



nars and trainings. For example, the Rev. Rachel Barnhart uses Zoom at Broad Street UMC to host House Churches.

Rev. Barnhart said, “The very nature of discipleship means engagement...we can’t do that by ourselves; we need community. And we can’t do that just by watching an online worship service. So, we have a House Church that meets by Zoom every Wednesday night. We worship together, pray together, and hear a message together and then we reflect together on how God is speaking to us through the scripture. We make commitments for action and hold each other accountable prayerfully.”

Visit <https://vimeo.com/458150830>

to hear more about what Rev. Barnhart has to say about how the Zoom House Church model safely brings people together to be the body of Christ in the midst of the COVID pandemic.

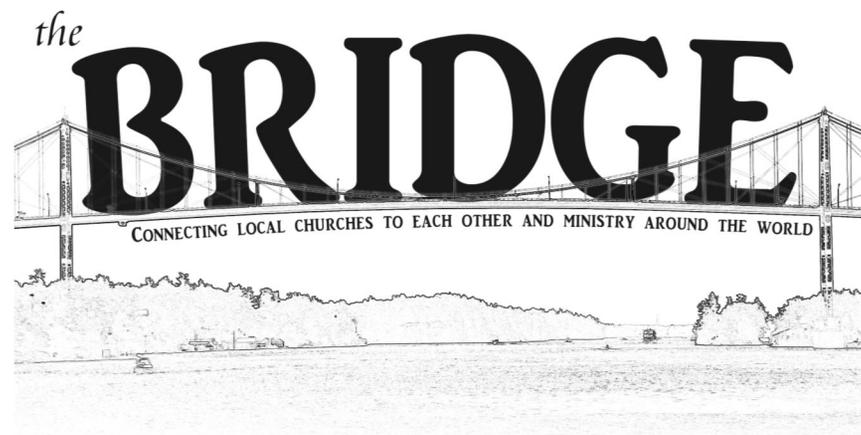
Rev. Barnhart will be teaching an online workshop on hosting House Churches through Zoom on Nov. 5 at 6 p.m. Visit <http://bit.ly/UNYhousechurchworkshop> at that time to attend this free workshop.

In addition to Tithe.ly, Facebook, and Zoom, there are so many digital platforms you can use to safely connect with others during this pandemic. You can learn more about these resources on the UNY Conference website. Visit <http://bit.ly/UNYdigitaldiscipleship>.

*The Bridge is a Conference Communications Ministry tool that delivers to local churches news and stories of ministry from around the Upper New York Conference and the world. For more news and stories visit:*

**[www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)**

Find the latest news and information about the Upper New York Annual Conference at <https://www.unyumc.org/events/annual-conference>



The Upper New York Conference’s vision is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be God’s love with our neighbors in all places.

## A look inside!

Using the tools available to grow discipleship digitally

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# Using the tools available to grow discipleship digitally

By Shannon Hodson, Writer/Editor

Since the start of the COVID pandemic last March, clergy and members of churches throughout the world have leaped out of their comfort zones into the world of digital ministry. Many churches in the Upper New York Conference developed websites and a social media presence, began livestreaming worship services, created online giving options, and started having small group meetings on Zoom.

This fall, the Upper New York Conference is offering trainings by three church leaders who have successfully increased discipleship at their church by connecting with others online.

## Online Giving

The Rev. B.J. Norrix, Lead Pastor of the Syracuse United Methodist Minis-

tries and pastor at Erwin First UMC and Brown Memorial UMC uses Tithe.ly, an online giving platform to increase giving at Erwin First UMC.

Rev. Norrix said, "At Erwin First, we adapted the Tithe.ly online platform last year, but didn't use it very much; occasionally somebody would make a contribution. Since we had to go live online beginning in the middle of March, we have been intentionally emphasizing this giving option.

We say to folks in every service, 'Go to our website at Erwinfirstchurch.org and find the Give to Erwin button; push that and follow directions.' We saw an immediate increase in giving from people who have not previously pledged."

Visit <https://vimeo.com/450146726> to see a video of Rev. Norrix explaining



how much giving has increased at Erwin by using Tithe.ly.

Rev. Norrix will be teaching an online worship on using Tithe.ly as an online giving option on Tuesday Oct. 13 at 6 p.m. on Zoom. Visit <http://bit.ly/UnyonlinegivingZoom> at that time to attend this free workshop.

## Facebook

Lori Jagow is the online minister at Pendleton Center UMC. She is using Facebook to increase discipleship at her church.

Lori explains how Pendleton started using Facebook more heavily at the beginning of the pandemic; she said, "We have found an incredible amount of success with increasing our reach using Facebook. We have even seen up

to a 13,000 reach with one post."

You can watch a video to learn how Lori increased her church's following ten-fold in just a few months. Visit <https://vimeo.com/455802746> to gain some insight from Lori on increasing discipleship using Facebook.

Lori will be teaching an online workshop on Using Facebook to Increase Discipleship on Zoom on Oct. 27 at 6 p.m. Visit <http://bit.ly/UNYFBworkshop> at that time to attend this free workshop.

## Zoom

While the trainings we are offering will be done through Zoom, Zoom can be used in so many ways beyond webi-

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