

December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Oneonta District Office UMC Newsletter**  
**of the Upper New York Annual Conference**

*“Living the gospel of Jesus Christ and Being God’s love with our neighbors in all places.”*

Please share this issue of the Oneonta District Newsletter with church members and staff, teams and organizations. If you wish to include news, that involves Missions send it a minimum of 7 days in advance

to: [OneontaDistrict@unyumc.org](mailto:OneontaDistrict@unyumc.org)



**Together, let us pray for**

*God’s Light and Hope during our Advent Journey  
The people of Westville UMC and Pastor Rose Bellen*

**All those who suffer and those in trouble**

*Our Muslim neighbors and friends  
The people of San Bernadino, Beirut, Paris, and all who suffer violence  
refugees and migrants fleeing Syria and Iraq  
all seeking a safe home  
those who struggle with addiction*

**for the concerns of our local communities**

*neighbors for whom Christmas is a difficult season due to loss, loneliness, depression, or family brokenness  
neighbors receiving God’s gift of love thru our Giving Tree gifts, Christmas baskets, and other ministries*

**for the world, its peoples, and its leaders**

*for wisdom and justice in our national and community conversations around racism  
for places of conflict, near and far- for grace to see each person as a child of God*

**for the Church universal- its leaders, its members, and its mission**

*Our participation in Africa 360- No More Malaria and Africa University*

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**Oneonta District Office UMC - Office Hours for Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015 – Jan 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Will be as follows:**

**Mon Dec 21<sup>st</sup>** – Not in office but working will be checking emails and phone messages

**Tues. Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>** -Office hrs. 8 am – 4PM

**Wed. Dec 23<sup>rd</sup>** -Not in office but working will be checking emails and phone messages

**Thurs. Dec 24<sup>th</sup> – Mon.Dec 28<sup>th</sup> -Christmas Holiday Office Closed**

**Tues. Dec 29<sup>th</sup>**- Office hrs 8:00 am – 4 PM

**Wed. Dec 30<sup>th</sup>**, -Not in office but working will be checking emails and phone messages

**Thurs. Dec 31<sup>st</sup> – Mon. Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> -Office Closed**

**We will resume regular office hours on Tuesday January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**NOTE\*** This will be the last Oneonta District Newsletter until the week of January 4<sup>th</sup>,



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

A central focus in many worship services during the Advent season is the Advent Wreath. The outer ring of the wreath holds four simple candles that represent so much: Hope, peace, joy, and love.

The world in which we live is crying out for what we claim in our liturgy of Advent. The candle in the center of the wreath represents the promise and reality of a Savior in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus, the One who will turn despair into hope, violence into peace, grief into joy, and injustice into love.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we - the United Methodist Bishops serving this great state of New York - call upon all of our congregations to claim and proclaim the fullness of our faith. Let us not live with an attitude of fear, but rather of assurance. Let us not contribute to ways of division and prejudice, but seek to live in harmony with one another. While we must pray, let us not just pray for an end to violence and disregard for human life, but boldly allow God to use our lives in action and word to seek solutions that offer peace and recognize the intrinsic value of every person. Let us show the world how God's amazing love transforms.

We must stand against acts of terror and those who choose these acts. We understand the need for our government to provide and ensure safety to its citizens, and we pray for God's wisdom upon our political leaders as they develop ways to more effectively and compassionately provide screening to those seeking to enter the United States. Closing our doors and demonizing whole categories of people becomes justification for the acts of violence by those who would harm us. We adamantly oppose any screening process that discriminates solely on one's religious faith.

In the midst of security, we also recognize the need for radical hospitality to find a way. Those who are fleeing the very acts of terror we are attempting to protect ourselves from, must be given refuge. Syrian women, men, and children are fleeing war and the rise of ISIS, and we must find a way to offer the promise of Advent.

We call upon United Methodists in New York to welcome those seeking refuge, to advocate for systems that will deal with this international crisis, and to offer hope, peace, joy, and love to all, in the name and person of Jesus the Christ.

May God give us courage for these days. As we trust the promises of God, may we share those promises with the world around us.

Through the grace of God,

Bishop Mark J. Webb  
Upper New York Conference

Bishop Jane Allen Middleton  
New York Conference



## District Events Coming Up

Date	Time	Item	Location
Sun. Feb. 28th	9:00 am Social Hour and Lunch to Follow	Bishop Webb preaching in Unadilla	Unadilla 1 <sup>st</sup> UMC
Tues., March 1st, 2016	9am-2:30m	Lenten Day Apart for Pastors	Cooperstown UMC
Sat., March 5th, 2016	TBA	Oneonta District Day	Elm Park UMC

Thurs., April 14th, 2016	TBA	Bishop's Day on the District	Norwich Broad Street UMC
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### SUPPORT AFRICA 360

#### **Help Oneonta District move into first place participation in Africa 360!**

How to get involved ?



There are all new materials – brochures, bookmarks, envelopes can be ordered online, printable display, liturgy, and more at [www.unyumc.org/mission/Africa360](http://www.unyumc.org/mission/Africa360) (churches can find tools at the Africa 360 toolkit, linked to that page as well) For youth, a local church in the Crossroads district has created a project, complete with video and craft project (downloadable from [www.unyumc.org/mission/Africa-360-Toolkit](http://www.unyumc.org/mission/Africa-360-Toolkit)), and includes cross-generational experiences for congregations that are interested: <http://www.unyumc.org/news/article/prayer-partners-another-life-saving-tool-in-the-africa-360-toolkit>

Laurel O'Connor

Field Coordinator, Africa 360

Upper New York Conference

315-424-7878 ext. 327

Africa 360: Health and Education for Generations

*If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. –African Proverb*

### **Reminder of Reports that were due Dec., 1, 2015**

#### **Thank you to all who have taken care of this!**

Due Dec. 1, 2015 Following Regional Church/Charge Conference (*mail these to District Office*):

10. Church/Charge Conference Minutes(*with attachments*) \_\_\_\_\_

11. Church/Charge Conference Sign-In Sheet • \_\_\_\_\_

Due by December 1, 2015 (*Do not mail printed copy -- just update online*):- **Note Please don't forget to select yes and save when completed**

15. Church Profile\* (complete at <http://uny.umconline.org>) \_\_\_\_\_

16. Pastor's Profile\* (complete at <http://uny.umconline.org>) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Local Church News**

#### **NEW - Harry Potter is Coming to Church**

Join us at the **Sidney United Methodist Church on Thursday evenings beginning at 5:30 pm** as learn more about God, ourselves, and all things spiritual using the Harry Potter movies as a means delve into the Word. We will watch the movies, pausing after some of the scenes to discuss what we have seen and how it relates to scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments.

As we watch the movies, we will use the story lines, symbolism, the development of the characters and the choices they make to discuss matters of faith and Christian living in our current times. All are welcome to join us.

Please contact Pastor Gary Kubitz [aftonbainbridgeumc@yahoo.com](mailto:aftonbainbridgeumc@yahoo.com) with any questions.

### **What is the United Methodist Church doing for the European migration crisis?**

Thomas Kemper, General Secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries, has written [an open letter](#) regarding The United Methodist Church's response to the ongoing European migration crisis. In his letter, Kemper outlines the scope of the crisis, requests prayer as an immediate response, and highlights the work of the Unit-

ed Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). To lend your financial support, please send donations to UMCOR through the Upper New York Conference, 324 University Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Syracuse, N.Y. 13210 (please denote "Advance #982450" for International Disaster Response on your check). Additionally, UMCOR is providing food packets and hygiene kits on the island of Kos and Lesbos. [Click here](#) for details of how to assemble UMCOR relief kits. [Click here](#) to read more about The UMC's aid to European refugees.

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## UNY Conference Trustees activate Revolving Loan Fund

The Upper New York Conference is pleased to announce the activation of the Revolving Loan Fund. Upper New York's predecessor conferences had loan funds to assist churches for certain expenditures, primarily associated with real property, such as major repairs and capital improvements. These funds are now available for lending to UNY churches with these capital needs, when alternative financing is unavailable. [Details](#)

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## 'Track' your congregation's Ministry Shares progress

Through Ministry Shares, your local church supports amazing ministries around the world and in your backyard. The majority of Upper New York Conference churches are currently on track to pay 100 percent of their Ministry Share benevolence for 2015. [Click Here](#) to see the full list of on-track churches. Or go to : <http://www.unyumc.org/about/churches-on-track>



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## Nicaragua 2016

A VIM team will be going to Nicaragua in 2016. Tentative dates are March 3—17. The team will be working with Dr. Belinda Forbes, UM missionary dentist. Belinda works with Accion Medica Cristiana (Christian Medical Action/ AMC), an agency that works with some of the poorest people in Nicaragua, the second poorest country in our hemisphere. The team will probably do health related work but not direct medical care. Work might include assisting with dental care, health education, construction, etc. AMC will look at the team's skills and the community's needs to determine the work and the location. It is expected that the team will go to the northeastern region, the RACCN, which is regarded as the poorest area of Nicaragua.

The team is being sponsored by First UMC, Schenectady, which has a covenant relationship with Dr. Forbes. Anticipated cost will be \$2000-2500. Team leader is Cindy Schulte. You can contact her at [tacks5@hotmail.com](mailto:tacks5@hotmail.com) or 518-374-3012 for more information or an application. You can also contact Jan Huston for more information at [hustonjp24@gmail.com](mailto:hustonjp24@gmail.com) or 518-399-0919. AMC has a website where you can learn more about the work they do with the warm, friendly people of this beautiful country – <http://amcenglish.org>. It is hoped that the team will be formed by mid-Sept. so get your application in soon!

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**Conference Job Posting** - *Anyone inquiring about any open positions can go to <http://www.unyumc.org/about/jobs> and use the online application system for applying for open positions.*

### Job Posting –Manager of Operations, Camp & Retreat Ministries

**Posting Date:** 12/15/2015

**Location:** Syracuse, NY

The Upper New York Conference of The United Methodist Church is accepting applications for a full-time Manager of Operations, Camp and Retreat Ministries. The Conference operates six facilities which focus on summer camp and retreat ministries. The Manager of Operations will report to the Director of Camp and Retreat Ministries, and shall be responsible

for developing and implementing proactive and appropriate operating, human resources, financial, facility and grounds processes and procedures for the facilities. The goal is to support year-round programs and site outreach through exceeding guest needs and expectations, while being aligned with and supporting the Conference's mission, vision and values.

The successful candidate will have experience in operations or leadership at a camp, conference or retreat center, as well as an Associate's degree. It is essential the person who fills this role be organized, a critical thinker, with excellent communication skills, and the ability to work independently without constant direct supervision. This position also requires extensive travel across the Upper New York area, so a valid driver's license and good driving record is required, as well as the ability to work a flexible schedule.

Please refer to the job description for complete list of qualifications and responsibilities.

**Application Instructions:** To be considered for this position you must apply online at <http://www.unyumc.org/about/jobs> and include the following:

- Completed online application                      Resume                      Cover letter
- Contact information for three professional references

*The Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to building a diverse team. We strongly encourage women and men from all races and backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, and veterans to apply.*

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## Background Checks

If you need to perform a background check in relation to the safe sanctuaries policy, one may be obtained through Trusted Employees, a new corporate partner of Church Mutual. Trusted Employees provides a comprehensive range of applicant screening and verification services that are scalable, customizable, and can be integrated with applicant tracking systems. [Details here.](#)

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## Resources - January 2016

Each month, the Upper New York Conference Communications Ministry Team provides a list of dates and links to resources that churches and individuals may find helpful in preparation for worship and other occasions. Click on the links to find resources and more information.

- Jan. 1 - [New Year's Day](#)
  - Jan. 3 and 6 - [Epiphany Sunday/Epiphany of the Lord](#) commemorates the coming of the Magi to the holy family.
  - Jan. 10 - [Baptism of the Lord](#) celebrates Christ's baptism by John and reminds all Christians of our one baptism.
  - Jan. 11 - [Human Trafficking Awareness Day](#) draws attention to efforts to eradicate modern-day slavery.
  - Jan. 17 - [Human Relations Day](#) (offering) furthers the development of better human relations.
  - Jan. 18-24 - [Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#) develops Christian unity through prayer and fellowship.
  - Jan. 18 - [The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday Observance](#) celebrates Rev. King's contribution to freedom and equality for all people.
  - Jan. 24 - [Ecumenical Sunday](#), part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.
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## Upper New York Annual Conference - Important Dates/Deadlines for 2016

Be sure to mark the following dates and deadlines on your calendar for 2016:

- **Jan. 12:** 2015 Ministry Shares and direct bill payments due at the Conference Office by 4:30 p.m.
- **Feb. 15:** Final day to update 2015 statistical information in EZRA system (*Note: The EZRA site will open on Jan. 1 - statistics cannot be uploaded until that date.*)
- **Feb. 16:** Final day to submit petitions/resolutions to the Conference Office for AC '16
- **March 1:** Final day to get all other Pre-Conference materials to the Conference Office
- **March 15<sup>th</sup> – 2015 Financial Audit of your church records is due to the District Superintendent**
- **Early March:** Registration for the 2016 Annual Conference session opens
- **Early April:** Pre-Conference Workbook available
- **April 16:** Pre-Conference Briefing 9-11 a.m. at the Potsdam UMC
- **April 16:** Pre-Conference Briefing 4-6 p.m. at the Saratoga Springs UMC
- **April 30:** Pre-Conference Briefing 9-11 a.m. at the Casowasco Camp & Retreat Center in Moravia
- **April 30:** Pre-Conference Briefing 3-5 p.m. at the Sky Lake Camp & Retreat Center in Windsor
- **May 7:** Pre-Conference Briefing 9-11 a.m. at the Asbury Camp & Retreat Center in Perry
- **May 7:** Pre-Conference Briefing 3-5 p.m. at the Bemus Point UMC

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**Chuck Knows Church videos on The Committee at <http://www.chuckknowschurch.com>** The latest is Evangelism.-Other good ones are the Pilot, Hospitality, Reflecting the Community, and Our Purpose. Great for use with your Administrative Council or other leadership group! There is a downloadable discussion guide available for each segment.

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### Contact info for the Upper NY Conference is as follows:

Upper New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church  
324 University Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Syracuse, NY 13210

315) 424-7878 \* Toll-Free (855) 424-7878 \* Fax (315) 478-4869 \* Email: [www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)

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### Quick links

[Oneonta District Calander](#)\* [Oneonta District Newsletter](#)\* [Advocate](#) \* [Africa-360](#) \* [Benefits/Pension](#)  
\* [Bishop Mark J. Webb](#)\* [Bridge](#) \* [UNYAC Calendar](#) \* [Camp & Retreat Ministries \(CRM\)](#) \* [Classifieds](#)  
[Conference Council on Youth Ministries \(CCYM\)](#) \* [Contact UNYAC](#)\* [Disaster Response](#) \* [Finance](#) \*  
[Forms](#) \* [Imagine No Malaria](#) \* [Media Resource Center](#) \* [Volunteers-in-Mission](#)\*[UNYAC Weekly Digest](#)

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**The District Newsletter can be found at the Oneonta District website:**

<https://sites.google.com/site/oneontadistrictumc/> and at Conference Webpage at:

<http://www.unyumc.org/district/oneonta>

See us on Face book: [Oneonta District United Methodists](#)

**P.O. BOX 668 Oneonta NY, 13820 Phone/Fax: (607)441-5102**

Your Partners in Ministry at the Oneonta District Office,  
Rev. Jan Rowel, District Superintendent and Teresa Wood, Administrative Assistant

