

First United Methodist Church
101 East Main Street
Westfield, NY 14787

The Messenger

A publication of

First United Methodist Church of Westfield

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“Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God” (Psalms 31:5)

A journey of FAITH, a living HOPE, abundant LOVE



The Messenger

Fall 2015

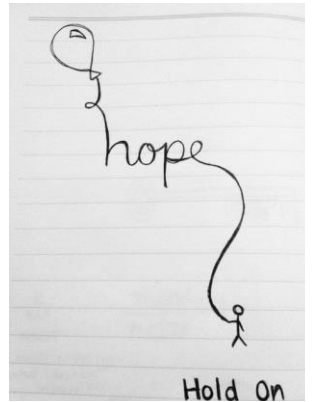
Pastor's Page

Keep a Grip on Hope

“I’ll never forget the trouble, the utter lostness, the taste of ashes, the poison I’ve swallowed. I remember it all—oh, how well I remember—the feeling of hitting the bottom. But there’s one other thing I remember, and remembering, I keep a grip on hope.

God’s loyal love couldn’t have run out, his merciful love couldn’t have dried up. They’re created new every morning. How great your faithfulness! I’m sticking with God (I say it over and over). He’s all I’ve got left.”

(Lamentations 3:19-24 MSG)



One of the pleasures of living in Westfield is to be able to swim in the pool at Welch Field in the summers. I love to begin my day early, saddling up my bicycle and riding over to the pool. Over the years I have overcome the need to approach this as a needed work out and it has truly become a blessing. When I approached it as a have to- it was so difficult to pull myself out of bed in the morning. But as the years have gone by and this routine has become what a difference.

Recently as I completed my swim, I was greeted by the newscast as it blared from the speakers of a nearby radio. Up first- Americans everywhere were wondering if their 401k plans were going to take another bath today as the economic difficulties in China wreaked havoc on the US Stock Market. This was followed up by the story of how the Dunkirk Power Plant, which was supposed to be retrofitted as a natural gas burner, was instead going to be mothballed. This means all employees would lose their jobs and the Tax Base for the City of Dunkirk, Dunkirk Schools and Chautauqua County all were going to take a major hit. This was followed up by breaking news of news reporter and camera man being shot in cold blood in Virginia by an assailant who eventually shot himself- AFTER POSTING A VIDEO OF HIS HORRIFIC CRIME on Facebook and Twitter for all the world to see!

At this point, I truly felt assaulted by this intrusion on my morning. I could feel all the good endorphins just draining out of my body as I thought of the poor families involved. I was more than angry at the radio station that presents the news in this fashion. These are real people that

they treat so casually when they report these stories. And if the stories aren’t horrible enough in their own right, they preface these stories with, “You might want to stay in bed this morning.”

My mind goes into overdrive when faced with these situations. My first thought is why would anybody in their right mind allow the news to be part of their early morning routine? Then I think of the very real people involved: those who make their livings on Wall Street or in the power plants like Dunkirk or depend on retirement income. What about all the programs that will go unfunded and need to be cut? What about the families of the victims in the shooting in Virginia? What about the family of the shooter? Of course we can just get on with our day because these things always happen somewhere else right? (What Westfield flood?) Then my thoughts turn to God. Why do things have to be this way? Will the insanity ever end?

Then my thoughts turn to those words of Lamentations where the writer who, in spite of no apparent reason to do so, puts his hope in the Lord no matter what. That “*when life is heavy and hard to take, go off by yourself and enter the silence. Bow in prayer . . . Wait for hope to appear.*” (Lam 3:28,29) Words of scripture are as pertinent today as they were when they were written 4000 years ago. In the end, our hope /help is in the name of the Lord who made the heavens and the earth.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Matt

Ad Board (Pam Gross – Chair)

The Administrative Board, along with its usual charge of identifying, developing, deploying, evaluating, and monitoring the Christian leadership for the local congregation, has been studying the book “Walking with Nehemiah – Your Community Is Your Congregation”, by Joseph W. Daniels Jr. As stated by John Wesley, the Founder of Methodism, “The world is my parish.” This statement reminds us of the many opportunities we have to build connections and make disciples with the people in our very own community. It is our hope that by reading, praying and having discussion about this book, we too will find better ways of interacting, engaging, and building relationships with those both living in and in our surrounding communities.

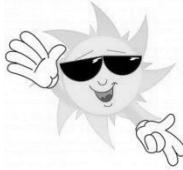


Trustee Report (Bill Gross – Chair)

Have you noticed the changes and repairs around the church? The ladies restroom repairs from frozen pipe damage have been completed. The window trim around the outside windows on the fellowship hall was painted by Ann Gollnitz. The window trim around the front stained glass windows has been painted with new lexan window covers coming soon. Brush on the side driveway has been trimmed and cleaned up. New memorial benches were purchased and are being installed in place of the old benches. The side wooden door will be scraped, stained, and varnished very soon. Roof cap repair will also be starting soon. Stay tuned for more to come!



Got some Sunshine to Share?

 We have several church members who aren't able to get out and about much anymore. Some are at home, in assisted living centers, or nursing homes. They ALL enjoy a visit! A few minutes, perhaps one of our devotionals and some conversation helps a lot to brighten their day, and pass the time. A list of our seniors is posted on the Welcome Center Bulletin Board, or call Jan VanOrd at 326-2023.

UMW

The UMW has decided to update their policy on funeral luncheons and wanted to update the congregation on these changes. Funeral luncheons will, for the most part, be catered. The UMW/UMW II will provide setup of tables, overseeing the kitchen, making the coffee and assisting the family. Food arrangements will need to be provided by the family. (Catering suggestions are available).

If you would be willing to assist with funeral luncheons in any way, please contact Trudy Stafford, Ann Gollnitz or Andi Mansfield.



UMW (United Methodist Women)

We are having a successful year. Things we supported are:

- new bench,
- Pastor Molly's trip to Haiti
- Shipping dresses to Africa
- Donations to the Technology Committee to help out with a new sound system for the sanctuary

We hosted one of the districts UMW's annual Communion Breakfasts in March.

We did three funeral luncheons (Barb Seiter, Bill & Pat Lanz and Mary Ellen Ross). The UMW II women also helped out with the lunches and assisted in the yearly cleaning up of the kitchen.

We took on the responsibility of supplying the kitchen with paper products – paper towels, napkins, cups, and small plates. So far we have spent \$465.32.

Many of us worked at the two rummage sales we had (one spring and one fall) as well as parking cars during the craft festival.

UMW is open to all women in the church (whether you are a member of the church or not). UMW meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month at noon and UMW II meets monthly (2nd Tuesday night at 7pm) For more information on UMW – contact Trudy Stafford (326-2764) or UMW II – contact Ann Gollnitz(326-2123)

Coffee, Anyone?



One morning at the Annual Upper New York Conference, shortly after we started attending to business, Bishop Webb realized he had made a mistake. He was out of sync, and blamed it on the lack of coffee. He called for a ten minute break so he could get some caffeine and get back on the right track. When he stepped back on stage, there were three cups of coffee waiting for him, and with his great sense of humor, he decided to try to sell it, with the proceeds going to Africa 360. With a laugh, he asked if anyone would give \$100 for a cup of coffee, and immediately, someone jumped up with the money! The bishop and the 1,200 Methodist in attendance were awestruck – so he pushed his luck and asked for \$200 for the next cup, and someone purchased that one. Bishop Webb went out on a limb and asked for \$500 for the last cup. Once again, someone (who admitted later that she doesn't even drink coffee) went up to the stage to get the coffee. In a matter of three or four minutes, the conference had \$800 for Africa 360. The Bishop taught us that if you are passionate about something, go for it, persuade others to join you, and have fun doing it!



Africa 360 is the Upper New York Conference's holistic plan for health and education initiatives in Africa. Uniquely, Africa 360 is about dreaming God-sized dreams, ambitiously eliminating preventable deaths from malaria and equipping the next generation of leaders. This will not only enable people to be healthier, but also provide for themselves and be more independent.



Annual “Indoor” Yard Sale”

Friday, October 23 & Saturday, October 24

Start saving household items. You may bring items starting – October 6th

If you are interested in helping out – please contact Andi Mansfield, Phyllis Gutz or Ann Gollnitz.

Food Pantry (Betty Syper)

Hello to all of my church family. I am writing to bring you up to date in the community food pantry. David and I have done some painting and rearranging in the food pantry. We may know soon if we get our grant for a new freezer, and since April we have served 504 clients (of which 45 were flood victims, 16 other emergencies, and 22 new clients). We have enjoyed working in the food pantry and with all the volunteers from our church and other churches in the community. The food pantry is a community affair in which all the churches and other organizations help by donating food items, gift cards and cash all of which is greatly appreciated. You can check out thank you notes given and other information on the church's web site link and our Facebook page (Westfield Community Food Pantry). If you would like to volunteer or know of someone who would, contact Louise Quick (326-7767). We want to thank all of you for your help with your time and donations to the food pantry. Thank you once again.



AppleSeed Christian Preschool will start back up on Tuesday, September 15. We look forward to hearing the children learn, laugh and enjoy their time here.



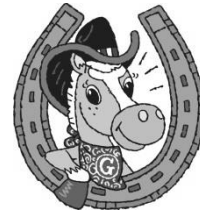
The children of the church will be participating in Operation Christmas Child. If you would like to add items, or do a box yourself, there will be a bin for donations new the Welcome Center. More information can be found at the Welcome Center. Filled shoeboxes should be returned to the church no later than October 20th.



Are you new to the church? Please contact the church office with your name(s) address, phone number and email address.

Has any of your information changed (name, address, phone number, email address)? We would love to make sure that your information is current. Please notify the office of any and all changes. Thanks.

VBS



We had an amazing time at Vacation Bible School! Our numbers may have been small, but everyone had a great time! Many thanks to everyone who helped out (from the food, to the games, to the crafts, to the songs and stories and especially those that prayed for us!)



Schedule Change

On Sunday, September 13, we will start back on our regular schedule.

8:30 am – Praise & PowerPoint service – Gibbs Parlor

9:30 am – Sunday School for all ages – gather in Fellowship Hall

9:45 – Choir Practice

10:45 – Worship Service (in Sanctuary)

Noon – Fellowship/Coffee time (Fellowship Hall)



On Sunday, September 27th we will have a combined 10 am service to celebrate our Great Fall Get Together and Heritage Sunday (no Sunday School). We will be honoring all of those who have been members for 50 or more years. Following the service, we will be having a pot luck lunch. Please bring a dish to pass. Dessert and drinks will be provided. We hope to dedicate our new benches at this time as well.



Our Charge Conference date has been set. It will take place on Saturday, November 7 at 10am at the Panama UMC. Watch the bulletin for more details.



On-line giving will soon be an option on our website

<http://www.westfieldumc.org/>

Did you know?

That the church has a new email address:

fumcwestfield@fairpoint.net

*please note new email address (the old one westmeth@fairpoint.net still works) Currently, we have an

email mailing list that sends out weekly bulletin announcements every Friday. If you are not getting them and would like to be added to the list, please contact the office. You can also be added to our email newsletter list so that you can receive the newsletter by email instead of snail mail. (Our hope is that we will also be posting the newsletter on our website)

That we have a **facebook** page: [westfieldumc?](https://www.facebook.com/westfieldumc/)

Monday – Thursday we posted the daily reading for the week and on Fridays, the sermon title is posted. We also add reminders and special announcements and events.

Have you checked out our **Website?**

<http://www.westfieldumc.org/>

The website has many different items including blogs from Pastor Matt and reprinted articles from Billie Dibble (the current series is all about our stained glass windows). It contains a calendar with all of our events listed (and is updated weekly) as well as bulletin announcements and newsletters **There are plans to add an on-line giving section that would allow you to make contributions to the Operating Budget, Missions, Memorial Fund, Pastor's Benevolence Fund, and Special Projects – Keep checking the website.** We are constantly updating and changing the look of the website and if you have any questions, suggestions or comments, please contact the office.

What is a Deacon?

(Pastor Molly Golando)

I have been working on staff in our church for the past 1 ½ years. I am working here as part of my full time appointment as a commissioned deacon. I wonder how many of you know what a deacon is. If you aren't really sure, get on board with almost everybody else! The role of the deacon is the most misunderstood clergy in the United Methodist Church.

First let me tell you what a deacon is not.

1. A deacon is not a stepping stone to become a full-fledged pastor or Elder as the correct term is in United Method-ease. For those of you who have been in the United Methodist Church for many years, you may be confused. Before 1996 this was what a deacon was. But in 1996 everything changed and the role of Deacon became a self-standing order of clergy.

2. There is not a hierarchy that puts Elders in supervisory roles over Deacons. Both Elders and Deacon are "Pastors" and receive the title Rev. This may happen because of the nature of the job. For example a deacon may be under the supervision of an elder if the elder is the senior pastor of the church and the deacon is on staff. However, in the call of the deacon and elder, one is not superior to the other, they just have different roles.

3. A United Methodist Deacon is not the same as a Presbyterian, Catholic or other denomination deacon. All deacons are called specifically in the area of service, but it is played out differently in each denomination.

Now let me tell you what a deacon is.

1. A deacon is called to the proclamation of the Word of God, service to others, the ministry of compassion and the ministry of justice. This is different to the call of the elder who is called to the proclamation of the Word of God, service to others, ordering the church and the administration of the sacraments (communion and baptism.) You can see that there is some overlap, but there are some differences. As a deacon, I do not have sacramental rights. I can serve communion, but I am not called to consecrate it. This is why I help with the serving of communion and baptism. It is the call of the deacon to assist the elder in these areas.

2. Deacons are appointed in roles that connect the church to the world. This is the primary call of the

deacon, to work in areas that bring the Word of God out of the doors of the church through service and justice ministries.

Step Three – My specific appointment

1. First I am a commissioned deacon. This means that I am in the process of becoming a deacon in full connection with in the United Methodist Church. I hope to be ordained in 2017. I have completed all my course work and have gone through the first round of rigorous interviews and paperwork. I need to be under the supervision of an Elder or Deacon in full connection. Pastor Matt is filling this role for me.

2. Every deacon and elder must be appointed to a charge conference. I am appointed to First UMC of Westfield and am responsible to this charge conference.

3. All deacons and elders must be appointed full time unless they have specific approval from the bishop to be appointed less than full time. I am appointed ¼ time to Westfield as a deacon and the contemporary musician. My other appointments to bring me to full time are ¼ time to BECALM (Barnabas Ecumenical Compassion and Life Ministries) – a ministry to pastors, and ½ time to Functional Literacy Ministry Haiti. However, just because I am appointed, doesn't mean that the United Methodist Church is responsible to pay me a full time salary. Each entity that I am appointed to is responsible for my compensation, or I can volunteer my services. Right now in everything except for my role as contemporary musician, everything is missional (no pay.) I have just now added the role of Case Manager for the flood relief of the July 13-14 storm which will be a short time paid position from UMCOR.

I hope you have struggled through this article and maybe have a little better understand of what a deacon is. I love this call from God and the ministry doors God has opened for me. Thank you for welcoming me into your congregation. I pray that God will continue to bless our ministry together.



Still Need Help From the Flood?

Help Get the Word Out!

(Pastor Molly Golando)

Do you still need help after the devastating flood of July 13- 14? If you are okay, please read this article and get the word out to your neighbors and anyone you may bump into. A help center will be set up in the church office Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 – 5 for at least the next three weeks and longer if there is still a need. Molly Golando will be working for UMCOR as a case manager during the next few months and available to help find help.

There is help available. Here are things you can do.

1. Make sure to apply for the SBA loans if you need assistance. If you are paying a mortgage now, this may be beneficial to you. You can apply directly until September 2 at Eason Hall. This is for anyone affected by the flood for homes and businesses. There are loans available for as low as 1.6%.

2. There are grants available for new furnaces and hot water heaters if you are income eligible. If you receive HEAP you will qualify. If you are not sure if you qualify can the church office for more information. If you had any flooding in your home, make sure to check your furnace now to make sure it works. **IF YOU HAD WATER IN YOUR FURNACE OR HOT WATER HEATER, HAVE IT CHECK PROFESSIONALLY BEFORE YOU TRY TO TURN IT ON!**

3. If you have well water make sure to have your water tested. There are free test kits available through Chautauqua County Health Department.

4. If you need help with cleaning out, mold abatement or rebuilding flooded areas in your home call the church office for more information.

5. If you have mold problems or any other need resulting from the flood call the church office (326-3373) or Molly Golando at 679-8465.

PRAYER

changes things

Prayer to Accept Change

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Just when I thought I had it all figured out, Lord, things change again.

When will I be able to rest in the comfort of knowing what comes next?

You, who transcend all time, who created the stars and set them in place, you, who are ageless yet known in every age, grant me the grace to accept the changes that are happening.

Empty my heart of anxiety, and fill it instead with wonder and awe. Release me from the chains of complacency, and bind me to your ever-moving Spirit.

When the things I believed to be permanent and stable are left by the way side, enfold me in your undying love that I may remember in whom all things are bound.

When fear of something new paralyzes me, and grief cripples me with anger over the loss of what had been, send your angels to give me a gentle push over that frightening edge into the unknown, so that I may learn to trust in you.

For you alone are eternal. You alone are enduring. You alone are the everlasting Lord. And in you alone will this restless world find peace. Amen.