

The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

June 2023

Sacraments of the United Methodist Church

I am so excited that I completed my first confirmation class and service with the confirmands in our church.

It is so rewarding sharing knowledge with the youth of our church. Each of them were so receptive in learning about our great God and what it means to be a United Methodist. It is so important that we know the doctrine of our church to help us become better disciples of Jesus Christ and understand why we do what we do.

Let's talk about sacraments of the United Methodist Church.

Sacraments are regarded as an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual divine grace. There are two sacraments which we recognize:

Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These are sacraments that Christ himself participated in also.

Through baptism we are joined with the church and with all Christians. Baptism is a symbol of new life. It displays God's love and forgiveness of our sins.

Through Baptism, the church bears witness to God's unconditional love, blessing each life and claiming each new child or person for the eternal life of the reign of God.

Baptism is an outward, tangible sign of God's prevenient grace already at work in the one being baptized. It is a promise that God will always be at work, bringing loving and healing into the life of the baptized.

I have been blessed to baptize many infants. Our faith community vows to raise them with the

knowledge that they are loved and that they have a community to which they belong.

Although the baptized may forget that they are loved and wander away from a community that promised to nurture them, when they return, they will find the love of God never left. Therefore, the act of baptism is unrepeatable because of God's steadfast faithfulness.

Continued on Page 2

WORSHIP IN JUNE

June 4— Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 8

June 11—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 33:1-12

June 18—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

June 25—Rev. Dr. Debbie San Pablo, Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17



Circle of Concern

Healing

Robert Lyons, with complications from heart surgery.

Lorraine Cleary who is recovering from surgery and doing well so far. (Barbara Lyons)

Prayers for **Lynda Juergensen** who is suffering from the loss of two of her sons, Daniel 1/18/23 and Eddie 11/2/17, both from Fentanyl overdoses. (Lynda Juergensen)

Continued Prayers

Roy Spellin, Dexter Jackson, Baby Grace, DeAnna D'Amelio, Barbara Becker, Steve Stika, Kristina Komsic (back surgery), John Cornetto, Henry Prince, Jim McHugh, Jackie LaMar, Linda & Walter Stawecki, Donna Logurcio (Pancreatic Cancer), 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

Church Picnic

It's Sunday, June 11 at Carol Janson's house, 374 Oak St., Patchogue. East of 112. Bring salads and or desserts to share.

Sacraments (From Page 1)

We may stray by misusing our God-given freedom, but we cannot destroy God's love for us. When we return to God, we find that the covenant still remains.

The Lord's Supper is a holy meal that symbolizes the body and blood of Christ. The Lord's Supper recalls the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and celebrates the unity of all the members of God's family. By sharing this meal, we give thanks for Christ's sacrifice and are nourished and empowered to go into the world in mission and ministry.

Our church takes communion once a month which reminds us that we are loved, and as importantly, that all people that join us at the table are loved. We need this sustenance that will nurture us while we grow in holiness.

As individuals, we grow in faith and holiness when we take communion; we also grow as a community and experience God's grace: "prevenient grace (convincing grace), Justifying grace (converting grace) and sanctifying grace (sustaining grace)".

Like Baptism, we participate in Holy Communion within the community of faith because "the sharing and bonding experienced at the Table exemplify the nature of the church and model the world as God would have it be." "It confirms and seals God's offer of salvation in Christ."

I challenge each of you to learn more about what it really means to be a United Methodist and why we do what we do.

Blessings,

—**Pastor Debbie**



"Come Summer With Me"

Come summer with me, Lord;
summer deep down in my soul;
restore my faith in summer's time,
in rest, in joy, in play, in you...
Summer in my heart, Lord,
and dwell there
as if time would never end,
as if all time were children's time,
eternal time
when school is always out and joy is
ever in...
And let others summer in my shade,
Lord,
and share whatever summer's
peace is mine to give,
whatever summer's light is mine to
shed,
whatever summer's warmth is mine
to share...
Good God of every season and
every day this week,
come summer with me, Lord, and
let the child in my heart
spend this summer in your love...
Amen.

—**Fr. Austin Fleming,**
guideposts.org

June Birthdays

June 2 Mary Spriggs
(Pastor's mother)

June 3 Mickey Arena

June 9 Nicholas Lyons

June 13 Lynne Rice

June 25 Mia May Connors

United Methodist Church of Patchogue

June 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 10:00 a.m. - ESL 7:30 p.m. - Pentecostal	3 9-3- Church Yard Sale, Parsonage
4 10:00 a.m. - Worship/ Sunday School 6:00 p.m. - Pentecostal	5 Office Closed 7:00 p.m. -AA	6 10:00 a.m. - Noon-Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. -AA	7 7:30 p.m. - Pentecostal	8 7:00 p.m. -AA	9 10:00 a.m. - ESL 7:30 p.m. - Pentecostal	10
11 10:00 a.m. - Worship/Sunday School 11:30 a.m. - Church Picnic 6:00 p.m. - Pentecostal	12 Office Closed 7:00 p.m. -AA	13 10:00 a.m. - Noon-Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. -AA	14 7:30 p.m. - Pentecostal	15 7:00 p.m. -AA	16 10:00 a.m. - ESL 7:30 p.m. - Pentecostal	17
18 10:00 a.m. - Worship/ Sunday School 6:00 p.m. - Pentecostal	19 Office Closed 7:00 p.m. -AA	20 10:00 a.m. - Noon-Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. -AA	21 7:30 p.m. - Pentecostal	22 7:00 p.m. -AA	23 10:00 a.m. - ESL 7:30 p.m. - Pentecostal	24
25 10:00 a.m. - Worship/ Sunday School 6:00 p.m. - Pentecostal	26 Office Closed 7:00 p.m. -AA	27 10:00 a.m. - Noon-Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. -AA	28 7:30 p.m. - Pentecostal	29 7:00 p.m. -AA	30 10:00 a.m. - ESL 7:30 p.m. - Pentecostal	

Food Pantry Shines

For as long as I can remember the Patchogue UMC has had a food pantry run by a suc-

cession of vol-

unteers. In 2016, Ed and Brenda Klingel, Jerry and I be-



came the latest.

The food pantry could not operate in its present form without a large group of volunteers. We are open from 10:00 to 12:00 on Tuesdays and serve an average of 60 families each week.

In addition to the distribution of food on Tuesdays there is a great amount of work done behind the scenes to ensure that we have an adequate supply of fresh food and staples to give out each week. Each family is offered a bag of canned goods and pasta. In addition, we offer milk (fresh or shelf), fresh fruit and/or vegetables, rice, cereal, cooking oil, meat and/or fish, diapers, wipes, and personal care products. Other items such as eggs, yogurt or cheese are given out when they are available.

LI Cares and Island Harvest are the two main sources of our food. We also receive cash donations from various organizations in the community and from food drives run by other churches and community organizations. Shoprite, Patchogue Rotary, South Country Shores Civic Association, and Bayport UMC are some of the organizations that have consistently donated to our pantry. We also receive a donation each year from our conference, and we often receive donations from our congregation on

Sundays. We use the cash to buy food items that we cannot get from other sources and to pay LI Cares for the nominal fee they charge for some of the food we order from them.

Each week, Jerry and I drive to Hauppauge to pick up about 1300 pounds of food items we order from LI Cares and bring it to the church where we are helped by Terry Ryan to unload the food for storage.

LI Cares lists available food under four categories, HPNAP, TEFAP, Purchased and Donated. HPNAP is a New York state funded program and TEFAP is a program funded by the US Government. Each year we must apply for grants from both of those programs. The grants are written by Ed Klingel and Barbara Becker. The amount of the grant and the foods available under each program determine what we can order each week from those lists.

They also offer food from their Purchased and Donated lists. The items on the Purchased lists are those purchased by Long Island Cares from various vendors. Some of the items on this list are offered to us without charge and for others we must pay a fee. Items on the Donated list are sorted into various categories such as canned vegetables, baking goods, baby supplies, etc and they charge us \$1.80 a pound.

On Fridays, Ed Klingel and Terry Ryan drive to Bellport to get food from a truck provided by Island Harvest. There are usually an average of 10 other agencies there and the food on the truck is divided among them. We usually receive baked goods, some fresh fruits and vegetables (especially in the summer), canned

goods, yogurts, and sometimes meat or fish, milk and eggs. The food has been donated by stores, so the quantity of items varies from week to week. They then bring the food back to the church and unload it into our storage facilities. On occasion, Ed can call Island Harvest for a particular item such as diapers or meat and then pick it up in Melville.

About 15 volunteers show up every Tuesday to help with the distribution of food and we have several people on call who are willing to fill in when others go on vacation. Every summer and on school holidays we have children and grandchildren of our volunteers who come to help us. It is a wonderful way for young people to learn how many people in our community are faced with food insecurity and how important it is to help others. Many of these young people are required to accumulate volunteer hours for their school or religious institutions and this is a wonderful way for them to fulfill this requirement.

Our current list of volunteers consists of Barbara Becker, Nellie Crescenzo, Joan Curtis, Camille Flynn, Mary Fusi, Lauren Halliwell, Sacha Kratz, Nancy Kreamer, Michele Leary, Ellen Pomponio, Lynn Russo, Terry Ryan, and Michelle Ryan. Our backup volunteers are Lorraine Brenner, Trudy Mansfield, and Carolyn Willis,

Ed, Brenda, Jerry and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributes their time and talent, and resources to make our food pantry a success. We are inspected every year by Island Harvest and they consistently praise our operation.

—Janet Alt

As Church Exits Rise, Proposed Budget Drops

The United Methodist Church will look and operate very differently going forward.

That was the frequent refrain at a May 17-19 meeting that saw the denomination's financial leaders shrink an already record-low proposal for the denominational budget in the wake of new projected losses from church disaffiliations and closures. The leaders also heard input on reducing the number of United Methodist bishops.

Yet even while grieving the departures, the leaders also discussed The United Methodist Church's opportunities to revitalize and share God's love with renewed vigor.

"Thinking about mission and ministry while trying to ensure stewardship for years to come is a delicate balance," said the Rev. Moses Kumar, top executive of the denomination's General Council on Finance and Administration.

"All of us have dedicated hours to this because each one of us cares deeply about The United Methodist Church."

He was addressing a gathering that brought together the boards of both the finance agency and the Connectional Table, a leadership body that coordinates denominational ministries and resources.

The GCFA board now is proposing a 2025-2028 denominational budget of about \$370.5 million to next year's General Conference, the denomination's top policymaking assembly. That's about \$3 million less than the

budget the finance agency began working on last fall.

The new bottom line also marks a nearly 40% reduction from the denomination-wide budget that General Conference approved at its last regular meeting in 2016.

The proposal requires significant cuts to all funds that support denomination-wide ministries — including United Methodist general agencies and bishops.

It also will be the lowest budget to come before General Conference since 1984, when the international denomination had far fewer members on the African continent and had yet to establish Africa University, now supported with denominational funds.

Figuring out how to manage such steep reductions and maintain vital ministry around the globe has been a source of tension between the GCFA and Connectional Table directors.

However, after months of negotiations, the two groups on May 18 each unanimously approved recommendations on how to divvy up a much-smaller budget.

"We've had some disagreements with GCFA, and we're happy to end in a spirit of agreement on these numbers," said Dave Nuckols, the Connectional Table's treasurer, in presenting the leadership body's recommended budget allocations.

However, he added that he hoped conversations could continue to restore the collaborative budget process the two boards had previously used in developing the budget rec-

ommendations that go before General Conference.

Both the GCFA board and Connectional Table have long agreed the denomination-wide budget should be significantly reduced. But they differed on how low to go while still sustaining ministries at all levels of the denomination.

In The United Methodist Church, local churches provide a share of church giving — called apportionments — to annual conferences, church regional bodies that in turn pay apportionments to general-church ministries.

The U.S. provides the bulk of funding for denomination-wide ministries. In the U.S., the formula for determining an annual conference's apportionments is its total local church net expenditures multiplied by a General Conference-approved base percentage.

The GCFA board and Connectional Table were at odds about how much to decrease the base percentage proposed to General Conference. The GCFA board initially supported reducing it by 25% in November, while the Connectional Table supported an 18% base-percentage reduction.

Ultimately, the GCFA board decided to reduce the base rate by 22.9%. The continued drop in the budget proposal — even with a slightly higher base percentage — is the result of the net-expenditure side of the ledger. Net expenditures are what a church spends after capital expenses, apportionments and benevolent giving.

Continued on Page 7

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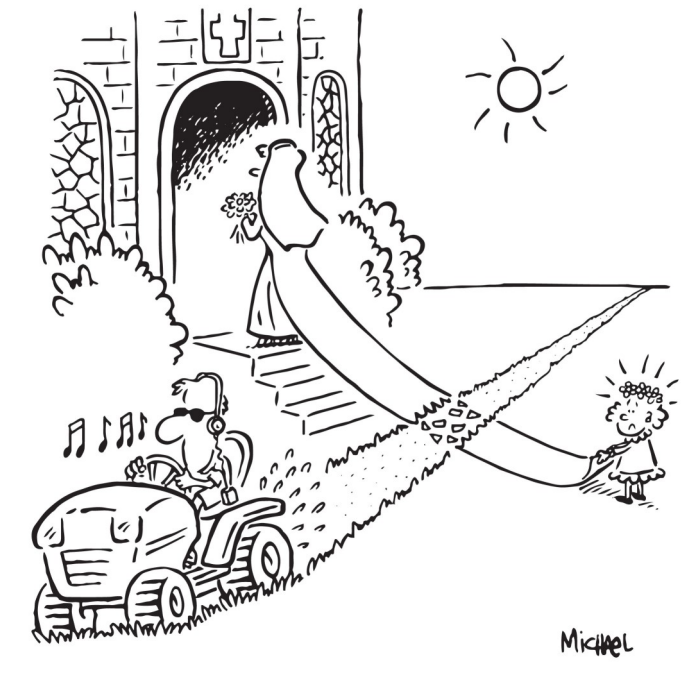
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Your Pledge**

Save Your Old Magazines

Dave 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 July-August issue of **The Link** is June 23.
Please email your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

UMC Budget (From Page 5)

Basically, they are an indicator of the denomination's financial base. In 2021, U.S. annual conferences saw an overall 7% reduction in church net expenditures due in part to church disaffiliations but especially from church closures amid the COVID-19 pandemic. With that drop in mind, the finance agency has adjusted its projections on net expenditures downward.

This year is likely to see the peak of church disaffiliations under a church law that allows congregations to leave with property if they meet certain conditions. That law is set to expire at the end of 2023.

So far, annual conferences have approved 3,838 disaffiliations — representing a loss of about 12.5% of U.S. congregations since the church law took effect in 2019. Put another way: The majority of U.S. United Methodist churches appear to be remaining in the fold.

It is also unclear how much membership loss these departures will represent since a number of members of exiting congregations are opting to remain United Methodist by transferring to other churches or planting new United Methodist faith communities. Still, the denomination's bishops, agency staff and other church leaders are already adjusting to a new reality. Since before the pandemic, the denomination's general agencies have been budgeting each year with lower giving in mind.

Bishops, too, are trying to shore up the long-shaky Episcopal Fund, the apportionment-supported fund that enables their work.

During their meeting in Nashville, both the Connectional Table and GCFA

boards heard from Council of Bishops President Thomas J. Bickerton, who urged the leaders to include the bishops in discussions about reducing their numbers.

He said he is already in conversation with other denominational leaders about the number of bishops needed.

"I don't think that there's anyone who is wanting to preserve the episcopacy in its current form," he said. "The numbers speak for themselves."

The proposed 2025-2028 budget allocates \$68.82 million to the Episcopal Fund. That's a 25.2% reduction from the budget General Conference approved in 2016.

At present, The United Methodist Church has 59 active bishops — 39 in the U.S.; 13 in Africa; four in Europe and three in the Philippines. That's seven fewer U.S. bishops than the previous General Conference-approved budget.

However, Rick King, GCFA's chief financial officer, warned the leaders that under this budget, the Episcopal Fund will be at risk of running out of money if The United Methodist Church returns to a full roster of bishops.

Bickerton said he and his episcopal colleagues recognize this challenge. He noted that five U.S. bishops face mandatory retirement in 2024, with another two or three who also may retire.

He said leaders of jurisdictions, which elect U.S. bishops, already are considering how to address future elections. In 2028, he added, 16 U.S. bishops face mandatory retirement.

Between 2024 and 2028, he said, denominational leaders will need to

think strategically about where bishops can best serve and are most needed. Simply removing bishops from U.S. areas with high numbers of disaffiliations may be counterproductive in reaching the new mission field, he said.

Meanwhile, the entire Eurasia Episcopal Area has embarked on the multi-step process to leave The United Methodist Church, and there are no plans to elect another bishop in that region.

At the same time, church leaders have long been at work on a plan to add five bishops to Africa. Bickerton said his African colleagues are realistic about the financial challenges the denomination now faces.

"My prayer is that we can find a way to collaborate and strategize together to get to the same goal that we all desire," Bickerton said. "And that's to position the church to make disciples and make an impact in the world."

Bishop Mande Muyombo, the Connectional Table's chair, echoed Bickerton's sentiments.

In a reflection that opened the meeting on May 18, he acknowledged that church finances are not just about numbers but about lives being transformed.

"That's the power of The United Methodist Church, a church that has given some of us hope, taken us from a place of scarcity and hopelessness to a place of experiencing God's love and grace," prayed Muyombo. "Lord, I know I speak on behalf of many — not only on my continent of Africa but in the world."

—Heather Hahn, UMNS

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 Worship Video Livestreaming at PatchogueUMC.Org
 Previous services available.



A Fathers Day Prayer

Dear God, we come before You today with a heart of thanksgiving for all fathers in the world. Thank you, Father, for designing fathers to be the pillar of support in families, the breadwinners, and the essential support in child-rearing. Whether they have been good or bad fathers, may we find it in our hearts to forgive them because no one is perfect. You always have a reason for creating

families the way they are, and every father in every household has been placed there according to Your will. We also pray for all single fathers out there. Thank You for their strength, for their perseverance, and love to raise their children despite the difficulty they faced in parenthood. We ask that God, bless them with wisdom, discernment, protection for their health, and faith in You to become even better fathers for their children.

We pray for the distant fathers who have been alienated from their children because of their jobs or due to other circumstances.

Father, please change them and allow them to see how they can build a healthy relationship with their children. Remove all barriers that prevent their union, Lord. For fathers

that are serving on the frontlines, we ask God that Your sovereign hand be upon them and protect them from all things that may harm or threaten their lives. Grant them the chance to reunite with their families one day.

Finally, we pray for all soon-to-be dads or new dads. We pray that they will follow in Your footsteps for God, You are their greatest role model as a father. May they grow to become more and more Christ-like each day, leading their household to draw closer to You. Remove all fear and worries that they have about fatherhood, and let them focus on Your faithfulness and providence for them.

We lift all fathers in the world to You. Work in them oh Lord to be who You want them to be. Amen.

—Christian.net