

# The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

November 2015

## Thanksgiving

*Blessed are the poor in Spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

(Matthew 5:3)

As I meditate on Thanksgiving for the month of November, the Beatitudes come into my mind again. The definition of blessedness should not be confined to material possessions or tangible objects. As long as we live in this material world, it will be a battle.

I read somewhere that some people in this post-modern era agree to write a marriage contract, which I find rather absurd.

Marriage has to be based on trust and love, not a written word on a piece of paper.

When we start our relationship, a new beginning, with this kind of contract, it would mean another battle between the two, a tug of war.

On the contrary, when we submit ourselves to the Spirit of God with modesty, meekness, and humility, blessings and fullness of joy and eternal life will follow naturally because Jesus Christ came to fulfill our lives in full, the wholeness.

In this respect, I believe that the kingdom of heaven is within you here and now.

Let us give thanks to our God for His abundant grace that is always sufficient.

Glory and honor to Jesus Christ, our Lord, in this Thanksgiving month.

—Rev. Dawn Yoon

## Big Birthday Coming Up

In 1791, a group of worshippers, under the leadership of Ezra Tuttle, came together to form the first Methodist congregation in the Patchogue area.

We were the second Methodist congregation on Long Island, the first being Commack.

Those faithful souls earnestly sought to follow the precepts set down by John Wesley, (who died that same year) that emphasized the study of scripture, the grounding of faith in sound reason and understanding, respect for traditions, especially of the early church, and the experience of God in one's life.

Continued on Page 2

## WORSHIP IN NOVEMBER

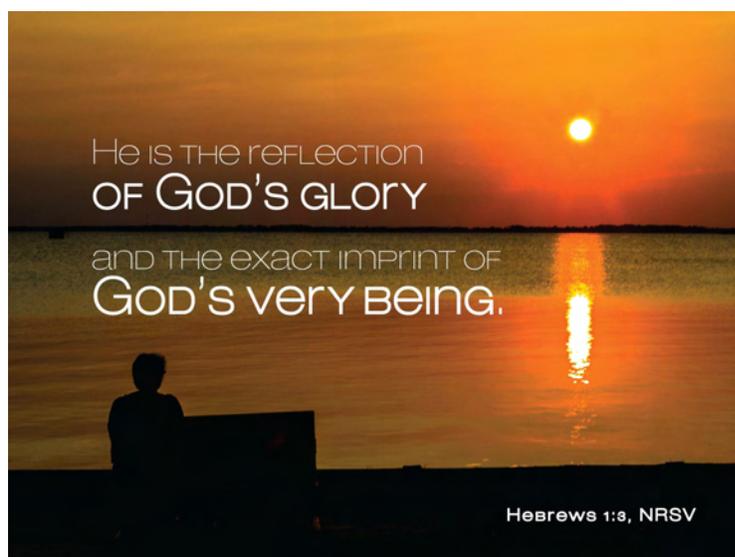
**Nov. 1**—Rev. Dawn Yoon, Psalm 146, Hebrews 9:11-14, Mark 12:28-34

**Nov. 8**—Rev. Dawn Yoon, Psalm 127, Hebrews 9:24-28, Mark 12:38-44

**Nov. 15**—Rev. Dawn Yoon, Psalm 113, Hebrews 10:11-14, Mark 13:1-8

**Nov. 22**—Rev. Dawn Yoon, Psalm 132:1-12, Revelations 1:4b-8, John 18:33-37

**Nov. 29**—Rev. Dawn Yoon, Psalm 25:1-10, 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13, Luke 21:25-36



## Circle of Concern

### For Guidance and Healing:

Steve Rea, Stanford Carde,  
Liza Burell.

### These Who are Hospitalized:

Maureen Blair.

### These who are in Rehab or Nursing Care Facilities:

Geri Sheridan in Sunrise Sr. Center,  
320 Patchogue-Holbrook Rd.,  
Holbrook, NY.

John Vander Zalm in Brookhaven  
Health Care Facility, 801 Gazzolla  
Drive, E. Patchogue, NY.

Leona Kreamer in Brookhaven Me-  
morial Hospital, 101 Hospital Rd., E.  
Patchogue, NY.

Alice Zahnd in Affinity Skilled Liv-  
ing, 305 Locust Ave., Oakdale, NY.

Ed Dew in Sunrise Assisted Living,  
Waverly Avenue, Holbrook, NY.

*Pray for our church and her future directions! Prayer cards are located at the ushers' stations in back of the sanctuary. Your joys & concerns are important to us; let us pray for you! Please put completed prayer cards in the offering plate or the Prayer Request Form on our webpage at [www.patchogueumc.org](http://www.patchogueumc.org).*

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Click on the Links at  
[www.PatchogueUMC.org](http://www.PatchogueUMC.org)**

## Our Birthdays Next Year (from Page 1)

Wesley also emphasized the balance of inner piety with outward or social holiness. Or as James, the brother of Jesus, put it: "Faith without works is dead."

There was perhaps a touch of Puritanism in that first church, since things like dancing, singing music other than hymns, and (perish the thought!) imbibing of liquid spirits, were considered sinful and cause for serious admonishment.

But Methodism survived and continues to do so, even as we seek to revitalize and recharge our church community.

This coming year, 2016, will mark the 225th anniversary of the Methodist faith in Patchogue and the 125th anniversary of our congregation in our current building on South Ocean Avenue and Church Street.

To celebrate our past and present and look with hope to the future, the anniversary committee has developed a tentative timeline of celebratory events. They are as follows:

**Nov. 28, 2015:** Participate in the Patchogue Christmas parade, carrying a banner proclaiming the anniversary year.

**January 2016:** Place a story on the anniversary year in the *LI Advance*.

**January 2016:** Begin a series of readings, enactments in costume, with old photos shown on screen, during worship, to emphasize our church history. Tours of the church and history room once a month after

worship. Progression of the history throughout the year.

**February 2016:** A Sunday afternoon gospel concert with the Shepherd Singers. Possibly in conjunction with Grace AME church.

**April 2016:** An international dinner reflecting the Patchogue community as it is now. This will include our ESL students, and showcase food, music, culture.

**September or October 2016:** A dinner and journal.

Other possibilities include: A concert involving choirs from other area churches as well as our own and a new pictorial church directory.

If you have ideas, please share them! And join in the celebration of our faith community.

—Barbara Becker

## Upcoming Events

**Nov. 25**—Thanksgiving Eve—Community Interfaith service at Temple Beth El, Oak St, 7:00 p.m.

**Nov. 26**— Thanksgiving Day—We will host our annual free dinner for the community. Sign up sheets to donate food or volunteer to help are in Wesley Hall.

**Dec. 5**— Holiday Fair, sponsored by the United Methodist Women. 9:00 AM–3:00 PM. Vendors, gift baskets, baked goods, breakfast, lunch. Do your Christmas shopping in a congenial environment, while supporting the missions of the UMW.

—Barbara Becker

## Outside Church Cleanup Day

**Sat., Nov. 14, 10:00 a.m.**

# United Methodist Church of Patchogue November 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <b>10 a.m.</b> — Communion Wor- ship <b>11:30 a.m.</b> —SPRC <b>12:30 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF	<b>2</b> <b>7:00 p.m.</b> —AA	<b>3</b> <b>9:30 a.m.</b> —Al Anon <b>10 a.m.-Noon</b> — Food Pantry <b>3:30 p.m.</b> — Learning Support <b>7-9 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF <b>7:30 p.m.</b> —AA	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>7:00 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF	<b>6</b> <b>9:30 a.m.</b> —ESL <b>10:30 a.m.</b> —Help needed for food delivery <b>7-9 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF <b>7:30 p.m.</b> —N/A	<b>7</b> <b>5:00 p.m.</b> — Chrysalis/Emmaus
<b>8</b> <b>10 a.m.</b> —Worship/ Sunday School <b>11:30 a.m.</b> — Finance <b>12:30 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF	<b>9</b> <b>7:00 p.m.</b> —AA	<b>10</b> <b>9:30 a.m.</b> —Al Anon <b>10 a.m.-Noon</b> — Food Pantry <b>3:30 p.m.</b> — Learning Support <b>7-9 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF <b>7:30 p.m.</b> —AA	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> <b>7:30 p.m.</b> —Choir Rehearsal	<b>13</b> <b>9:30 a.m.</b> —ESL <b>10:30 a.m.</b> —Help needed for food delivery <b>7-9 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF <b>7:30 p.m.</b> —N/A	<b>14</b> <b>10:00 a.m.</b> — Outside church cleanup
<b>15</b> <b>10 a.m.</b> —Worship/ Heat Offering/ Sunday School <b>12:30 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF	<b>16</b> <b>7:00 p.m.</b> —AA	<b>17</b> <b>9:30 a.m.</b> —Al Anon <b>10 a.m.-Noon</b> — Food Pantry <b>3:30 p.m.</b> — Learning Support <b>7-9 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF <b>7:30 p.m.</b> —AA	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> <b>7:30 p.m.</b> —Choir Rehearsal	<b>20</b> <b>9:30 a.m.</b> —ESL <b>10:30 a.m.</b> —Help needed for food delivery <b>7-9 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF <b>7:30 p.m.</b> —N/A	<b>21</b> <b>9:30 a.m.</b> —UMW
<b>22</b> <b>10 a.m.</b> —Worship <b>11:30 a.m.</b> — Trustees <b>12:30 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF	<b>23</b> <b>7:00 p.m.</b> —AA	<b>24</b> <b>9:30 a.m.</b> —Al Anon <b>10 a.m.-Noon</b> — Food Pantry <b>3:30 p.m.</b> — Learning Support <b>7-9 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF <b>7:30 p.m.</b> —AA	<b>25</b> <b>7:00 p.m.</b> — Community Inter- faith Service, Tem- ple Beth El	<b>26</b> <b>11:00 a.m.</b> — Thanksgiving Din- ner	<b>27</b> <b>No food delivery</b> <b>7-9 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF <b>7:30 p.m.</b> —N/A UMC Retreat	<b>28</b> <b>6:00 p.m.</b> — Patchogue Christ- mas Parade, Church participating
<b>29</b> <b>10 a.m.</b> —Worship <b>12:30 p.m.</b> — Pentecostal MF	<b>30</b> <b>7:00 p.m.</b> —AA					

## Our Mission

There's an old song that I like to paraphrase when asked to describe the state of our church :

*"Oh, we ain't got a barrel of money, maybe we're ragged and funny, but we'll travel along, singing God's song, side by side."*

I think that describes us to a T. We often struggle financially, but that doesn't stop us from working together to follow Jesus in offering help and loving care to those in need.

Some of our church ministries, such as the food pantry, have been in operation for at least 25 years.

Others, the annual free Thanksgiving dinner and the ESL classes, between 9-10 years. This is the 5th year for the Wesley Dinners and roughly the same for the clothing corner.

And, of course, every year, United Methodist Women, as well as the Sunday School, engage in a number of mission projects.

Here is an update on the five church-wide missions:

**ESL**—Classes began again on Oct. 2 and have an enrollment of ten. They are held on Friday mornings, 9:30 – 11:30.

The students, upon learning that we will be celebrating 225 years of Methodism in Patchogue in 2016, offered to help with an international dinner to be held sometime in the spring. The dinner will feature food, music and other aspects of culture, reflecting the wonderful diversity of the Patchogue community today.

In addition to the language classes, we are beginning a Learning Support Program for students, K-6th grade, and their parents, held on Tuesdays, 3:30–5:30. Next summer, we will provide a 3 hour workshop for parents who are new to the district or have limited English language ability, to become familiar with the educational system and be better able to guide and help their children.

**The Food Pantry** is open Tuesdays, 10–12noon. All are welcome. There are no income or residency restrictions. If a person or family needs to come for food every week, that is fine.

While we are fortunate to receive food supplies through Long Island Cares, Island Harvest, the IRS, Patchogue Lioness club and other wonderful groups, the items and monetary donations you put in the food bags each Sunday continue to be a mainstay of the pantry.

**Wesley Dinners** are going strong, continuing to serve 40–50 people the 4th Thursday of each month. (We are usually able to serve second helpings and take-out to as many as request them).

Needless to say, volunteers are the heart of this ministry. If you would like to assist even occasionally, contact Carol Kirschner or Helen Smith.

**Thanksgiving Dinner**— We will be serving a delicious dinner this Thanksgiving, Nov. 26, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. It is free to everyone.

Serving food is an expression of hospitality as old as humankind itself. This dinner provides an opportunity for everyone in the congregation to

participate in some way, whether through preparing and delivering food to Wesley Hall that morning, or helping with set up, kitchen work, serving or clean up. The sign up sheets are in Wesley Hall. It is a joyful experience.

**The Clothing Corner**, located in the Cloud Room, is available all year round. Traditionally, at Thanksgiving, we try to make available gently used, clean outerwear. We have submitted a request for coats through LI Cares, but if you have any coats, jackets or any warm winter clothing to donate, you can bring them to the church office for the time being.

Your donation can be the difference between a child or an adult shivering through the winter, or feeling warm and secure.

Thank you. Blessings to you all.

—Barbara Becker

## Thank You, Lord, For Everything

**grat-i-tude**  
[grat i tood]  
*noun*  
the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness

Dear Lord,  
Thank you for the breathe to say  
Thank you for another day  
Thank you for the eyes to see the world of beauty surrounding me

Thank you for the ears to hear your message of hope loud and clear  
Thank you for the hands to serve and far more blessings than I deserve  
Thank you for the legs to run the race of life until it's won  
Thank you for the voice to sing  
Thank you Lord for everything

—Anonymous

## Retired Pastor Reviews Worship Services

She sat silently among Quakers. She had her ear drums nearly punctured by amped-up praise bands. She breathed incense with the Greek Orthodox, and joined a hot chocolate-sipping cowboy church crowd.

As a newly retired United Methodist pastor, the Rev. Christy Thomas attended worship at 50 different places from summer 2014 to summer 2015, and wrote about her experiences as a columnist for the Denton (Texas) Record-Chronicle.

There were highs and lows, and the lows were way down there. “There were about five churches I went to where I walked out the door and said, ‘Get me to the nearest bar,’” said Thomas, 66.

Many United Methodists know Thomas as a blogger who has written candidly and passionately on a range of denominational issues, including the Bishop Earl Bledsoe controversy in 2012.

As pastor of First United Methodist Church in Krum, Texas, Thomas also wrote columns on the Christian life for the Krum Star newspaper and the Record-Chronicle in nearby Denton, about 40 miles north of Dallas.

Thomas retired as pastor in December 2013, in part to spend more time writing. The Record-Chronicle’s managing editor, Scott Parks, decided she should continue her column but model it after one that Rice University professor William Martin used to write for Texas Monthly magazine.

Martin, a biographer of Billy Graham, would visit a place of worship somewhere in Texas and write about the service.

Parks really liked that idea. “I was always fascinated by the idea of a knowledgeable and credible person going to visit different churches and then reporting on what he found,” he said.

Thomas had known Martin when she was an undergraduate at Rice, and had majored in anthropology there. So she was game to follow Martin’s example and bring her social science background to bear.

Her worship review columns began last summer and appeared almost every week for a year. She reported on her visits to a wide range of churches, as well to a Reform Jewish Shabbat service and Muslim prayers.

Though she has collected the columns on her website under the title “Mystery Worship Series,” Thomas always introduced herself before the service to an usher or the pastor, and explained what she was doing.

“That was Scott’s request,” she said. “He wanted to make sure this was above board, that people didn’t feel that I had snuck in or not been up front.”

Welcomes, warm and otherwise Thomas’ accounts were, in the main, reportorial, offering a visitor’s perspective. She would cover everything from parking to the quality of the sound system to the availability of gluten-free communion bread to the organization of the sermon.

Almost always, she would note the welcome she received.

“I am often ignored when I, an older woman, walk into a church alone,” she wrote in one column. “Immediate greetings come if I am accompanied by a male companion. The greeters swarm all over us if I have young people with me. But we older women aren’t called invisible for nothing.”

(The church she was visiting that Sunday— St. Andrew Presbyterian in Denton —was a happy exception, with members greeting her warmly.)

Thomas had many good experiences, including at two United Methodist churches she reviewed: First United Methodist in Denton, and Hollywood United Methodist in Los Angeles. She found herself deeply moved by the highly liturgical Greek Orthodox service she attended, and by a far simpler Quaker service she attended. (United Methodists, Thomas believes, could learn a lot about holy conferencing from Quakers.)

Of Friendship Baptist, an African-American church in The Colony, Texas, Thomas would write glowingly:

“I was enveloped and engulfed by the music, led by this exquisite set of voices, highlighted by two soloists. I

**Continued on Page 7**

### November Birthdays

**Nov. 4** Kiley Kecky

**Nov. 10** Montana Queen

**Nov. 16** Josie Hoag

The deadline for the December issue of

**The Link** is **November 20**.

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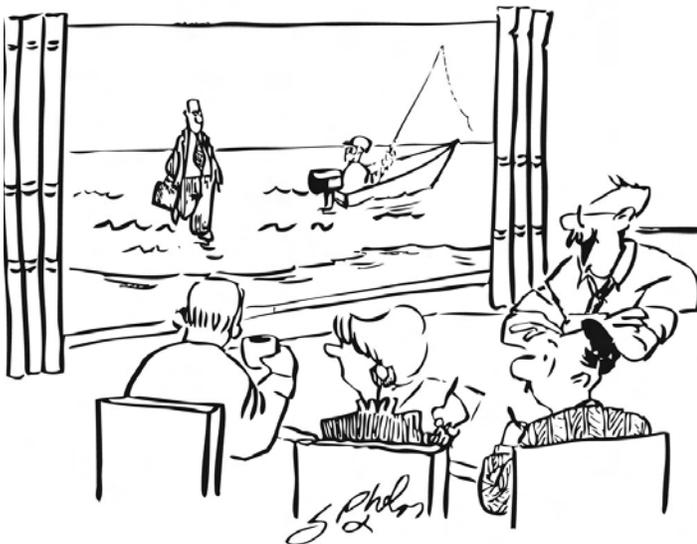
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### A Note About Restoring Hope

Our Restoring Hope capital campaign was completed several years ago but funds may continue to be contributed. All Restoring Hope contributions go to the Trustees who have continuing building expenses but no other current source of revenue.

## Church Reviews (from Page 5)

was near tears by the time they finished, steeped in a sense of the holy presence of God, touched by the expressions of response by various members of the congregation during this time.”

When Thomas had a bad experience, her reports for the newspaper were restrained — notable more for lack of enthusiasm than for outright criticism. But she would post the columns on her blog and then offer more commentary, a kind of director’s cut of her impressions.

Of one megachurch where she heard the prosperity gospel preached amid aggressive appeals for money, Thomas wrote on her blog: “I think it is the most evil place I have ever seen.”

The prosperity gospel, Neo-Calvinist theology, lousy biblical exegesis and any worship service where the pastor and praise band’s performance seemed to matter more than the congregation’s involvement in worship—all these were subjects for hot comment on Thomas’ blog. When any of those elements was combined with male-only church leadership, she felt even more need to vent.

Thomas spent years in conservative church circles, including as a student at Dallas Theological Seminary. While grateful for the academic rigor there (especially the grounding in Hebrew and New Testament Greek) she ultimately rebelled against its theology and

restrictions on women as ministers and found her way to Southern Methodist University’s Perkins School of Theology and The United Methodist Church.

The year as worship service reviewer wore on her as she often went to churches of a kind she’d fled years ago, as well to other churches whose theology and worship style she found objectionable.

“If I had not been well-grounded as a Christian, I would have lost my faith,” Thomas said.

### A new gig

This summer, she and Parks agreed she needed for her sake to end the reviewing column. But they came up with an alternative.

Both are fans of the “Dear Prudence” advice column on Slate, so Thomas has in recent weeks been writing something similar for the Record-Chronicle under the title “Ask the Thoughtful Pastor.”

Thomas had expected to get light-hearted or basic factual questions, but readers have asked about abortion, biblical inerrancy and the value of prayer. So Thomas has been giving her opinions—in a pastoral tone, but with no varnish.

The questions keep coming, and there have been letters to the editor about her column too.

“People like it or hate it,” Thomas said. “But they’re reading it.”

—Sam Hodges, UMNS

## Methodist Theological School “Cares For Creation”

The majestic, snow-capped mountains of Estes Park, Colorado, provided a perfect setting for The United Methodist Church’s Rocky Mountain Conference in June.

I was especially inspired by the focus of the conference this year, “Renewal of Creation,”

Our earth, along with all of us that call it home, is facing precarious times. Our planet is warming, animal species are disappearing at an alarming rate, and the poor and vulnerable bear the greatest burden of these changes.

Pope Francis’ much anticipated encyclical on the environment is candid about the enormity of these problems. We have lost sight of our important role as stewards of creation and there’s no more profound example of this than that of our current system of agriculture.

As the granddaughter of a minister and farmer, Psalm 24:1 has always held special meaning for me: “The earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains.”

This is a fact repeated throughout Scripture. While God commanded Adam and Eve to “rule over” every living thing (Gen. 1:26), He did not relinquish ownership.

Over the last 50 years, our system of agriculture has shifted dramatically from small and moderate-sized family farms to industrial-scale facto-

Continued on Page 8

### Can You Help?

Lenny could use a hand with food deliveries, Fridays, 10:30 a.m.

10 Church St., Patchogue, NY 11772

Rev. Hyo Jung (Dawn) Yoon, Pastoral Minister

Camille Flynn, Administrative Assistant

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## Creation (from Page 7)

ry farms, characterized by a vertically integrated production system.

These changes have come at enormous costs to the farmers, land and animals. Once upon a time, animals were raised. Now, they are referred to as “production units” on these large industrial farms. Factory farms deny animals their natural behaviors and tendencies, and eliminate the sacred bond that exists between the farmer, his land and the animals.

Industrial agriculture is also the leading contributor to greenhouse gases.

Yet, there are beacons of hope on the American landscape. This June, I had the privilege of visiting the Methodist Theological School in Ohio. Just over a year ago, they constructed a

small farm on a beautiful knoll on the edge of campus.

Today, the Seminary Hill Farm has 180 varieties of fruits and vegetables that supply the local school’s cafeteria with 80 percent of its produce. The meat and dairy the school purchases are procured from nearby family farms with high animal welfare standards. Young seminarians that will shape the future of our church are learning valuable lessons through that farm.

As the earth “groans in travail” (Rom 8:22), sometimes the easiest solutions to these complex problems are found right below our feet, in the dust of the earth.

Pope Francis’ encyclical on the environment is also optimistic about the

incredible possibilities before us. He calls out to all people of faith, not just Catholics, to join together to find solutions to environmental problems. In fact, the survival of our churches may depend on us collaboratively taking action.

As many of our churches grapple with declining membership, the Pope points out, “Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded.”

We are all made from the same dust of the earth (Gen. 2:7). Our bodies are made up of her elements, and only together can we preserve what so uniquely binds us as one.

—Reasa Currier, UMNS