

The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

September 2021

Navigating Troubled Times In Faith

Needless to say, these are troubled times.

I can remember my parents telling me about the Great Depression, World War II and ration cards and all the struggles their generation went through.

Then, as a kid, I can recall school drills of having to huddle under our desks covering our heads in case the Soviet Union dropped a nuclear bomb on us. A lot good that tactic would have been during a nuclear explosion?

I guess every generation has their stories to tell about troubled times. As for me, I can honestly say that recent times have been the most troubling times of all.

For twenty years our country has been at war against terrorism. I can remember the twin towers of the World Trade Center collapsing one floor upon the other.

When I traveled down to Ground Zero as a volunteer for three months—at first, I couldn't believe my eyes. How is it possible? Over two hundred floors of architecture, each with hundreds of people on them, just crumbled into a pile of twisted steel, pulverized plastics and an assortment of other items that helped maintain the balance of the financial world.

The cloud of dust, everywhere, was like walking through a foggy night in London. It just seems our world progressively got worse after that one horrific September morning twenty-years ago this month.

If terrorism perpetrated on our soil and around the world wasn't enough— atrocities like that we saw carried out by ISIS and other groups—we then witnessed the horrific and callous murder of George Floyd.

That one incident erupted in an explosion of protests and rioting across our nation that devastated commercial businesses, other properties and even the loss of human lives.

Continued on Page 2

WORSHIP IN SEPTEMBER

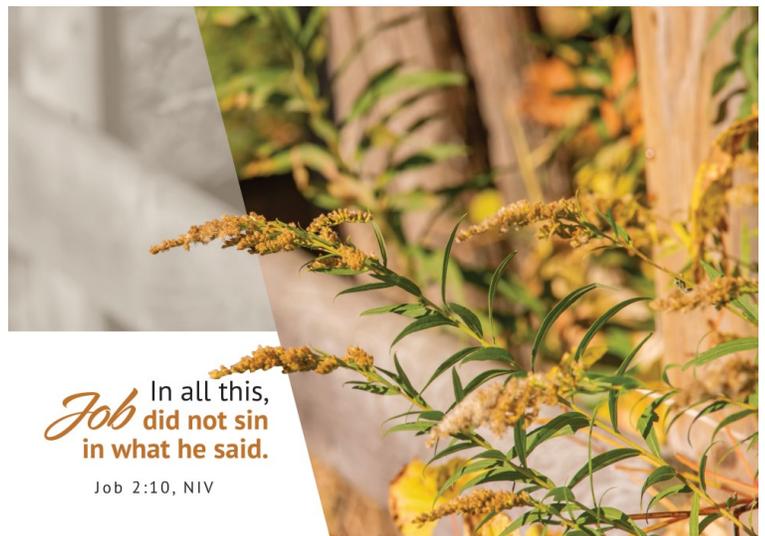
Sept 5— Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 7: 24-37

Sept 12—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 8: 27-38

Sept 19—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 9:30-37

Sept 26—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 9: 38-50

Worship is still with some Covid restrictions. Masks are required.



Job In all this,
did not sin
in what he said.

Job 2:10, NIV

Circle of Concern

Bereavement

Prayers for the family and friends of **Bill Morgan**, our former choir director

Kenny Streck, Kathy Halliwell's brother

Noreen, sister of Bob Rogers. (Bob Rogers)

Healing

Anita Helfst who is suffering with the effects of COPD and is back in the hospital. (Kathy Halliwell)

Bruce Kirschner who fell and is back home. (Carol Kirschner)

Continued Prayers

Brianna Maglio, Baby Gregory, Richard Pryor, Bob Arndst, Lynn Russo, Harry Higbie, Rhandi, Barbara Lyons, Tom King, Niall Morrissey, Jay Murdock, Mary Ann Hannan, Louise Russo, Katie Blumenthal, Carol Anderson, Suzanne Tierney, Diane Dain, Nancy Schaff, Bill Schaff, Yarrington Family, Ulla Ziegler Pereira, Reah, Christopher Racciopo, Andrew Acerra, Said Mirzaali, Maryellen Comacho, Suzanne Dalton, Travis Gentile, Kimberly Helfst, Joyce Gabrinowitz

Compiled by Kathy Halliwell

*Please email Kathy—
keats1002@gmail.com with any
additions or deletions.*

These in Rehab or Nursing Care

Geri Sheridan and Robert Krawzak in Brookhaven Health Care Facility, 801 Gazzola Dr., East Patchogue, NY

Troubled Times (From Page 1)

On top of that, our nation and the world were attacked, not by terrorists or rioters, but rather the deadly virus COVID-19 and the Delta Variant that has become COVID on steroids.

In the midst of all of this, who would have ever thought that the very capitol of our nation would also come under attack by a mob of thousands while our House of Representatives and the Senate were in full sessions?

Then, the mayhem and total chaos that went on in Afghanistan needs no further description.

Yes, these are indeed troubled times we are living in. Many have expressed how surprised they are that situations like this are going on in his or her lifetime.

However, if you read the Scriptures, you can plainly see that God told us that we will experience troubled times. We will experience hardships. It is not hard for our faith to wane when we are traversing troubled times. But by the grace of God, we have been given the gift of faith.

The Apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians that we are to walk by faith and not by the things we see. Yes, we can find it difficult to trust God in difficult and uncertain times; but God's ways are not our ways.

When we put our trust in God during troubled times, God will provide us a peace and calm in the midst of the storm. God is ready and able to lift the heavy burdens we tend to carry around.

Listen, am I troubled by all that is going on in our world? Of course, I am. I am human just like everyone else. However, when I remember to turn to our Lord in prayer in the midst of my troubled heart and mind—the Lord always comes through with His peace that the world could never offer.

May we walk together through these challenging times, holding onto our faith knowing that our God is still seated on the Throne.

In His Grip,

—Pastor Chuck

A Back to School Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for bringing us back to our school buildings where we make so many happy memories and grow more with each passing year.

Let us not ever take for granted the joy and inspiration we get from learning from each other and being together in person.

Thank you for our nurses, doctors, and other frontline workers who work so hard to fight Covid each day. May we seek to emulate their sense of duty and compassion for everyone we meet.

Lord, we pray that you would protect us this coming school year from everything that might harm us. Help us take good care of one another, and help us remember to care for our own health and wellness, too.

May we shine with the light of Your goodness and mercy, everywhere we go.

Amen.

—mamamanages.com

United Methodist Church of Patchogue September 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 10:00 a.m.— Church open for worship.	6 Office Closed	7 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry	8	9	10	11
12 10:00 a.m.— Church open for worship.	13 Office Closed	14 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry	15	16	17	18
19 10:00 a.m.— Church open for worship.	20 Office Closed	21 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry	22	23	24	25
26 10:00 a.m.— Church open for worship.	27 Office Closed	28 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry	29	30		

Freedom

Freedom is a word that has been bandied about a lot over this last year. Honest, rational discussion of what it means to be free and to live in a free society would be an excellent thing. A dialogue that could deepen and broaden our understanding of freedom.

But, for the most part, that hasn't happened. Instead, it has become a rallying cry narrowly focused on the issue of pandemic protocols and vaccine dissemination. What was and is a public health issue was cynically and deliberately turned into a political football.

In the early centuries of our country, when much of the land was sparsely settled, (except by indigenous people) you could make a case for individuals seeking to live as they pleased, isolated from large groupings of other people, defining the parameters of their life.

But, the minute a person becomes part of a community, it cannot strictly be about that individual's desires. Especially in a large country that is operating as a democracy. It is no longer- 'I can do whatever I please, however I please.' That is more akin to anarchy than democracy. Life in a free, democratic society needs to be based on a foundation of mutual responsibility, cooperation, and respect. And when a disease sweeps across a country, then, more than ever, people must work together to combat it and suppress it. The virus is an equal opportunity offender—it cares not what your political party or ideological beliefs are.

There have been some valid individual anxieties about the vaccines. But, I read a comment that the covid vaccines weren't real vaccines, because they couldn't guarantee you wouldn't get the disease even if vaccinated. But what all three can do is prevent you from becoming seriously ill, hospitalized, or dying. The statistics have shown that 99.2% of people who died from Covid in recent months were unvaccinated, as were over 90% of those hospitalized.

Listen, I really don't like wearing a mask, especially when it's hot. They're uncomfortable, it's hard to hear what people are saying, and sometimes it's hard to breathe. But if it means that I am working together with family, friends and community to minimize the spread of the virus, then so be it. And it does work.

Ask ourselves how bad was the most recent flu season — exactly—virtually no cases, because we were wearing masks, washing hands, distancing. Even before the vaccines.

I think the controversies about mask mandates in schools and other public places are ill advised, no matter the stated reasons. It is only when we work together cooperatively that we can defeat a very determined, aggressive opponent. Please, get vaccinated, wear masks, wash your hands, care for one another.

—Barbara Becker



UMCOR Supports

Afghans In Need

For more than 40 years Afghanistan has been wracked by wars, civil strife, invasion and massive amounts of arms shipped in from outside forces. It is one of the poorest countries in the world, with high infant and maternal mortality rates, and millions of Afghans have been displaced as refugees over these many years.

Today the country is again at a point of transition with great uncertainty about the future. Thousands of Afghans are seeking to flee violence and a fear of persecution. Roland Fernandes, general secretary of Global Ministries and UMCOR, expressed his sympathy for the Afghan people, stating: "The situation in Afghanistan is uncertain and unfolding. It is a tragedy of epic proportions. We pray especially for all of those left behind who now live in fear and for the many communities across Afghanistan also facing extended drought and hunger."

Global Ministries and the United Methodist Committee on Relief have long-standing partners in Afghanistan, with projects and programs dating back to the mid-1960s. The work has been, and continues to be, in partnership with local Afghan communities, as well as with other humanitarian agencies concerned with health, community development and human rights.

UMCOR is working with these partners to determine what assistance is most helpful at this time and the best avenue for ensuring humanitarian relief reaches the country. Through one project, UMCOR will provide cash assistance to displaced families residing

in the Kabul area, enabling them to prioritize their most urgent needs such as food, shelter or medicine. Those interested in supporting UMCOR's response in Afghanistan can make gifts online at [here](#) or by checks sent to Global Ministries/UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087-9068, with Advance #982450 noted on the memo line.

UMCOR is also prepared to assist with refugee resettlement through its partnership with Church World Service and is currently in conversation about assisting Church World Service with temporary housing for Afghan refugees. Those interested in supporting the UMCOR-CWS partnership can make gifts online here or by checks sent to Global Ministries/UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY 10087-9068, with Advance #3022144 in the memo line.

"The United Methodist Church is one of the denominations that helped launch Church World Service in 1945 and CWS remains UMCOR's primary partner in refugee resettlement work," said Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton of the New York Conference, president of UMCOR. "It is imperative that we continue this long-standing tradition as United Methodists by being active in this humanitarian effort."

In the last few years, CWS has resettled thousands of refugee families in the U.S. with visas issued under the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program and SIV Program, a Special Immigration Visa created by Congress to ensure that no U.S. ally is left in danger.

—UMCOR

Colleges, Seminaries Grapple With Shot, Mask Mandates

United Methodist-related colleges and United Methodist seminaries are scrambling with the rest of higher education as another fall term begins in the COVID-19 pandemic.

The arrival of vaccines earlier this year promised a return to something like usual campus life. But schools are resuming amid a recent, sharp rise in case numbers and hospitalizations, due to the highly contagious delta variant and many Americans resisting vaccination.

Colleges and seminaries have had to weigh whether to mandate shots and mask-wearing. Their decisions are hardly uniform.

I think it's accurate to say that it's all over the map," said Scott Miller, president of Virginia Wesleyan University and immediate past president of the North American Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges and Universities. "It depends on what part of the country how institutions are responding, and it's primarily because of political influences in the state."

Virginia Wesleyan is requiring vaccinations, and Miller said faculty and staff have all had shots except for a handful exempted for religious or medical reasons, and that students have a 98% vaccination rate.

As fall term opens, Virginia Wesleyan will slightly exceed its projection of 400 in the first-year class.

"We had an additional 15 that probably would have come but said they did not want to abide by our vac-

ination requirement," Miller said. "(The policy) has not significantly impacted us in the enrollment area."

Like a lot of schools, Virginia Wesleyan responded to the recent surge of COVID-19 cases with a mask requirement in classrooms and some other indoor settings.

"We know this news may disappoint some, especially given that our community has done its part to keep each other safe," Miller wrote in an Aug. 13 memo.

At United Methodist-related Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama, masks are required in classroom settings. But politically conservative Alabama has since May 24 had a law prohibiting schools, public or private, from requiring students to prove a change in immunization status.

Meanwhile, Alabama is one of the states struggling most with COVID-19, including having a dire shortage of ICU beds.

Huntingdon is strongly encouraging vaccinations, and about 60% of students have had shots, with staff at 80% and faculty at 100% vaccinated.

"We certainly recognize that all of those statistics are better than the Alabama average," said Anthony Leigh, Huntingdon's senior vice president for student and institutional development.

Certainly our student percentage is well above the Alabama average for individuals (ages) 18 to 29."

Another United Methodist-related college in Alabama, Birmingham-Southern, has made news with its vaccination policy, which some have

Continued on Page 7

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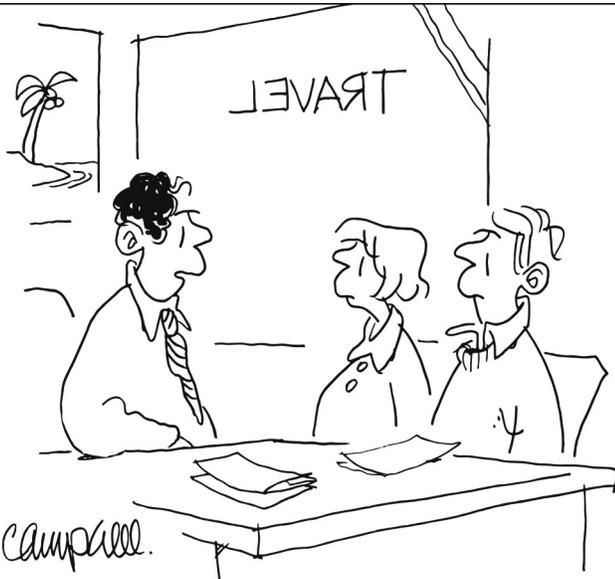


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"You can still find an unspoiled paradise,
but I'm afraid you have to die first."

Thanks To Lawn Mowers

Lenny Pearson and I would like to thank four volunteers who cut the lawn while Lenny recovered from shoulder replacement surgery. The church owes a debt of gratitude to Trudy Mansfield, Bob Prince, Steve Rice, and Terry Ryan. Each cut would cost at least \$70, twenty plus times per season. This includes more than mowing, We first have to pick up all the garbage blown on to the lawn.

—Dave Hollowell

The deadline for the October issue
of **The Link** is September 24
Please email your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

criticized as a way around the state law forbidding mandates.

“Due to the lack of federal funds for pandemic precautions this term, all students will initially be charged \$500 for the fall term to offset continual weekly antigen testing and quarantining,” the Birmingham-Southern policy says. “Students who are fully vaccinated prior to the beginning of fall term will receive an immediate \$500 rebate.”

Millsaps College, in Jackson, Mississippi, is among schools offering vaccination clinics on campus. Though vaccinations are not required at United Methodist-related Millsaps, students who prove they’ve been vaccinated can enter drawings for \$500 gift cards.

“That’s our big incentive right now,” said Annie Mitchell, Millsaps’ vice president of marketing and communications.

On Aug. 23, the Federal Drug Administration gave full approval to the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, a move expected to prompt many employers, including schools, to require vaccines.

United Methodist-related Illinois Wesleyan University, in Bloomington, Illinois, immediately announced a vaccine requirement for students.

The 13 United Methodist seminaries also are having to make decisions about vaccinations and masks.

Claremont School of Theology, with campuses in Claremont, California, and at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, has decided to stick with online classes only for fall term.

“Our faculty and students were expressing significant anxieties amidst the uncertainties of the COVID situation,” said the Rev. Kah-Jim Jeffrey Kuan, president. “Both California and Oregon have reinstated indoor mask mandates. Given that our faculty are very experienced in remote learning, both synchronous and asynchronous, the ones scheduled to teach in-person learning can pivot quite readily.”

Some other United Methodist seminaries, such as Garrett-Evangelical Seminary in Evanston, Illinois, and Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington are returning to in-person learning for the first time since the pandemic gripped the U.S. in March 2020.

“What I’m hearing is that people are glad to be back in person because of the connection, the community,” said the Rev. Javier Viera, Garrett’s president. “But there is anxiety. And people got accustomed to new ways of working.”

Both Garrett and Wesley are requiring vaccinations and indoor masking for those on campus.

“I’m not going to say we’re back to normal,” said the Rev. David McAllister-Wilson, Wesley’s president. “Nobody thinks that anymore.”

Saint Paul School of Theology, with campuses in Leawood, Kansas, and Oklahoma City, and United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, are among the United Methodist schools encouraging, not requiring, vaccinations. They report strong compliance. Their leaders share with Viera and McAllister-Wilson the view that

online education has had advantages for seminaries, including strengthening enrollment and better serving apprentice pastors of rural and small-town United Methodist churches, who have time and distance challenges being on campus.

At Saint Paul, chapel had to move online when the pandemic hit, with a 300% jump in attendance.

“It’s continued to be a lot higher,” said the Rev. Jeanne Hoeft, vice president for academic affairs and dean. Tragic as the pandemic has been, said the Rev. Kent Millard, president of United, it has forced seminaries to innovate faster.

“It made online acceptable,” he said.

But for private colleges and universities, the in-person experience is a huge selling point.

“I don’t think (the pandemic) is going to drive students to online education in the long haul,” said Miller of Virginia Wesleyan. “They want the interpersonal relationships in the classrooms with other students and professors. They want to be able to join a fraternity or sorority. They want to be part of intercollegiate athletics.”

The Rev. Dave Allen is cheered by what he’s seeing as fall term begins at Duke University, where he leads Duke Wesley, the United Methodist fellowship.

“For one thing, we have a full campus now,” Allen said. “We probably have twice as many students living on campus as we did a year ago,

Continued on Page 8

10 Church St., Patchogue, NY 11772

The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Pastoral Minister
 Camille Flynn, Administrative Assistant
 Office Phone: 631-475-0381 | Fax: 631-475-3132
 Email: PatchogueUMC@Yahoo.com
 Office Hours: Tues-Friday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
 Worship Video Livestreaming at PatchogueUMC.Org
 Previous services available.



Colleges Grapple (From Page 7)

when (Duke) took steps to spread out the student population.”

Duke is requiring vaccinations and indoor masking, and with those protocols in place, Allen plans to resume holding worship indoors. He’s eager to have his group sharing Sunday night meals again, too.

“The eating we do together is incredibly important to the fellowship we build,” he said. “We weren’t able to share any meals all during the last school year.”

Huntingdon College had an online-only option for students last year but has ended that, wanting all students to experience campus life fully.

The school is retaining a schedule it experimented with last year—starting

fall term early and concluding just before Thanksgiving break.

At least one other innovation from the first pandemic year remains: a food truck, serving hot wings and more.

“That was a huge hit,” said Leigh, the Huntingdon administrator. “It continues to be a popular thing.”

—Sam Hodges UMNS

September Birthdays

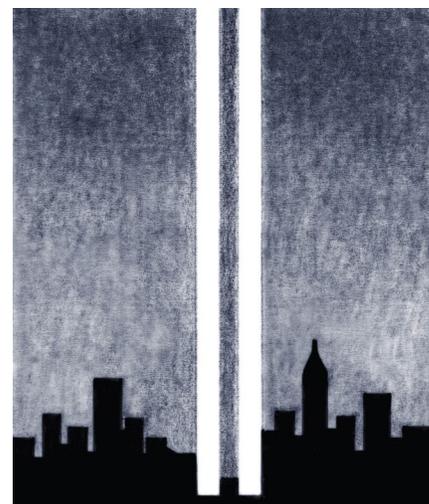
Sept 1 Terry Ryan

Sept 17 Cailin Rogers

Sept 20 Renee Jaymes Schwartz

September Anniversary

Sept 24 Betty & Paul Rice



IN REMEMBRANCE OF

SEPTEMBER 11