- Weekly Lawn Maintenance

**T.J.'s HERO SHOP II**  
*508 East Main Street • Patchogue*

**289-5560**

**60 Washington Ave. Patchogue**

**Remember  
Your Pledge**

**"I realize we've run into the lunch hour, and I'm sorry. Now, who's the wise guy who ordered pizza?"**

**Save Your Old Magazines**

**D**ave Hollowell would very much appreciate your saving the magazines you have read and passing them on to him. He takes them for the enjoyment of adult and nursing home residents and shut ins. They can be dropped off in the church office.

The deadline for the September issue of **The Link** is August 25.  
Please email your copy to [gbhoag@optonline.net](mailto:gbhoag@optonline.net).

## Disaffiliations (From Page 5)

The North Texas Conference worked with the lay people of Market Street to ensure they had the pastoral care and resources to get started. The Rev. Vic Casad, a retired district superintendent, served as the church's interim pastor. The Rev. Wayne Walters, a father of four who aims to be a collaborative leader, will become the church's pastor on July 1.

The Rev. Owen Ross, the conference's director of church development, was at the faith community's launch in December. He asked those in the room how many had held a leadership role in their previous church, and almost everybody raised a hand.

"Methodism at its finest has always been a lay-empowered movement," Ross said. "What is making Market Street so strong is you have a congregation of leaders. ... If you were picking an all-star team of Methodists in this area of East Texas, this is the team you would have recruited."

Nevertheless, pastors also have a role to play in salving the wounds that linger after the acrimony of many church disaffiliation votes, say two professors of preaching at Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology in Dallas.

"The pain (as it is felt in your ministerial context and as you see it at the conference and denominational levels of the UMC) needs to be named explicitly and honestly," write the Revs. O. Wesley Allen Jr. and Alyce McKenzie in *Preaching to the Left Behind*, a pamphlet that offers advice for sermons that heal.

"A word of good news needs to be offered, but in ways that avoid denial of the significance of what is occur-

ring," the two write. "This would be a good time to read and preach from lament."

Allen is Lois Craddock Perkins Professor of Homiletics, and McKenzie is the Le Van Professor of Preaching and Worship as well as director of the Perkins Center for Preaching Excellence. Allen said the center is willing to host and facilitate conversations with clergy groups about preaching in this time.

In the meantime, the professors urge both pastors and churchgoers not to confuse the views espoused in such fictional works as the "Left Behind" series with the message of the Gospels. The Gospel of Matthew — the focal Gospel of this year's lectionary — makes a point of showing "that our being 'left behind' is not judgment or abandonment but being commissioned for new work and responsibility in a new day," the two write.

Allen told UM News that he has seminary students in a variety of situations. Some have joined the Global Methodist Church; some have left congregations so they can remain United Methodist; and still others are part of United Methodist congregations that are not only staying but also welcoming new members from disaffiliated congregations.

"It is an odd day, and they are struggling to know what to say and how to lead through what will likely be an extending, painful and confusing time," Allen said. "Their near-constant talk of these situations in class is part of why I wanted us to write this pamphlet."

Many conversations around church disaffiliations use the metaphor of

divorce. Allen and McKenzie say a better metaphor might be siblings growing up and going separate ways.

Shifting the metaphor, the two write, "allows us to continue to be in conversation around our common heritage and look for ways to share resources and join forces in certain kinds of ministry (e.g., disaster relief) without demonizing each other."

McKenzie noted that this is not Methodism's "first conflict rodeo." The people called Methodist have parted ways before and come back together again.

Both she and Allen hope for a return to Methodism founder John Wesley's emphasis on grace and graciousness. "But it is not helpful to gloss over differences," McKenzie said.

Both professors recognize that with emotions so raw, a Methodist family reunion may not happen anytime soon.

Mindy Sutton, a third-generation member of First Methodist in Mabank, had worked with young parents in the congregation to try to keep that church together in the United Methodist fold. But the effort proved to no avail.

The heartrending disaffiliation vote resulted in Sutton's whole family, including her organist mother, reluctantly leaving behind a church home illuminated by stained-glass windows dedicated to her grandparents.

**Continued on Page 8**



10 Church St., Patchogue, NY 11772

The Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Pastoral Minister  
 Camille Flynn, Administrative Assistant  
 Office Phone: 631-475-0381 | Fax: 631-475-3132  
 Email: PatchogueUMC@Yahoo.com  
 Summer Office Hours: Tues-Friday, 9 a.m.-Noon  
 Worship Video Livestreaming at PatchogueUMC.Org  
 Previous services available.



## Disaffiliations (From Page 7)

“My brother made the comment that, when we disaffiliated, it kind of felt like our grandparents were dying all over again,” she said.

Now, Sutton, who is associate vice president and dean of students at Southern Methodist University, has found peace in seeing how the Market Street congregation has developed.

“It’s hard not to see the hand of God in all of this, to be honest,” she said. “As painful and difficult as the disaffiliation process was, this has just been so joy-filled and promising and hopeful.”

Market Street is now full of children eager to get involved in church life. The church plans to hold a vacation Bible camp in July.

Among the kids involved in the new church is charter member Nekuza’s grandson.

“My 10-year-old grandson, who could not even catch his breath because he cried so hard after the disaffiliation, is now an usher,” the proud grandmother said. “That’s his dream job — to be an usher at church.”

—Heather Hahn, UMNS



## An Independence Day Prayer

Lord... remind us today that You have shown us what is good in what You require of us; to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God. We ask that as a people, we may humble ourselves before You and seek Your will for our lives and for this great nation. Help us in our nation to work as never before to strengthen our families and to give our children hope and a moral foundation for the future. So may our desire be to serve You, and in so doing, serve one another. This we pray in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

—Billy Graham, [Croswalk.com](http://Croswalk.com)