



# THE *Next* CHAPTER



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF MOUNT KISCO, N.Y. | February 2019

## WEEKLY CALENDAR

### SUNDAY

9:15 a.m., Choir Practice

10:15 a.m., Worship followed by fellowship, coffee and snacks in Halstead Hall.

6 p.m., Iglesias Cristiana Fe Y Esperanza, Sanctuary, Education Room, Halstead Hall

### MONDAY

6:30 p.m., Overeaters Anonymous, Halstead Hall

### TUESDAY

4:30 p.m., Interfaith Food Pantry, Halstead Hall

7 p.m., Bible Study at Panera Bread

### WEDNESDAY

8:30 a.m., Interfaith Food Pantry, Halstead Hall

### THURSDAY

8 p.m., Amway, Education Room

### FRIDAY

1 p.m., Co-Dependents Anonymous, Education Room

6 p.m., Iglesias Cristiana Fe Y Esperanza, Sanctuary and Education Room

### SATURDAY

8 a.m., Wellness Wins (formerly Weight Watchers), Halstead Hall

9 a.m., Golden Crown Driving School, Education Room (third Saturday of each month)

6:30 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Halstead Hall

## *Taking Time to Pray*

It's taken me awhile, but I finally have a prayer room set up in the parsonage. It's a comfortable space where I can retreat to pray, read scripture, and journal. I especially love it in the mornings as the sunlight streams in the windows.

For me, it's always been important to have a special place designated for prayer. It's an uncluttered space where I can leave the multitasking behind and really focus on connecting with God. When I don't take that time, life has a tendency to fall off the rails.

The founder of Methodism, John Wesley, was known to spend a couple of hours **in prayer each day, mostly in a small alcove off his bedroom.**

As we approach the season of Lent, many people will be looking to strengthen their practices of **meditation, prayer and reflection.** Maybe you're looking for a way to nurture or enhance your prayer life, too.

With that need in mind, I share this article that I came across recently about re-invigorating your prayer life **by**

## BENEATH THE *Spires*

Rev. Joanne S. Utley

trying a new practice. It was written for United Methodist Communications by Joe Iovino. Re-energize your prayer life with a new practice

"Lord, teach us to pray," the disciples request of Jesus (Luke 11:1 CEB). Many of us who lack confidence in our prayer lives ask the same of our pastors and others who seem to have a better handle on that spiritual discipline.

As United Methodists we know the value of works of piety like prayer. The third of John Wesley's three rules for the Methodist Church was to continue "attending upon all the ordinances of God." The list of examples he offered with this rule included "Family and private prayer."

Learning to pray is like learning to ride a bicycle. What we can learn from a book or class is not enough. Proficiency comes through practice.

Additionally, because prayer is a form of communication, there is no one-size-fits-all technique. Each of us needs to find our unique style.

Spending a day or season invigorating your prayer life is time well spent. Experiment with some new-to-you ways of praying. You might be surprised to find what works best for you.

### **Be still**

You don't necessarily need words to pray. In Psalm 46 God tells his people who were busy trying to please him, "That's enough! Now know that I am God!" (Psalm 46:10 CEB). Sometimes we need to stop performing for God and simply "be still."

This can be hard at first because it is so unfamiliar. Set a timer for 3-5 minutes or find some relaxing music or sound effects that will mark the time. Then be quiet and rest in the presence of God.

### **Breath Prayer**

Breath prayers are another way to become more aware of God's presence. The Holy Spirit is as near as the air we breathe.

A common way to practice breath prayer is silently repeating a single-line prayer with each breath. As you inhale address God with something like, "Jesus, Son of God." Then, as you exhale, express a request to God such as, "be merciful to me, a sinner." Other examples are, "Creator God, allow me to see your beauty around me,"

"Holy Spirit, let me feel your joy," "O Lord, show me your way," and "Holy One, heal me." Repeat the prayer with each breath for several minutes. Listen for God.

### **Multi-sensory Prayer**

Engaging other senses in prayer proves effective for many. Through the centuries, Christians have looked at candles, smelled incense, and held onto beads, crosses, and more as they prayed.

A creative way to do something similar is to pray while working a piece of clay in your hands and contemplating your humanity and sinfulness. The clay reminds us that God is constantly shaping us into vessels of the Holy Spirit. As Jeremiah watched a potter shape and reshape clay, he heard the voice of God, "Like clay in the potter's hand, so are you in mine" (Jeremiah 18:6 CEB).

### **Labyrinth Prayer**

A labyrinth is another helpful tool for focusing prayers. A labyrinth is a path marked out in a field, painted in a parking lot, or shown on a carpet that you walk while you pray.

While a labyrinth may look like a maze, it is not. It is a single path leading participants into the center, and back out.

While entering the labyrinth, prayers are focused on confession. Participants then pause in the center to read scripture, sing, or worship

another way. On the way out of the labyrinth prayers for others, self, and anything else that occupies the mind are offered.

Or, if you would rather walk, pray similarly while strolling around your neighborhood or on a nearby hiking trail.

*(We'll be holding a Lenten workshop on labyrinths and you'll have the opportunity to walk one during the event.)*

### **Praying scripture**

Another great source of prayer is the Bible. Praying the scriptures has a long tradition among the faithful.

Prayerfully read a passage by stopping every line or so and praying what comes to mind. This can stretch us to bring before God petitions, we might not think of on our own.

Praying the Psalms, for example, calls us to address every emotion. Praying Mary's "Magnificat" (Luke 1:46-55) will lead us in prayer for the poor and oppressed. Many scriptures such as Jesus' healings and parables, Paul's letters, and others, may deeply speak to our needs, help us to praise, or remind us of a promise of God.

### **Pray by checking in with God**

You may also pray by simply checking in with God at the end of the day. As you might call a friend or family member just to chat about what is going on in your life, you can have the same conversation with God.

Ignatius of Loyola, a 16<sup>th</sup> century cleric and theologian,

taught what he called the Daily Examen. The examiner asks the believer to share with God that for which you are thankful, moments you recognized God's presence in the events of the day, your shortcomings, and to ask God to prepare you for the day ahead.

### **Find your way**

As there are many ways to communicate with those closest to us, so too there are numerous ways to pray. This list is not comprehensive, but rather a place to begin exploring prayer methods.

Spend some time developing a richer prayer life by finding what works for you. This will allow you to re-energize your conversations with God.

In God's grip and service,  
Pastor Joanne

### **General Conference 2019**

Please hold in prayer all those who will gather for the special session of the General Conference that will discuss the UMC's stance on human sexuality. You can watch via live stream beginning at 10 a.m. EST, Saturday, Feb. 23 at [www.umc.org/live](http://www.umc.org/live). There will also be daily updates posted at [www.nyac.com/special-called-general-conference](http://www.nyac.com/special-called-general-conference). The NYAC delegates are laity Frederick Brewington, Gail Douglas-Boykin, Jorge Lockward, and Dorothee Benz; clergy Timothy J. Riss, Noel N. Chin, Kristina D. Hansen, and Alexandre da

Silva Souto. Alternates are laity Tiffany French Goffe, Ann Craig, Roena A. Littlejohn, and Karen Prudente; clergy Vicki I. Flippin, Sheila M. Beckford, Martha E. Vink, and Sungchan Kim.

### **Special Annual Conference**

Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton has called a special session of the NY Annual Conference to discuss moving forward after the decisions of the General Conference. The session is set for Saturday, March 16 at Purchase College. All clergy and lay members of the NYAC are expected to attend. Visitors are also welcome as space allows. Registration is required.

### **Pastor's Lenten Bible Study**

Pastor Joanne will be offering, "24 Hours That Changed the World," beginning the week of March 10 and running for seven sessions. This is a book/video study exploring the last hours of Jesus' life, written by Rev. Adam Hamilton. Evening sessions will be on Wednesday, and a daytime class will either be on Wednesday or after worship on Sundays. Please let the church office know of your interest and which class you'll attend as soon as possible so we can order enough books.



**Please join us for the Katonah Appalachia Service Project Annual Dinner and Auction. Saturday, March 30, 2019 6:00-9:00PM. Parish Hall, Katonah United Methodist Church.**

- \$15 For Adults, \$10 For Children 21 Years And Younger (Includes Dinner & Coffee/Tea)
- Reveal of 2019 Katonah ASP T-Shirt design winner
- Highlight photo slideshow of last year's trip
- RSVP by March 23<sup>rd</sup> Please RSVP with number attending by [email to katonahhasp@gmail.com](mailto:email@katonahhasp@gmail.com)
- Invite friends, neighbors and family
- Over 50 items in the auction
- All funds raised help pay for the June ASP trip



Hearts on Fire Dinner Dance  
 On Friday, February 8th, we celebrated Valentine's Day a little early with a Hearts on Fire Dinner Dance. With almost 50 members and friends we enjoyed an amazing 3 course meal. Our chef, Don McCann, was assisted preparing the meal with Andre Ferrara and Art Covey. Nancy and Stu Beck did an amazing job in serving the meal. The mood was set with Halstead Hall being beautifully decorated by Bobbie McCann, Marianne Baldwin and Ross Porter. Our DJ, Neil Armstrong provided a wide variety of music for our listening and dancing pleasure. Many joined in line dancing led by Bobbie. It was a fun evening for all!





## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Scott Hall
- 6<sup>th</sup> Pastor Joanne
- 15<sup>th</sup> Heather Kent
- 18<sup>th</sup> Sandra Gillotti,
- 20<sup>th</sup> Marianne Baldwin
- 25<sup>th</sup> Jill Manning  
Vienna Zeppieri
- 26<sup>th</sup> Karen McKitrick

**Our monthly birthday parties are usually held on the first Sunday during fellowship.**

### *New Order of Bricks*

Would you like to place an engraved brick on the commemorative pathway outside Halstead Hall? Please let the church office know of your interest. They are \$125

**Thoughts from Andrew Breeden** one of the editors of the Upper Room

I have decided that were I to make a resolution this year. I would resolve to let life's fleetingness guide my motives, actions and decisions.

- to be kinder, more eager to give, quicker to help, more patient with others, and to spend more time with those I love. And instead of letting the rapid passing of time be an occasion for sorrow, let it be one of joy.

What if I welcomed the knowledge that I am only here for a short while? Instead of leaving me hollow and empty, what if it left me more eager to love and

show compassion, more willing to help when called on? What if it left me joyful- joyful in gratitude to God for every moment I am given, no matter how many or how few, joyful in love for my family, joyful in the hope of life beyond this one, joyful in faith that I haven't seen the last of my great grandparents and all the others who have gone on to be with the Lord

This year, my hope for joy and for me is that we find joy in all the sweet moments of life and strength to endure the bitter ones. Here's to the time we've been given, to old memories and to the new ones we will make, and to getting on well in the year to come. Here's to the opportunity for a fresh start, a wiser mind and a lighter heart.

### QUESTION FOR REFLECTION :

What resolutions and plans do you have for the coming year ?  
**HOW WILL YOU INCLUDE GOD IN YOUR PLANS ?**

Thanks for the opportunity to share  
Dave Visaggio

### **Love for Neighbors**

Thanks to all who pitched in to care for our 20 guests in the Emergency Shelter Partnership during the week January 28-February 4.

A big thank-you if you:

- Helped set up space in the chapel or Halstead Hall.
- Cooked and served dinner
- Ate dinner and had a conversation with our guests
- Provided breakfast/lunch bags

Thanks also to the kids in the Sunday School class who decorated and packed the "to-go" bags for Tuesday, and to ESP coordinator Dave Visaggio.



Bible Studies Every Tuesday Evening at Panera's.

ASH Wednesday March 6, at 7:00pm

Bible Study during Lent. Beginning the week of March 10th

Easter Sunrise Service, with Katonah UMC

Easter Brunch following Easter Sunday Service at UMCMK

Spring Flea Market Saturday, May 4 (Vendors Only)

Flower Patch May 9-11th

Faith In Action, Sunday, June 2

Fireman's Parade, Friday, July 12

Christmas Fair, Saturday, December 7

All upcoming events require the help of volunteers. Please contact the church office if you are interested.

**THE MOUNT KISCO**  
**INTERFAITH**  
**FOOD PANTRY**



The pantry is located right here in the church and is open from **5-7 p.m., Tuesdays and 9:30-11 a.m. Wednesdays.** They are always in need of **volunteer workers.** Or you can help by donating some of the most popular items like cereal, pasta, rice, and canned food. Please be sure to check the expiration dates.

If you would like more information or volunteer to help, please contact Lisa Porter by email: [wrporter115@verizon.net](mailto:wrporter115@verizon.net)

## Need to Contact Us?

**Address:** 300 E. Main St., Mount Kisco, NY 10549

**Phone:** 914-666-5014

**Email:** [office.umcmk@gmail.com](mailto:office.umcmk@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.mountkiscochurch.org](http://www.mountkiscochurch.org)

**Church office hours:** M-F 1:30-4:30 p.m.

**Pastor:** Rev. Joanne S. Utley

**Pastor's email:** [kiscorev@gmail.com](mailto:kiscorev@gmail.com)

**Pastors office hours' & F** 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Music director:** Paul Martinez

**Head ushers:** Andre Ferrara, Art Covey

**Lay leaders:** Bobbie McCann, Ross Porter

**Administrative assistant:** Marianne Baldwin

**Sexton:** Art Covey



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## CoDA



We welcome you to Co-Dependents Anonymous, a program of recovery from codependence. The only requirement for membership is a desire for healthy and loving relationships. We have all learned to survive life, but in CoDA we are learning to live life.

<http://nyccoda.org/>

Held here Fridays at 1pm in our Education Room. For more information please contact [lddance@gmail.com](mailto:lddance@gmail.com).