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### **Something to think about ...**

I grew up at Lake Avenue Baptist Church in Rochester. When I was a child, the church had four ministers and the congregation was large enough to sustain a graded Sunday School with 20 kids in each class. By the time I graduated from seminary, even though its congregation had decreased some, it still had two full time ministers and a part-time director of Christian Education. The choir director was a local music professor; the organist a student at Eastman School of Music, and the church paid four of the choir members to lead their sections. There were five adult Sunday School classes, at least six different small groups to which you could belong, and the Board of Diaconate alone had twenty members on it. This was the church I knew throughout my formative years.... and then I came to Alfred.

Seminary does not really prepare its students to minister in the small church. In one of my seminary classes, the professor asked us to discuss how we would deal with a choir director who wanted the choir to sing the "Hallelujah Chorus" during the wrong part of the liturgical year. This is a distinctly large church problem; the small church would let the choir sing the "Hallelujah Chorus" on Arbor Day if they could find enough people to sing it! Regardless of what they teach in seminary, however, it is the small church, not the large church, where most Christian ministry takes place. In 2012, the average congregation in America had only 70 regular participants, counting both adults and children, (and babies and dogs and anything else that could be counted to make the attendance feel bigger!) Furthermore, the small church is not simply a sized down version of a large church -- it is distinctly different. It faces different challenges and it has very different gifts than those of a larger church. A friend of mine Reverend Lisa Drysdale has also had a lifetime of pastoring small churches, and she and I once came up with a list of the distinguishing marks of a small church:

\* You know you're in a small church when you walk in the door for the first time and are immediately put on a board and made Sunday School superintendent.

\*You know you're in a small church when your membership certificate comes complete with a key to the church building.

\*You know you're in a small church when one church family moves out of town and suddenly you are faced with a major budget crisis.

\*You know you're in a small church when after your illness you have to buy a large freezer in which to keep all the donated food.

\*You know you're in a small church when you sit in a different pew and everyone thinks you missed church that week.

\*You know you're in a small church when Eugene Herkilmeyer went off to explore the Amazon 75 years ago and hasn't been heard from since but the Diaconate keeps him on the church rolls just in case.

Most importantly, however, you know you're in a small church when every person in the church is known, valued, and viewed as an important part of its ministry.

In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses says to the Hebrew people, “It was not because of your numbers among other nations that God cared for you and chose you; for you were the least numerous of all peoples. It was because God loved you, and held to the oath that was given to your ancestors, that you were freed with a hand of power, and redeemed from slavery, from the power of Pharaoh of Egypt.” (Deuteronomy 7:7-8)

As we begin another program year in the church, we will once again face the challenges of our small numbers, undoubtedly worrying about budgets and finding enough volunteers to do all of the ministry we hope to do together, but the call of the church is not to “do programming;” it is simply to love as Christ has loved and in many ways living out Christ’s love is easier to do in the small church than the large. We love by paying attention to one another and sharing our hurts and our joys, by knowing each other’s names and faces and the pathways of our communal lives. We love by committing ourselves to righting injustice because we know how it has personally affected the people we worship with and care about. We love by coming together with fellow church members serving at the food pantry, on the boards of Habitat for Humanity, or Hart House. Our ministry isn’t institutional and programmed; it is personal and relational, and such love doesn’t require large numbers. Jesus himself said, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” (Matthew 18:20)

Even if we are not strong in numbers, may the ministry of the Union University Church be strong in love in 2021-2022 and beyond.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "Jim".

# Church News & Events

## Mission of the Month



Habitat for Humanity, an international organization, was founded in 1976 by Millard & Linda Fuller. "The concept that grew into Habitat for Humanity International was born at Koinonia Farm, a small, interracial, Christian community outside of Americus, Georgia. Koinonia Farm was founded in 1942 by farmer and biblical scholar Clarence Jordan." (Habitat for Humanity website)

The Fullers visited Koinonia in 1965 and, together with Jordan, developed the concept of "partnership housing." "The concept centered on those in need of adequate shelter working side by side with volunteers to build simple, decent houses."

The Union University Church has supported our local Genesee Valley Habitat for Humanity affiliate for more than 20 years through our benevolence giving. Many of our church members have participated in Habitat projects as well as serving in leadership roles.

Specially designated envelopes will be available for donations to Genesee Valley Habitat for Humanity during the month of September. **All checks for Missions of the Month should be made out to the Union University Church with the name of the mission on the Memo line of the check.**



**Don't forget to RSVP for  
Rev. DeMott's  
Retirement Celebration  
RSVP Deadline is  
October 1, 2021**

**The Dinner is October 23, 2021**

If you have misplaced your RSVP card or if you did not receive one, you can email the church office (uucalfred@gmail.com) with the following information:

**# of guests including names, vaccination status, and meal selection for each person.**

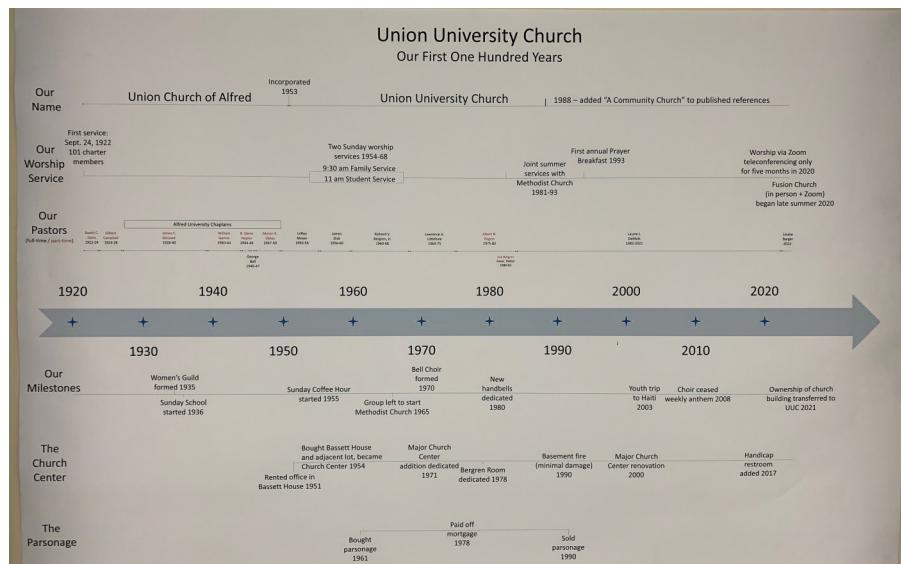
Cost per meal is \$17. Make checks payable to UUC with **DeMott Celebration** noted on the check. Payment must be received no later than October 1.

### **Menu Selections:**

Herb Crusted Roast Beef  
Chicken Cordon Bleu  
Pasta Primavera

If you have special memories of Laurie that you would like shared during the program, please include them in your email. You are invited to submit comments even if you are unable to attend. Submitted comments will be collected and shared during the dinner.

# Church News & Events, cont.



## **Dexter Time Returns**

Since the Board of Christian Education has decided it will be best to delay the start of a formal Sunday School program, Dexter Time will take the stage for a return engagement this fall.



A star returns to the (new) Red Carpet!

## **Centennial Timeline**

John Buckwalter has created a magnificent timeline which is posted on a wall in the foyer of the Church as well as in the King David Room in the Church Center.

## **Kick Off Centennial Video Featuring UUC Kids**

You will not want to miss the video created by Larry Casey which will premier on Sunday, September 12. You will see images of some of our founders as well as kids throughout the years.

# Church News & Events, cont.

## **Working Hard**

Work on the interior and exterior of the church building and church center continues:

\* The trim and porches on both sides of the building have been scraped and painted.



John Buckwalter, our crew chief, steps up to the challenge.



Walt, Lana, Bev (behind bars), Lyle, & Denny prime the porch.

\* Furniture in the Bergren Room was rearranged and the heavy drapes were removed revealing stained glass windows and adding light.



\* The front steps and landing of the church were power washed.



A power filled Laurel power washes the front stairs.

# Church News & Events, cont.

## **Working Hard cont.**

\* The openings in the attic were sealed and the space cleaned of debris.



Walt & Dave hard at work.



This is what happens when you have birds in the belfry.

\* The front office off the foyer was cleaned out.

\* New steps up to the altar were built for more stable access.

\* New carpeting was installed on the steps and the altar platform. (see p. 4)

\* A new sink was installed in the women's bathroom.

\* Shelving was removed from the foyer and the wall was painted.

\* The roof leak on the church building was repaired and the gutters cleaned.

\* The church center was deep cleaned.



Jan & Mindy having a fine time cleaning the kitchen.

\* Flashing on the church building was calked.

\* Several chairs were reupholstered for use in the church building.



# People

## Transitional Minister

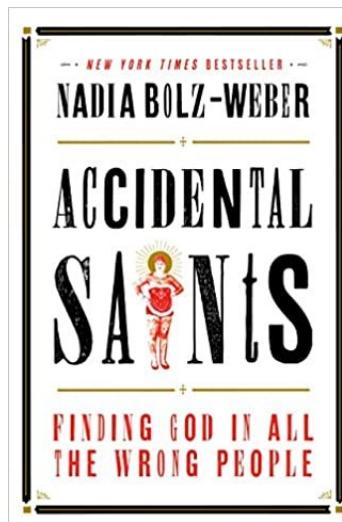
The Transitional Minister Search Committee is pleased to announce that Rev. Louise Barger has accepted the position of Transitional Minister at UUC. We have located suitable furnished housing and expect to finalize the arrangements soon. Rev. Barger's visit to Alfred at the beginning of August was brief but intense: arrival on Saturday, dinner at the Burdick's with the search committee Saturday night, preaching at UUC Sunday morning, "meet & greet" following worship, lunch, tour of the area with the Casey's, and return to Rochester Sunday night in preparation for a return flight home on Monday morning!

## Book Group Resumes

From Amazon: "In *Accidental Saints, New York Times* best-selling author Nadia Bolz-Weber invites readers into a surprising encounter with what she calls "a religious but not-so-spiritual life." Tattooed, angry and profane, this former standup comic turned pastor

stubbornly, sometimes hilariously, resists the God she feels called to serve. But God keeps showing up in the least likely of people—a church-loving agnostic, a drag queen, a felonious Bishop and a gun-toting member of the NRA."

All are welcome to join book group. Just let Laurie know you're interested. Here's a link if you'd like to order a copy of the book:



[https://www.amazon.com/Accidental-Saints-Finding-Wrong-People/dp/1601427565/ref=tmm\\_pap\\_swatch\\_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1631119942&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Accidental-Saints-Finding-Wrong-People/dp/1601427565/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1631119942&sr=8-1)

## Archangel Michael

*from the Newsletter Newsletter used with permission*

"Many Christian denominations celebrate the festival of Michael and All Angels on September 29. While Gabriel is probably the best-known angel for announcing to Mary that she would bear the Son of God, "the archangel Michael" is named in Jude 9; in Daniel 12:1 he is called "Michael, the great prince, the protector of [the] people"; and in Revelation 12:7 we read of "Michael and his angels." In each case, Michael is involved in a cosmic battle revealed to someone in a vision as a message from God.

"In fact, whenever angels appear in Scripture, the Hebrew word is "messenger," which in Greek is *angelos* — thus, the English "angel." The Bible doesn't say much about what angels looked like, but surely they weren't the cute cherubs of modern pop art. Given their most common greeting, "Do not be afraid," it must have been startling to see one.

"Why celebrate Michael and All Angels? First, it reminds us there is more to God's realm than we humans can see or comprehend. No matter the exact structure or appearance of angels, God sometimes uses them to communicate with us. Second, by broadening our understanding we can serve as angels ourselves: *messengers* of God's love and grace to the world."

*We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers.*

I Thessalonians 1:2, NIV

## We Pray

*God of wisdom and love, help all who are struggling with difficult circumstances find direction and strength to face their challenges. Give us all the assurance that underneath us are your everlasting arms, which will sustain us through everything we face day and night.*

*In Jesus' name. Amen.*

## **September Board Members of the Month**

Deacon.....Mary Beth McDonough (marybethmcdonough1@gmail.com; 607-661-2529)  
Elder.....John Buckwalter (buckwajd@gmail.com; 607-968-0540)  
BOCE.....TBD  
Fellowship.....TBD  
Trustee.....Denise Grandusky (dgrandusky@hotmail.com; 585-596-5149) & Laurel Buckwalter  
(laurelbuckwalter@gmail.com; 607-968-0669)

**Who do you call?** Flowers or lay leading—call an Elder; greeting or coffee hour—call a Deacon;  
Sunday school—call BOCE; building issues—call a Trustee.

## **Upcoming Sunday Leaders**

If you are not able to serve as scheduled, please switch with someone listed on the charts below and notify the Church Office. If you are unable to find someone to switch with you, please contact either the Elder of the Month or the Deacon of the Month.

Date	Lay Leader	Flowers	Coffee
Sept. 5	Casey	Communion	Cartledge
Sept. 12	Porter	Soule	Mindy Smith
Sept. 19	Watson	Watson	Luo
Sept 26	TBD	Schulze	Casey
Oct. 3	Cartledge	Communion	Tucker
Oct. 10	R. Stephens	Mary Smith	Porter
Oct 17	Buckwalter	S. Burdick	Mary Smith
Oct. 24	Dewey	Cartledge	Buckwalter
Oct. 31	Jen Smith	Slack	Burdick



*Eternal God! Grant us gratitude enough to look backward and be thankful; courage enough to look forward and be hopeful; faith enough to look upward and be humble; kindness enough to look outward and be helpful.*

*Amen.*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 <i>10:30 Worship Communion</i>	6	7	8 <i>12pm Book Group</i>	9	10	11
12 <i>10:30 Worship Rally Day</i>	13	14	15 <i>12pm Book Group</i>	16	17	18
19 <i>10:30 Worship</i>	20	21	22 <i>12pm Book Group</i>	23	24	25
26 <i>10:30 Worship</i>	27	28	29 <i>12pm Book Group</i>	30		

5  
*10:30 Worship Communion*

8 *12pm Book Group*

12  
*10:30 Worship Rally Day*

15 *12pm Book Group*

19  
*10:30 Worship*

22 *12pm Book Group*

26  
*10:30 Worship*

29 *12pm Book Group*

# Just for Fun



## **Your Money or Your Wife**

During the wedding rehearsal, the groom approached the pastor with an unusual offer.

"Look, I'll give you \$100 if you'll change the wedding vows. When you get to me and the part where I'm to promise to 'love, honor and obey' and 'forsaking all others, be faithful to her forever,' I'd appreciate it if you'd just leave that part out." He passed the minister a \$100 bill and walked away satisfied.

The next day during the wedding ceremony, the time came for the bride and groom to exchange their vows. The pastor looked the young man in the eye and said, "Will you promise to prostrate yourself before her, obey her every command and wish, serve her breakfast in bed every morning of your life, and swear eternally before God and your lovely wife that you will not ever even look at another woman, as long as you both shall live?"

The groom gulped, looked around, and said in a tiny voice, "Yes." He then leaned toward the pastor and hissed, "I thought we had a deal."

The pastor put the \$100 bill into the groom's hand and whispered back, "She made me a much better offer."

## **Bulletin Bloopers Anyone?**

- The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.
- The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'
- Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
- Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.
- Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
- Nellie Morgan and John Rees were married on February 2nd in Newtown's Baptist church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
- At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.
- Seven new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of new members, and to the deterioration of some of older ones.
- Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.
- Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.
- St Hilary church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.
- The ladies of St Peter's Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.
- This evening at 7 PM there will be a hymn sing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

## **Out of the Mouths of Babes**

A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, 'Would you like to say the blessing?' 'I wouldn't know what to say,' the girl replied. 'Just say what you hear Mommy say,' the wife answered.

The daughter bowed her head and said, 'Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?'



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**September, 2021 Newsletter**