

TheLink



The United Methodist Church of Patchogue

March 2014

Sponsored this month by Janet and Jerry Alt

Edited By George Hoag

Five Finger Prayer

1. The thumb is the closest finger to you. So start praying for those who are closest to you. They are the persons easiest to remember. To pray for our dear ones is a "sweet obligation."

2. The next finger is the index. Pray for those who teach you, instruct you and heal you. They need the support and wisdom to show direction to others. Always keep them in your prayers.

3. The following finger is the tallest. It reminds us of our leaders, the governors and those who have authority. They need God's guidance.

4. The fourth finger is the ring finger. Even that it may surprise you, it is our weakest finger. It should remind us to pray for the weakest, the sick or those plagued by problems. They need your prayers.

5. And finally we have our smallest finger, the smallest of all. Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. When you are done praying for the other four groups, you will be able to see your own needs but in the proper perspective, and also you will be able to pray for your own needs in a better way.

—Attributed to Archbishop of Argentina Cardinal Bergoglio, now Pope Francis. Thanks to Gerri Sheridan.

Worship In March

Mar. 5—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *Looking For Love*, Psalm 51:1-10, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21.

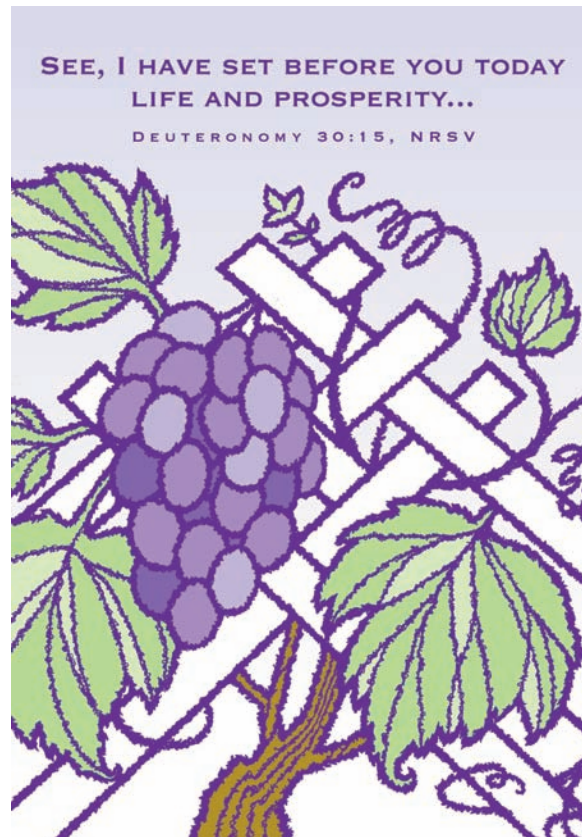
Mar. 9—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *Looking For The Resistor*, Psalm 32, Matthew 4:1-11.

Mar. 16—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *Looking For The Helper*, Psalm 121, John 3:1-7.

Mar. 23—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *Looking For The Thirst-Quencher*, Exodus 17:1-7, John 4:5-15, 39-42.

Mar. 30—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *Looking For The Shepherd*, 1 Samuel 16:1-13, John 9:1-41.

Apr. 6—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *Looking For The Liberator*, Psalm 130, John 11:1-16.



Circle of Concern

For Bereavement:

For the Family and Friends of James Hayward. For the Family and Friends of Don Meany.

For Guidance:

Janice, Louis D'Amico and family, Colleen Smith, Tim and Jen Mansfield, Kathy, Bruce Clamser, Robin, Bridget and Jesse Fitzgerald, Gloria and Louis D'Amico, Charleen and family, Sheila Dreaper, Renie Meadowcroft, Charleen, Terisa John, Rocky Miller, Robin, Kevin, Jasmine Arettines, Carolyn, James Penney, Geri Sheridan, Paul Rodrigas, Chris and Bonnie Hoagland, Corey, Keith Girouard, Laura and Louis Diamond, Chris Jackson, Sylvia and Ellie Gayco, Esperanza Candelario, Dot Fassl, Ben Capua, Kathy Mellor, Elaine Moffitt Short, Keith Girouard, Bruce Kirschner's mother, Dianna Peterra and family, Chris Jackson.

These Who are Hospitalized:

Keyana White, Andrew Miller, Wayne Williams, Bob Venator, Ida Davis, Jane Belzak, Alice Zahnd.

These at Home:

Wilfredo Franco, Michael Curtis Sr., Sandy Burrell, Chester Gibson, Grace Cruger, Dave Hollowell, John Puk, Harold, Carolyn Willis, Loretta Harrigan, George Roessler, Richard Vining, Frank Whalen, Justin Miller, Laurie Gaber, Sylvai and Ellie Gayco.

These who are in Rehab or Nursing Care Facilities:

Alice Zahnd in Patchogue Nursing Center, 25 Schoenfeld Blvd., Patchogue, NY.

Esther Davies in Brookhaven Health Facility, 801 Gazzolla Drive, E. Patchogue, NY 11772 Room 78D, 631-289-3150.

Ted Davies in Brookhaven Health Facility, 801 Gazzolla Drive, E. Patchogue, NY.

Ed Dew in Sunrise Assisted Living.

Pray for our church and its future direction.

Make your Prayer Request on line at PatchogueUMC.Org

Remember
the Church
in Your Will

The deadline for contributions to the April edition of **TheLink** is March 14. Please e-mail your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

Gay Wedding Trial Postponed for New York Theologian



United Methodist theologian and retired elder in the New York

Annual (regional) Conference, who had been scheduled to face a church trial in a month for officiating at the same-sex wedding of his son, is now awaiting a new trial date.

The trial of the Rev. Thomas Ogletree was initially scheduled for March 10 at First United Methodist Church in Stamford, Conn. Retired Bishop S. Clifton Ives, the presiding officer or the equivalent of a judge, postponed the trial date Feb. 10. No new date has been given.

Ives' decision followed a joint motion by the counsel for the church, the Rev. Timothy Riss, and the counsel for Ogletree, the Rev. W. Scott Campbell. In a previous pre-trial meeting, Ives—after consultation Riss and Campbell—referred the charge to a process seeking just resolution. More time is needed for this process, said a news release. This news opens the possibility that the case could be concluded without a trial.

Ogletree, a retired seminary dean noted for his work on Christian ethics, presided over the wedding of his son, Thomas Rimbey Ogletree, to Nicholas Haddad on Oct. 20, 2012. The service took place at the Yale Club in New York City.

Ogletree, 80, is a Yale Divinity School professor emeritus, veteran of the U.S. civil rights movement and life-long member of the Methodist tradi-

Continued on Page 7

Lift up your church with your prayers, presence, gifts and service.

LESSONS ALONG

the Way

May God's peace be with you!

From HIS fullness, we have all received, grace upon grace.
John 1:16, NIV



As we enter into the somber – and ultimately, joyful – season of Lent, I thought of the many forms this month's column might take: the biblical progression itself, our own, individual Christian journeys at this time of the year, the vast outpouring of love by God exhibited in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. But then I thought to myself, "heck, that's Pastor Tito's job..." And so, walking into church this morning, 48 hours into my customary 72-hour deadline extension, I suddenly realized what this column would look like – and once again the Holy Spirit used Pastor's message of resentments and forgiveness to fill in all the holes in my skeleton outline. With that in mind, I present to you:

Whack-a-Mole; Tai Chi; and God's Perfect Grace. Oh my!

I'm sure most of you know what Whack-a-Mole is: you stand in front of an arcade game with a big mallet in your hand, and there are maybe 9 holes on the game surface. When the game starts, a plastic mole pops up out of one of the holes at random, and you need to drive him back into his hole. Of course, the moment you do that, another one pops out of another hole, and you need to pound him down as well. And so on. Over and over, faster and faster and faster, until your heart rate has tripled, sweat is breaking out

on your forehead, and you not only want to hit the moles but smash them into tiny little mole bits. At least some of you know what I'm talking about, and it's not because I'm OCD. We'll come back to that in a moment (whack-a-mole, not my behavioral challenges...)

Okay, shift gears with me. Tai Chi. Again, many of you have seen it: the beautiful, flowing movements, the serene countenances, the seemingly effortless maintenance of sometimes pretzel-like stances, practiced by those of any age, even those in their 80's and beyond. It is centered on focus, balance, increased health, inner calmness – and at an advanced level, it is a martial art. Not a striking, attacking art such as karate, but an art of yielding and changing in response to outside events and forces. Think about that for a minute: the ability to handle an adverse situation from a place of peace, serenity and inner strength. But where does that discipline and inner strength really come from?

How many times in the book of Psalms do David and the other authors ask God for protection and help with the overwhelming struggles they/we face? And, to take it a step further (and several millennia forward), how many times are these overwhelming struggles of our own making, in one way or another? I'm not talking about the death of a loved one. I'm talking about being up to our eyeballs in debt because we don't control our spending. I'm talking about weighed down with a burning anger of months, years, or even decades, over something that might be nothing more than ego-driven. I'm talking about a teen who continues to mount up traffic tickets, in

spite of our pleas, lectures, and anger – and who learned those behaviors from us while sitting in a child seat behind us. And most importantly, I'm talking about our/my continual failure – because we're all human – to rely on God daily, in the moment, and instead let everything build up to a crisis. And when that crisis rears its head, we resent God for letting it happen...

We continue to play whack-a-mole with our shortcomings and resentments but all we need to do is ask God to pull the plug on the game. Anger washes over us in a white-hot wave, we lash out to hurt others, and in the process hurt ourselves even more – but the Lord, his Son, and his Book (and many of our own Brothers and Sisters, if we can drop our guard long enough to ask them), are there to help, carry, and love us. But God's grace? When we're in union with Him, when is it NOT perfect?

Philippians 4:6:7 (NIV) – "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Whack-a-Mole? No way to win; no need to play.

Tai-Chi? Beautiful, flowing, centering, but not the answer.

God's Perfect Grace? The ANSWER. Yours in Christ,

—Tom Bracken

birthdays

Mar. 11 Leanna Stone

Mar. 12 Isabel Chae

Mar. 19 Marguerite Abate

Celebrate your life! Witness for your faith!

A Message from the New Finance Committee Chair



First and foremost, thank you to all who have made a pledge for 2014. Without these pledges, we could not make our payroll or pay our bills. The amounts pledged are used to make up our budget and is our main income.

For those of you who have not pledged, I implore you to reconsider. Take some time and pray about it, please.

Second, we are very close to reaching our budget amount which is the Good News! We just need a little help from you.

However, let me also say, if you are having any difficulty, remember our Pastor is here for you. It is called Pastoral Ministry for a reason. His job is not only to do Sunday services but to be there when you need him for any reason. Take advantage of him!

The not so Good News

We still owe a past due amount of \$31,000 + to Swezey for past oil bills but we are up to date on our current bills with them. With this in mind, we will continue with our extra Heat offering on the third Sunday of every month. This money will be dedicated to the past due amount. We are really working on trying to make a dent in that bill. Once it is paid, we can all take a deep breath.

I am very grateful to be a member of this congregation and cherish each and every one of you! Blessings.

—Dianne Adone

Stewardship

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace”. Numbers 6:24-26.



Stewardship is defined in Merriam-Webster as “the activity or job of protecting and being responsible for something”. As such, there are a number of ministries and teams at our United Methodist Church of Patchogue which fit that definition. Therefore, as we enter the season of Lent, we want to focus on the Worship Committee and the Worship Team.

Early last fall, six of us, along with our pastor Rev. Ernesto “Tito” Sanchez, went to an extraordinary day-long workshop in Garden City led by Dr. Marcia McFee. It turns out that she is a very-long-time friend of our Bishop, Rev. Martin McLee, who was there to introduce Marcia to the many NYAC attendees. In his glowing and heart-felt introduction of Marcia, Bishop McLee gave an incredibly powerful, loving endorsement to her approach of worship. (You may recall that Pastor Sanchez has mentioned several times – from the pulpit – that we hope to follow the path which Bishop McLee has staked out for us).

By the time we all left late that afternoon (the six of us in one vehicle), our minds were spinning and exploring, and we all practically shouted out our reactions and ideas to one another! Marcia’s approach is to create an “anchor” for a liturgical season, a theme, if you will, which flows throughout that season’s worship. This anchor reflects and parallels the messages of the readings and the Gospel, and also puts them in perspective against the backdrop of today’s world. Along with that are visual and musical elements to support and uplift both the service and God’s Word.

After further discussion, and a meeting of the Worship Committee (of which the Worship Team is simply one part), Pastor Tito entrusted us to help shape this year’s Lenten season by augmenting it with this new and exciting approach. It is very important to note: everything that we are doing is designed to add to and enhance our worship of God in this most important season of Lent; there are NO subtractions. Those who enjoy a “traditional” worship service will find all those elements in place; and those who seek a more “3-dimensional approach” (for lack of a better term) will find what they need as well. This has been a labor of love—God’s love—for all of us who have contributed to it.

If you traditionally hold off until Palm Sunday and Easter, give yourself a special treat! Even consider attending the Ash Wednesday service. That is where Lent—and our Anchor (which, by the way, is not an anchor)—will begin. Our Pastor has said it all along: great things, God’s things, are going to happen at UMC Patchogue!

If you’ve not already enrolled in that vision: why not start right now?

May God bless and keep us all.

—Your fellow servants and stewards

United Methodist Church of Patchogue

March 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<i>1</i>
<p>2</p> <p>9:00 a.m.—New Member Class, Bible Study 10 a.m.—Communion Worship/Sunday School 11:30 a.m.—SPRC 12:30 p.m.—Salvation Army Class & Service</p>	<p>3</p> <p>7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>5</p> <p>6:30 p.m.—ESL 7:00 p.m.—Ash Wednesday Service</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7:30 p.m.—Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>7</p> <p>11:00 a.m.—Wesley Devotional Group 7:30 p.m.—N/A</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>9</p> <p>9:00 a.m.—New Member Class, Bible Study 10 a.m.—Worship/Sunday School 11:30 a.m.—Finance 12:30 p.m.—Salvation Army Class & Service 2:00 p.m.—Chrysalis</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>12</p> <p>6:30 p.m.—ESL 7:00 p.m.—BAFFA Food Pantry 7:30 p.m.—Bible Study</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7:30 p.m.—Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>14</p> <p>11:00 a.m.—Wesley Devotional Group 7:30 p.m.—N/A</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16</p> <p>9:00 a.m.—New Member Class, Bible Study 10 a.m.—Worship/Sunday School 11:30 a.m.—Church Council 12:30 p.m.—Salvation Army Class & Service 4:00 p.m.—BAFFA Concert</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6:30 p.m.—ESL 7:30 p.m.—Bible Study</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:30 p.m.—Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>21</p> <p>11:00 a.m.—Wesley Devotional Group 7:30 p.m.—N/A</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23</p> <p>9:00 a.m.—New Member Class, Bible Study 10 a.m.—Worship/Sunday School 11:30 a.m.—Trustees, Teachers 12:30 p.m.—Salvation Army Class & Service</p>	<p>24</p> <p>7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>26</p> <p>6:30 p.m.—ESL 7:30 p.m.—Bible Study</p>	<p>27</p> <p>5:00 p.m.—Wesley Dinner 7:30 p.m.—Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>28</p> <p>11:00 a.m.—Wesley Devotional Group 7:30 p.m.—N/A</p>	<p>29</p>
<p>30</p> <p>9:00 a.m.—New Member Class, Bible Study 10 a.m.—Worship/Sunday School 12:30 p.m.—Salvation Army Class & Service</p>	<p>31</p> <p>7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry</p>					

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Get **IN**volved

NY Trial (from Page 2)

tion. He has served as dean at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Conn., and the United Methodist-related Theological School at Drew University in Madison, N.J. Ogletree is declining interview requests at this time.

But, in May, he told United Methodist News Service that as a professor, he rarely has been asked to perform weddings. When his son asked him to officiate, he said he felt “deeply moved.”

He said in a statement released Jan. 17 that “I could not with any integrity as a Christian refuse my son’s request to preside at his wedding.”

“It is a shame that the church is choosing to prosecute me for this act of love, which is entirely in keeping with my ordination vows to ‘seek peace, justice, and freedom for all people’ and with Methodism’s historic commitment to inclusive ministry embodied in its slogan ‘open hearts, open minds, open doors.’”

The Book of Discipline, the denomination’s law book, since 1972 has stated that all people are of sacred worth but “the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.”

Church law says that marriage is to be between a man and a woman and bans United Methodist clergy from performing and churches from hosting “ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions.”

If tried and found guilty, Ogletree could face a variety of penalties. The Book of Discipline gives a trial court of 13 clergy — the church equivalent of a jury — a range of choices up to revoking Ogletree’s credentials as

United Methodist clergy. However, a trial court also can opt for a lesser penalty.

Voters in the New York Conference repeatedly have approved petitions seeking to change church law on homosexuality, most recently in 2011. In 2013, the conference approved a resolution by Methodists in New Directions that commended United Methodist individuals and congregations “whose bold actions and courageous statements help to provide for the pastoral needs of same-sex couples within The United Methodist Church.”

Complaint process

The Rev. Randall C. Paige, pastor of Christ Church in Port Jefferson Station, N.Y., and the Rev. Roy E. Jacobsen, a retired pastor, were the New York Conference clergy who filed a complaint against Ogletree after his son’s wedding announcement appeared on Oct. 21, 2012, in *The New York Times*.

Paige is the president of the Wesley Fellowship, an unofficial evangelical renewal group in the New York Conference. Jacobsen is a board member of the group.

“As we who brought the complaint expressed to Bishop McLee, we take no joy in bringing this complaint,” Paige said. “We do it in obedience to Christ and the laws of our Church. His honor, along with the integrity of the entire United Methodist Church is the motive driving this action.”

Ogletree and Paige met face to face in late January 2013 to try to find a just resolution to the dispute and avoid a trial. Paige asked Ogletree to promise never to officiate at such a union again. Ogletree declined.

New York Area Bishop Martin D. McLee informed Ogletree in March that he had referred the case to a church counsel — the equivalent of a prosecutor. The church counsel then determined that there was enough evidence to proceed to trial.

The Book of Discipline says “church trials are to be regarded as an expedient of last resort.”

McLee said in a statement released late Jan. 17 that he still prayed that the complainants and Ogletree could negotiate a just resolution and avoid a trial.

“During this most difficult time in the life of the church, I invite you to be in prayer for the Reverend Dr. Ogletree, the complainants and all who have a vested interest in this matter,” his statement said. “God is still God and that is where our trust and hope lies.”

Ives’ referral of the case for the just resolution process puts the matter before McLee again. Under the Book of Discipline, the process is confidential. McLee may use a trained, third-party mediator to help. If a resolution is achieved, a written agreement will be presented to Ives. If no agreement is reached, the matter will be returned to Ives for further action.

Widening dispute

Ogletree’s case comes at a time when the church’s debate regarding human sexuality has intensified and more clergy have been willing to defy publicly church law.

He was among more than 1,000 active and retired United Methodist clergy across the United States, who in 2011, signed pledges announcing their willingness to defy the denomination’s

Continued on Page 8



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NY Trial (From Page 7)

ban on officiating at same-gender unions. The New York Conference alone has 218 clergy signers, supported by 1,000 lay signers.

Bishops promised in a letter released Nov. 11, 2011, to uphold church law banning same-gender unions.

Since then, the dispute has become only more public.

Frank Schaefer in the East Pennsylvania Conference was told in December to surrender his credentials after he was found guilty in a church trial of officiating at the 2007 nuptials of his son to another man. After a 30-day suspension, Schaefer said he could not abide by the Book of Discipline “in its entirety because of its discriminatory laws.” He also announced plans to appeal the ruling. The trial and its

aftermath made headlines nationwide.

Retired Bishop Melvin G. Talbert officiated on Oct. 26, 2013, at the same-sex union of Joe Openshaw and Bobby Prince, members of Discovery United Methodist Church in Hoover, Ala. The Council of Bishops has called for a complaint to be filed against Talbert.

A complaint against the Rev. Stephen Heiss, a pastor in the Upper New York Annual (regional) Conference, has been referred to church counsel. Heiss has said he officiated at the same-sex ceremony of his daughter in 2002 and more such unions since New York legalized same-sex marriage in 2011.

—Heather Hahn and Kathy Gilbert,
UMNS



A Prayer For Lent

Lord,

I know how much you love me.

It's hard for me to feel it sometimes, but I know your love is always with me.

Help me to use your love as a way to persevere in my Lenten intentions.

I am weak, but I know with your help, I can use these small sacrifices in my life to draw closer to you.

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