

# The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

March 2018

## Journeying Toward Jerusalem

**I**t is interesting that the month of March this year brings us right up to the precipice of Easter, but stops one day short of the Resurrection. I actually think that is a good thing, because perhaps it will keep us focused on our continued Lenten journey and the journey of Jesus to Calvary and the tomb.

Then, at the very beginning of April we can celebrate the great resurrection; however, I would prefer to move slowly to that moment realizing the tremendous price Jesus paid that we may have life eternal.

By the time this **LINK** is printed and distributed, myself, my wife and others from the church will either be in the Holy Land or traveling back to our beloved homes.

In the Holy Land we will visit where Jesus was born in Bethlehem and the village where he grew up in Nazareth. We will travel along the Sea of Galilee where he called his disciples, walked on water and performed many of his miracles. We'll stand in the very place he delivered his Sermon on the Mount and travel through Jerusalem where he taught in the temple courts, rode into that city triumphantly on Palm Sunday, and, yes, was crucified, died and buried.

I know that tomb is empty because I have visited it many times over the years—but for this newsletter, I don't want to peak in there yet. I would rather leave us at the tomb which March 30 and 31 does for us.

I encourage everyone reading this to slowly and introspectively travel this journey of Lent. Let us not

rush quickly to Easter and all of the flowers and upbeat songs and hymns. Let us reflect on our mortality and realize how short life really is. That God has given us life and wishes for us to live it fully, wisely and effectively for Him.

Search deep within and seek areas that may require changes so as to honor God more and love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

**Continued on Page 2**

## WORSHIP IN MARCH

**Mar. 4**—The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, John 2:13-22

**Mar. 11**—The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, John 3:14-21

**Mar. 18**—The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, John 12:20-33

**Mar. 25**—The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 14:1-15,47



PSALM 22:30, NRSV

## Circle of Concern

### Joys:

Brenda & Ed Klingel 16th Anniversary, Joan Curtis birthday, Linda Werner birthday

### Bereavement:

Rice family, Wall family, Louise Cabral

### For Guidance and Healing:

Ed Herfey, Tammy Zimmerman/Harris, Michael, Henry Prince, Tommy Saltalamacchia, Len Ricchi, Mary Smith, John Zimmerman, Lisa, Frank Carroll, Steve Shadbolt, Alan, David Henson, Marge Bates, Kristin Elliot, Fran Knoedal, David Winthrop, Larry, John, Gary Kron, Amanda RubinoFowler family, Florida shooting victims families, our police

### These at Home:

Bruce Kirschner, Lee Hollowell, Viola Schwartz, Jean Miller, Paul Falvey

### These in Rehab or Nursing Care

#### Facilities:

**Geri Sheridan** in Brookhaven Health Care Facility, 801 Gazzola Dr., East Patchogue

**Alice Zahnd** in Gurwin Jewish Nursing Facility, 68 Hauppauge Rd., Commack, NY

**Ed Dew** in Sunrise Assisted Living, 320 Patchogue Holbrook Rd., Holbrook, NY

**Len Ricchi**, in Medford Multicare, 315 Horseblock Rd., Medford, NY

*Pray for our church and her future directions!*

## Journeying (From Page 1)

This is a time each year where we can intentionally go deeper in our understanding of discipleship—what it truly means to take up our cross and follow Jesus as one of his disciples.

Friends, let us together make this month of March a month where great transformations will take place in our lives, our families and our church.

Use each day to study the scriptures, reading the stories of Jesus in the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Find the time and quiet space each day to pray. Pray for individual change and positive changes in our community, nation and world. Pray that more people would come to know Christ in a personal way. Not only spend more time with the Lord—spend more quality time with the people you love. Find ways to serve others, for Jesus, Himself, said he didn't come to be served, but to serve others.

Volunteer to serve meals at our Wesley dinners each month or assist with the weekly food pantry. Think of a charity like St. Jude's hospital or UMCOR and skip going out one night and send that amount to help with their cause of helping others.

I believe this season awakens all of these God-driven pursuits. And you know what the good part is—when we engage in them—we are blessed a hundred times more.

Headed to Jerusalem with each of you, I pray this will be the most meaningful journey we have ever taken.

In His Grip,

—Pastor Chuck

## Youth Group Dinner

Friday, March 2

6:00–8:00 PM

Bring a friend.

## Men's Ministry Breakfast

Saturday, March 10

8:00–10:00 AM

Pastor Chuck will lead a session on *What Happens When We Run Out of Time and Energy? Coming Back Strong*

## Palm Sunday Breakfast

Sunday, March 25

8:00–9:30 AM

Adults: \$6, Children: \$4  
3 and under: free

## Order Easter Plants

Daffodils, Tulips, Hyacinths & Lilies

Payment must accompany order.

Deadline is Palm Sunday

## BAFFA Concert

Sunday, April 8

4:00 PM

John Rutter's *The Gift of Life*

Reception to follow

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is  
found  
in  
no  
one  
else.  
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# United Methodist Church of Patchogue

## March 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 10:00 a.m.—ESL 6:00 p.m.—Youth Meeting 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—NA	3 7:30 p.m.—AME
4 10:00 a.m.—Communion Worship 11:30 a.m.—Confirmation Class 1:00 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 5:00 p.m.—AME	5 Office Closed 7:00 p.m.—AA	6 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10:00 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	7 7:30 p.m.—AME Service	8	9 10:00 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—NA	10 8:00 a.m.—Men's Breakfast 9:30 a.m.—UMW 7:30 p.m.—AME
11 10 a.m.—Worship/Sunday School 11:30 a.m.—Confirmation Class 11:30 a.m.—Finance 1:00 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 5:00 p.m.—AME	12 Office Closed 7:00 p.m.—AA	13 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10:00 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	14 7:30 p.m.—AME Service	15	16 10:00 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—NA	17 7:30 p.m.—AME
18 10 a.m.—Worship/Sunday School 11:30 a.m.—Confirmation Class 1:00 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 5:00 p.m.—AME	19 Office Closed 7:00 p.m.—AA	20 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10:00 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	21 7:30 p.m.—AME Service	22 5:00 p.m. Wesley Dinner	23 10:00 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—NA	24 7:30 p.m.—AME
25 8:00 a.m.—Pancake Breakfast 10 a.m.—Palm Sunday Worship/ Sunday School 11:30 a.m.—Confirmation Class 1:30 a.m.—Trustees 1:00 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 5:00 p.m.—AME	26 Office Closed 7:00 p.m.—AA	27 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10:00 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	28 7:30 p.m.—AME Service	29 7:00 p.m.—Holy Thursday Service	30 Office Closed 7:00 p.m.—Good Friday Service 7-9 p.m.—Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—NA	31 7:30 p.m.—AME

## United Methodists Support Students On Gun Violence

Survivors of the latest school shooting are “formidable” and will be “change agents,” said an elementary school teacher who accompanied 95 students as they faced Florida lawmakers to demand an end to the killings.



“They are not playing by political rules because they don’t know political rules. They have data in their heads and passion in their hearts,” said Catherine Kuhns, a fourth-grade teacher at Country Hills Elementary who went on the Feb. 21 trip to Tallahassee, the state capital. The elementary school is just a quarter of a mile from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

Many of the teenagers at the high school were first little ones in her classroom, explained Kuhns, a member of First United Methodist Church in nearby Coral Springs.

“I will never be able to impart to anyone how amazing these kids were. They are unshakeable, they are passionate, they have done their homework.”

On Feb. 14, those students were attending school as they would on any ordinary day when police said 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz used an AR-15-style

rifle to kill 17 people and wound 14 more. The students have changed from typical high schoolers to advocates for societal change, who are determined to end school shootings. Kuhns chaperoned a group of nine young people.

“Within this group of nine, one lost a best friend, one watched a teacher shot, one witnessed three classmates take fatal bullets. One was in panic mode because she could not reach her sister in the freshman building. That sister survived, but was the one who saw three classmates shot before her eyes. Each lost friends and faith in current laws. Each student’s lives will never be the same,” Kuhns wrote in a Facebook post.

Kuhns said at one point one of the officials asked, “How many school shootings have we had this year?” Then he added, “We haven’t had that many.”

One of the students spoke up, she noted, and responded, “We are averaging one school shooting a week in 2018. Twenty-seven individuals have died this year alone, 17 have come from my school.”

“They were very respectful, but they corrected them (the lawmakers),” Kuhns said.

Governor Rick Scott was at Kuhns’ church the Sunday after the shooting. Kuhns greeted him and told him she had been a teacher since 1975 but nothing had prepared her for the conversation she had to have with her 9- and 10-year-old students on Feb. 15. “I told him, ‘No teacher should ever have to do that again. No student should ever have to fear for their lives

in school,’” she said. “And, by the way, I will be seeing you very soon.” She kept that promise when she walked into the governor’s office on Feb. 21. He remembered her, she added.

Kuhns will be retiring after this year and she has found her next life’s passion.

“I am so sick of this violence,” she said. “I am over this, over man’s inhumanity over man, I am just over it. When it comes breathing down your neck it is just too dang close.”

—Kathy L. Gilbert, UMNS

## What Methodists Say About Gun Violence

Jesus’ call to his followers to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9) is tied to intimate relationship with God, and echoes God’s dreams for peace for all of creation as expressed in Micah 4:1-4: *they shall beat their swords into plowshares, / and their spears into pruning hooks.*

As followers of Jesus, called to live into the reality of God’s dream of shalom as described by Micah, we must address the epidemic of gun violence so “that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in God’s paths.” Therefore, we call upon United Methodists to prayerfully address gun violence in their local context. Some of the ways in which to prevent gun violence include the following:

1. For congregations to make preventing gun violence a regular part of our conversations and prayer times. Gun violence must be worshipfully

and theologically reflected on, and we encourage United Methodist churches to frame conversations theologically by utilizing resources such as “Kingdom Dreams, Violent Realities: Reflections on Gun Violence from Micah 4:1-4” produced by the General Board of Church and Society.

2. For congregations to assist those affected by gun violence through prayer, pastoral care, creating space, and encouraging survivors to share their stories, financial assistance, and through identifying other resources in their communities as victims of gun violence and their families walk through the process of grieving and healing.

3. For individual United Methodists who own guns as hunters or collectors to safely and securely store their guns and to teach the importance of practicing gun safety.

4. For United Methodist congregations that have not experienced gun violence to form ecumenical and interfaith partnerships with faith communities that have experienced gun violence in order to support them and learn from their experiences.

5. For United Methodist congregations to lead or join in ecumenical or interfaith gatherings for public prayer at sites where gun violence has occurred and partner with law enforcement to help prevent gun violence.

6. For United Methodist congregations to partner with local law-enforcement agencies and community groups to identify gun retailers that engage in retail practices designed to circumvent laws on gun sales and ownership, encourage full legal compliance, and to work with groups like

Heeding God’s Call that organize faith-based campaigns to encourage gun retailers to gain full legal compliance with appropriate standards and laws.

7. For United Methodist congregations to display signs that prohibit carrying guns onto church property.

8. For United Methodist congregations to advocate at the local and national level for laws that prevent or reduce gun violence. Some of those measures include:

- Universal background checks on all gun purchases
- Ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty
- Ensuring all guns are sold through licensed gun retailers
- Prohibiting all individuals convicted of violent crimes from purchasing a gun for a fixed time period
- Prohibiting all individuals under restraining order due to threat of violence from purchasing a gun
- Prohibiting persons with serious mental illness, who pose a danger to themselves and their communities, from purchasing a gun
- Ensuring greater access to services for those suffering from mental illness
- Establishing a minimum age of 21 years for a gun purchase or possession
- Banning large-capacity ammunition magazines and weapons designed to fire multiple rounds each time the trigger is pulled
- Promoting new technologies to aid law-enforcement agencies to trace crime guns and promote public safety.

—Adapted from the  
**UMC Book of Resolutions, 2016**

## **Sad, Tired And Angry**

### **A Prayer In The Face of Gun Violence**

**A** *Imighty God, I come before you, once again, after another shooting.*

*I am sad, God.*

*So I ask you to receive into your loving care the souls of those who were killed, to care for those who were wounded or hurt in any way, to console the family members and friends of those who died or were wounded, to strengthen the hands of the rescue workers, medical professionals and caregivers.*

*I pray too for the shooter, as I must as a Christian.*

*All this makes me inexpressibly sad, God.*

*But I know that the sadness I feel is your sadness.*

*It is the same sadness your son expressed when he wept over the death of his friend Lazarus.*

*I know that the sadness I feel is your sadness.*

*I’m tired of the unwillingness to see this as an important issue.*

*I’m tired of those in power who work to prevent any real change.*

*I’m tired of those who say that gun violence can’t be reduced.*

*All this makes me tired.*

*But I know that the tiredness I feel is your tiredness.*

*It’s the same tiredness that Jesus felt after his own struggles against injustice that led him to fall asleep on the boat with his disciples.*

*I am angry, God.*

**Continued on Page 8**

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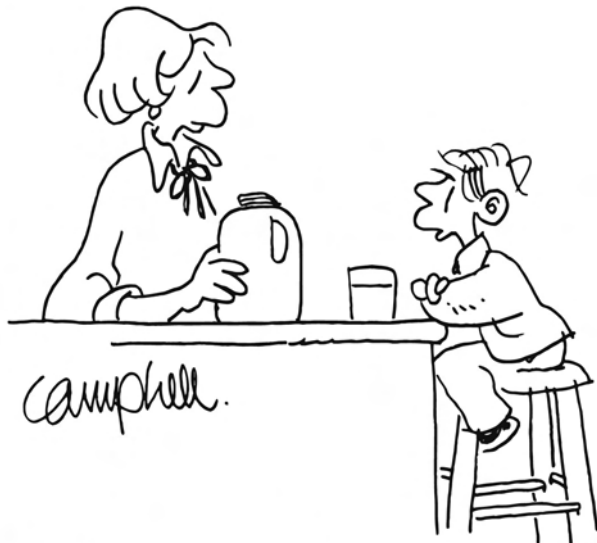
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**Don't  
Forget  
Your  
Pledge**

The deadline for the April issue  
of **The Link** is March 23  
Please email your copy to [gbhoag@optonline.net](mailto:gbhoag@optonline.net).



"I'm playing a crowd member in the Passion Play. I was going to play Pilate 'til I found out I'd have to wash my hands."

THIS IS HIS COMMANDMENT,

THAT WE SHOULD BELIEVE  
IN THE NAME OF HIS  
SON JESUS CHRIST AND  
LOVE ONE ANOTHER...

1 JOHN 3:23, NRSV

## The Separation of Church and State

! I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared their legislation should 'make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise there of,' thus building a wall between church and state." —Thomas Jefferson, 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptist Association.

I have often heard many good and thoughtful people bemoan the lack of prayer in the schools and attribute the moral decline of our nation to the moment when the Supreme Court ruled against the practice.

I don't believe that for a minute.

Aside from the fact that our moral high ground has never been as exalted as we would like to believe; aside from the reality that the gap between our professed ideal norms and how we actually operate as a nation and people is deep and glaring; aside from all that, the concept of the separation of church and state is deeply rooted in the 1st amendment of the Constitution, as Thomas Jefferson alluded to in the above quoted statement.

Jefferson's words echoed an earlier statement by Roger Williams in 1644, referring to ... "a hedge or wall of separation between the garden of the church and the wilderness of the world."

Roger Williams, founder of Rhode Island and passionate defender of religious liberty, understood well what happened when the church and government were joined at the hip.

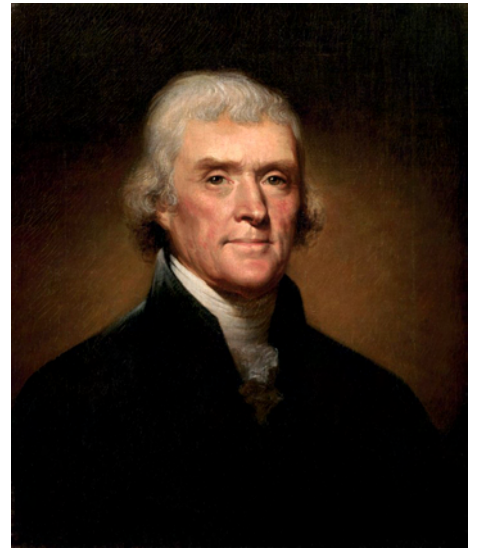
At one time a Puritan minister in Salem, he was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony for disagreeing with the policies of the ruling theocracy, including the fair treatment of the indigenous Native Americans.

His Rhode Island colony later provided a haven for dissenting religious believers, including Quakers, Anabaptists and Anne Hutchinson, who was thrown out and excommunicated by the Puritans for daring to be a woman who held weekly meetings to discuss recent sermons and who believed that individuals could communicate with God without the interpretation of the clergy.

(By the way, there is a monument on Shelter Island, not far from Camp Quinipet, remembering a group of Quakers who were executed by the Puritans in Massachusetts for daring to believe differently.)

All through human history, when religion and government are intertwined, there has been repression, exclusion, and often brutality. The very Puritans who were so repressive were in fact refugees from religious intolerance in the Church of England. Earlier, in Tudor England, the pendulum of religious persecution swung back and forth between Protestants and Catholics, depending on who was in power.

The Inquisition, one of the most brutal, pernicious examples of religion acting as an institution of power rather than a community of faith, tortured and murdered untold numbers of people on the grounds they were heretics, ie: may have believed differently than the official doctrine, all



**Thomas Jefferson was a strong believer in the separation of church and state.**

with the complicity of the secular governments.

Jesus threatened the power of the ruling religious establishment, the Sanhedrin, as well as the secular power of the Romans, by his radical teachings and values. And so they colluded to destroy him.

So, no I don't think prayer in the schools, or posters of the Ten Commandments on the walls of public buildings would make us a better country or people.

What would do that is, if each of us who professes to believe in a particular faith would actually live that faith, would internalize the essential beliefs and behave in accordance with them in all aspects of our lives.

Prayer should be in our homes, our houses of worship, our hearts.

Our faith should be manifested through our lives. We can and should live our faith without imposing them on others who may not share them.

—Barbara Becker

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 Office Hours: 9:00 AM–2:00 PM, Closed Monday  
**Worship Video Live Streaming at PatchogueUMC.Org**

Sunday Worship—10 AM | Sunday School—10 AM  
 Fellowship Coffee Hour—11 AM  
 Hearing assistance provided



## Gun Violence Prayer (From Page 5)

*I'm angry at the seeming powerlessness of our community to prevent this.*

*I'm angry at the selfish financial interests who block change.*

*I'm angry that these shootings happen at all.*

*But I know that this anger is your anger*

*It's the same anger Jesus felt when he overturned the tables in the Temple, angry that anyone would be taken advantage of in any way.*

*Help me see in these feelings as the way that you move me to act.*

*Help me see in these feelings your moving me to act.*

*Help me see in these reactions your pushing me to do something.*

*Because I know this is the way you move people to action.*

*And I know that you desire action.*

*For Jesus did not stand by while people were being hurt. He plunged into their lives.*

*So help me to answer these questions:*

*How can I help?*

*How can I fight against gun violence?*

*How can I urge my political leaders to enact change?*

*How can I help people understand that this is an issue about life?*

*I am sad over the loss of life, tired of excuses for the loss of life, and angry that we are paralyzed by the loss of life.*

*Turn my sadness into compassion.*

*Turn my tiredness into advocacy.*

*Turn my sadness into compassion.*

*Turn my tiredness into advocacy.*

*Turn my paralysis into the freedom to act.*

*Help me to be compassionate, to advocate and to act, as your son did,*

*Almighty God.*

—James Martin, S.J.