



New Connexions United Methodist Church

September 2025

Words from the Pastor

Rev L. Grace Harmon

There is power in names. Naming something is a declaration of what you intend, your vision. Names are ideas to lean into, or sometimes to push against. You shouldn't judge a book by its cover, but a good title can sell a lot of copies. In just the precious few weeks we have been proclaiming the name New Connexions, we are seeing the power a name can have.



New Connexions, it turns out, is more than a merger between two small congregations. It is a statement of our hope for ourselves, a commitment to Methodism, a vision for how we want to be in relationship with our community. And naming the thing seems to be helping us to live into it as well, because we have a lot of new activity happening.



We recently held our 're-release party,' unveiling of our new logo at an Ice Cream Social and ministry fair. So much hard work went into getting ready for that day! Swag was purchased, research was done, people gave of their time, their talents, and their wallets to get the job done. And while I know those of you most involved are tired, I also hope you are energized. I hope we are all energized. See, we even became more connected to one another as we went about the work of reintroducing ourselves to our community.

We have plans underway for a series of events, Wellness Connexions, in the fall. The goal is a pilot program we hope will turn into an everyday reality for our church. The idea of New Connexions as a 'third space,' where disparate members of our town and region find a place to call home and new people to call friends, a place where we take good care of one another in all sorts of ways, a place that brings generations together, fosters dialogue and builds, well, connexions, is a powerful witness to the best of what church, what Methodists can and should be.

Methodism is based on the idea of connexion. We are remembering this secret to our historical success. Connexion is what motivates us to be engaged in the world around us, to have a continuous, intentional conversation between our beliefs and our interactions with the world. New Connexions has waded right into the waters of meeting the needs we find before us. Our Methodism keeps us connected through the idea that we ask one another 'how is it with your

soul?’ And stay till the answer is ‘well.’ Our blooming identity is a prolonged invitation for people to gather here and ask that very question, and receive that very answer. And Methodism has always been a ministry primarily of the laity. We are embracing that anew as well. The ideas emerging are your ideas, your passions, your perceptions of what is needed here and now. As it should be.

While you are reading this, I will be on renewal leave. I have some connexions of my own that have gone long untended. And while everyone likes to be needed, I am so excited to see what I’ve missed when I come back, because I can feel the drive and vision of this congregation has been reconnected. I love that, truth be told, you don’t need me. You have each other – you are New Connexions.

Ever onward and with love,
Pastor Grace

Change is in the Air

There is lots of change in the air... a new name for the New Paltz United Methodist Church, a new logo, new programs... which we will tell you all about in this newsletter. But, first, there is a change regarding our newsletter. Kathy Weiss is stepping aside as one of the editors. Kathy has been key in getting this newsletter out for 5 years! THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU Kathy for all you have done! Before resigning, she recruited Jacqui Vedder to be a new co-editor working with Brenda Beane. THANK YOU Jacqui for saying yes!

Some words from our Incoming Editor

Jacqui Vedder

I am enthusiastic to begin working with Brenda Beane as co-editor of the newsletter this fall. My involvement with New Paltz United Methodist Church, now known as New Connexions UMC, began 7 years ago. One day I ventured into the Church by way of a soup luncheon, new to town and looking to meet people. I received a warm welcome from many of the members, so stuck around. After that I started attending Vi Cole book group with Karen Seyfert at the helm. I felt grateful to form a spiritual connection with new friends over thought provoking literature. Sometime later I started attending services and volunteering in the kitchen with Brenda and others at soup luncheons. Since then, I have been involved in many ministries and events at the Church including Free Fresh Food, Prayer Group, Harvest Feast and most recently The Grove where I am the coordinator of Wellness Connexions, a series we are offering this fall.



I love building community as well as learning and growing from the multi-faceted people I have met at New Connexions UMC. I look forward to a meaningful experience working on the newsletter with Brenda!

A New Vision for the United Methodist Church

LOVE BOLDLY

PASSIONATELY LOVE GOD AND, LIKE JESUS,
EMBRACE AND INCLUDE PEOPLE OF EVERY
AGE, NATION, RACE, GENDER AND WALK
OF LIFE.

INSPIRED BY MATTHEW 22:37-39 AND JOHN 13:34-35


SERVE JOYFULLY

WITH A CHRIST-LIKE HEART, JOURNEY
ALONGSIDE THE MOST VULNERABLE,
OFFERING CARE AND COMPASSION WITH JOY.

INSPIRED BY PSALM 100:1, NEHEMIAH 8:10, JOHN 13:14-15
AND 1 PETER 4:10

LEAD COURAGEOUSLY

FOLLOW JESUS' EXAMPLE BY RESISTING AND
DISMANTLING ALL SYSTEMS OF EVIL, INJUSTICE,
AND OPPRESSION, STRIVING FOR PEACE,
JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION.



A NEW VISION FOR
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



NYAC
UMC
Making Choices of Jesus Christ for the
Renovation of the World

For more information, see umcnewvision_localchurchguide.pdf

New Paltz UMC Under Goes “Renovation” to Become New Connexions UMC



Introducing New Connexions UMC at the Ice Cream Social

On Sunday 8/17/2025, an Ice Cream Social was held at the “old” New Paltz UMC on the corner of Main and Grove to introduce the New Connexions UMC. New Connexions is the result of joining New Paltz and Modena UMCs. It was a time to connect and to celebrate a new era of service in our community. It was a time to show who we are and what we do.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Connexion has been the heart of Methodism since it's beginning. This spelling was common in England when John Wesley began the Methodist movement, however the word/spelling became associated with Methodists because we talked about it so much. **New Connexions** views our church merger as a remembering of our Methodist roots, renewing and reimagining our commitment to the wider community, our social principles, and the work we have always done to make society a better and more loving place for everyone.

OUR SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

Methodism is about the world beyond the doors of the church. We believe we have a responsibility to act upon our beliefs. Our social principles include commitment to:

- Community of All Creation. Acknowledging the human impact on the earth, affirming the role of science, and working for healing of environmental injustice.
- The Economic Community. Addressing the challenges of globalization and responsible consumerism, the evils of income inequality and human trafficking.
- The Social Community. Clarifying our commitment to ending colonialism and racism, mental wellness and breaking addictions, anti-racism and inclusive human sexuality.
- The Political Community. Affirming the role committed people of faith play in setting a moral standard by activism, engagement, acts of civil disobedience and protection of vulnerable communities.

ALL MEANS ALL

New Connexions knows that church has caused harm, been exclusionary and judgemental. We actively seek to offer a different community and experience. As a Reconciling Congregation, we have been actively committed to full inclusion of the LGBTQIA community for decades. We have also been on an anti-racist journey, educating ourselves on the historic and current impacts of systemic racism and owning our own roles, then and now.

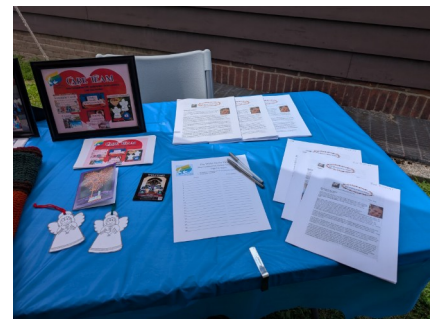
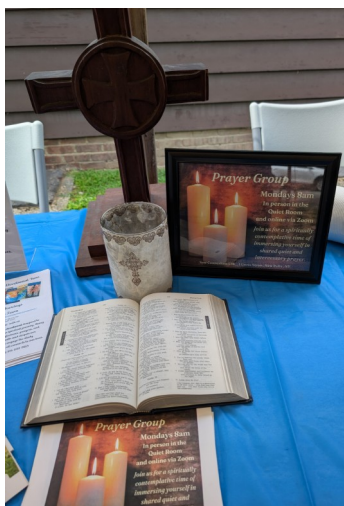
FRESH SQUEEZED LITURGY

At [New Connexions](#), our faith is dynamic and so are the words we use for worship. Each week we offer liturgy that is tailor made to the message of the day and the news of the world. We pride ourselves on never allowing our understanding to grow stale through repetition.



KNITTING TOGETHER

Members of the [New Connexions](#) community gather to create scarves, hats, mittens, and prayer blankets. The idea that we are interwoven, connected, and that we increase these bonds through gifts made with love and the time we spend together is central to our theology and priorities. You can find many of these items on our mitten tree in front of the church all winter long, for anyone who needs a little warmth and comfort.



FRESH FOOD MINISTRY

In [connexion](#) with other area progressive churches, we offer Free Fresh Food weekly. You can find us the fourth Sunday of every month, rain or shine, snow or heat, offering produce and other healthy options to our friends and neighbors, no questions asked, to anyone who happens by.



OUR [CONNEXION](#) TO HISTORIC BLACK NEW PALTZ

Methodism was, from the first, an abolitionist and inclusive church. While we did not maintain that noble stance consistently, the Methodist Church in the New Paltz area was an integrated community for decades after the Civil War. We continue to uncover the rich [connexions](#) between the stories of Black New Paltz and Methodism in collaboration with the Margaret Wade Lewis Center for Black History and Culture. Look for the Fulton and Jane Cox memorial tablet!



OFF GRID GAME NIGHT

New Connexions wants to be a place for just that: [Connexion](#). Off Grid Game Night is an opportunity to set down your technology, meet face to face with old friends and new, and unwind. Great conversation over board games, puzzles and crafts.

SOCIAL JUSTICE SING-A-LONG

The ways of the world are weighty. And yet, we believe that through our faith and our [connexions](#) we have what we need to meet the trials of our times with creativity and even joy. We gather monthly to watch a musical that is particularly relevant to current events. Even as we think critically about what we should do, we find creative love as we sing out with hope.



MCKNIGHT FUND GRANTS

Offered in support of education and community improvement, the McKnight Fund has supported such initiatives as:

- The Supplemental Food Program, feeding local seniors with a personalized approach
- Moheto Church and School, the only fully inclusive Methodist ministry in Kenya, with over 300 attendees and a school for over 100 children
- Our new wellness series, a pilot for potential initiatives to come
- Ulster Immigrant Defense Network
- A student film on suicide awareness
- Student Christian Center at SUNY New Paltz

Still keeping Ukraine in our prayers



If you would like to add a financial donation to your prayers, see [GIVE - New Paltz United Methodist Church \(newpaltzumc.org\)](https://newpaltzumc.org) for “Give to Ukraine”.

Wellness Connexions

Jacqui Vedder

Our vision for New Connexions UMC is as a community hub & wellness center. Somewhere you come to realign your spirit, rest, restore, recalibrate, gather strength and feel moved. Offerings will be open to all and free to the public. They are centered around stress reduction, emotional regulation and social connection.

With the chaos going on in the world at the moment, the pace at which daily life moves and the advent of the devices we now depend on, we’ve lost touch with each other as well as ourselves. In the attempt to become more connected we feel increasingly secluded, overwhelmed, powerless and apathetic. We are desperately seeking change, but may not know where to begin. The best solution is always to come back home to yourself and your community. Look within and around at those who are on a similar journey, though you may not know them yet.

New Connexions is here to serve a need we all are facing, for calm, well being and a place we can breathe. This will inspire us to make better choices when we re-emerge into the world, because we’ve taken time for ourselves. Classes will be available to the public that teach skills needed for personal growth and that help people get acquainted with one another again.

Therefore, we have put together five events taking place Wednesday evenings, this fall, from 7-8 PM running from October 22 - November 19, 2025. We hope you are able to come, connect and enjoy!



Presents

WELLNESS CONNEXIONS

Music, yoga, meditation & more.
Free and open to all.

Wednesdays from
7 to 8 p.m.
Oct. 22 - Nov. 19

1 Grove Street,
New Paltz, NY

10/22

Live Performance

BRITTANI O'HEARN

Singer songwriter Brittani O'Hearn plays a variety of folk-pop covers and originals on guitar and ukulele. Her EP 'Into the Light' was released in 2020, exploring themes of grief, ghosts, and growing up. She owns Blue Fox Books, an indie bookstore that hosts open mic nights, author visits, and workshops. Her passion is collecting and sharing stories in community.



10/29

Sound Meditation

SOUND & REST



May Lin Le Goff & Morgan Tyler Beatrice, offer an immersive guided auditory journey designed to invite the body and mind into a state of rest and contemplation. Through this practice, one can learn to focus the mind by tuning into the distance between sounds, the intervals between musical notes, and silence. These create an explorative space for one's inner world.

Please bring your own bolster/blanket/yoga mat. We have a limited supply.

11-5

Restorative Yoga

SAMA SHAKTI

Rooted in the art of yogic restoration, the session is designed to activate the body's natural healing response, calm the nervous system, and support emotional balance. Restorative Yoga allows your body to open at its own pace while receiving the vibrational medicine of sound.

Please bring your own bolster/blanket/yoga mat. We have a limited supply.



11/12 Centering Prayer



IMINA
GRACE
HARMON

Pastor Grace serves here at New Connexions. Centering Prayer is a gentle and forgiving form of meditation designed to create space for the sacred to come calling.

11/19 Live Performance

Formed from an extended partnership between Annie Roland and Carrie Chapman, Barely Lace offers a repertoire of esoteric original music as well as traditional European ballads and contemporary covers. They entwine haunting harmonies against chords and rhythm in a style they call 'acoustic trance'.



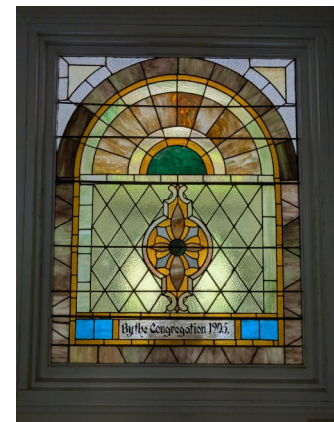
BARELY LACE

newconnexionsumc@gmail.com

Here, we ask 'how are you?'
And we stay til the answer is 'well.'

Remembering Modena Memorial UMC

With all the excitement and buzz about the creation of New Connexions UMC, we remember Modena UMC whose church property is being sold. On Sunday 7/6/2025, a Deconsecration Service was held, along with an Open House, Luncheon, and Silent Auction.





Important and meaningful belongings from the Modena Memorial UMC along with their history will come to the New Connexions UMC... a blending of the New Paltz and Modena UMCs. We remember the past, live in the present, and look to the future.

McKnight Trust Keeps on Giving

Jane Ruback

As we move away from summer and into cooler times take a moment and remember the good things we have done.

Just this year, the McKnight Trust, with the Ad Co blessing, which means YOUR BLESSINGS AS WELL, has contributed to the following community minded projects:

- The Ulster Immigrant Defense Network pantry
- The Grove, right in our own worship space, focused on young adults and their needs
- Movies With Spirit, planning to show a movie on Sat, Dec 21, "Waitress"
- Mental Health Action, coordinated by Jacqui Vedder and others to promote well-being

Come and enjoy the programs we will have in the future - films, relaxation and meditation, take your pick. But recognize how a single gift, set up as a Trust, can provide wonderful things for years after. Thank you Eloise McKnight! This trust was set up in 1997.

Just an additional reminder of the many ways the McKnight Trust has impacted our community, here is a brief list of organizations and program that have received financial support from a grant from this fund (Note, some organizations no longer go by the name they once did, but their missions remain steadfast):

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Rural and Migrant Ministry | • Playschool |
| • Student Christian Center | • Art Program at the US-Mexican Border |
| • Delacorte Productions (for a film about suicide prevention) | • Ulster Immigrant Defense Network Academy |
| • Supplemental Food Delivery | • And more to come |

Thanks to all for giving rise to this funding apparatus, and for supporting the recommendations for its use over the years.

The McKnight Trust Committee (Lee Pritchard, Pearl Lee, Joan Gallagher, Jane Ruback)

Planned Giving – Annual Announcement of Endowment Earnings

NEW PALTZ UNITED METHODIST CHURCH TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF ENDOWMENT FUND EARNINGS

When the Endowment Fund was created by an All Church/Charge Conference to receive gifts a formula for identifying the income of the Endowment and how to use it was also adopted. The amount available is 4.5% of the average balance as of June 30th of the previous five years.

Using this calculation, the 2025 income available for distribution in 2026 is \$22,736.

The formula for the distribution of income is:

| | | |
|--|-----|--------------|
| Local Ministries | 60% | \$ 13,642 |
| Outreach Ministries | 10% | 2,273 |
| Capital Improvements and Church Repairs | 30% | <u>6,821</u> |
| | | \$ 22,736 |

The motion of the Conference also said that distributions of the income should “be made subject to the direction of the Charge Conference based on the recommendations received from the Administrative Council and the Planned Giving Committee”. To this end the Planned Giving Committee has voted that suggestions for the expenditures go through the Committee and processes already in place and be presented to the Annual All Church/Charge Conference as part of our Church’s budget.

Therefore, suggestions for spending the income from the Endowment Fund should be forwarded as follows:

Local and Outreach Ministries: A request with a budget should be submitted to the Planned Giving Committee who will evaluate it and then submit it to the Administrative Council as part of the over-all Endowment Budget that will be presented to the All Church/Charge Conference.

Capital Improvements and Church Repairs: A request should be submitted to the Board of Trustees for its budget, then to Planned Giving then to the Administrative Council then to the All Church/Charge Conference.

This process must be completed by the end of September in order to receive all the approvals needed so act quickly. Please forward the spending requests to Daniel Ruback.

Thank you.

The Planned Giving Committee

The Reverend John Reynolds

Anna Louise Bates, Church Historian

The New Paltz United Methodist Church and Memorial Methodist Church of Modena underwent a historic merger in 2025. The new combined church is the New Connexions UMC. This is the first of several articles chronicling the historical connection between these two churches. Future articles will depend upon my access to documents from the Plattekill/Modena church. For now, I will focus on early circuit riders who served both locations. John Reynolds was such a preacher.



Reynolds was appointed to the New-Paltz and Plattekill circuit in 1846. During this time, he lived in a bank building in New Paltz. The New Paltz church building was only six years old at this time and was located with its entrance on Main Street. The building would be moved several years later to a location on Church Street. That building is currently the Jewish Community Center in New Paltz. The current church building on Grove Street was built in 1929, partly because of the old church's proximity to the local stable. This would have been the stable that the Reverend Reynolds walked to from his home at the bank building on the night of October 18, 1846. According to his memoir in the Conference journal, "He had, as usual, gone to the stable to provide for his horse for the night, when a person soon afterward passing though the stable, discovered him lying near his horse, and breathing like one in a deep sleep." He passed soon afterwards. The memoir says he preached: "... with a heart warm with the love of God and deeply impressed with the value of souls." Reynolds was about 65 years old. He had been in the itinerant ministry for about 35 years, since his acceptance to the New York Conference in 1811.

The Reverend Reynolds' story is typical of early circuit riders. They lived strenuous lives and worked hard for reasons that are perhaps difficult for our generations to fathom. He never married. The journal comments: "Although the providence of God he was not permitted to leave a dying testimony, such was the purity of his life and the daily evidence of his separation from the world and of his consecration to God, that no one who knew him intimately could for a moment doubt but that his death was as safe as it was sudden." Safe? That meant that he was free from sin and surely destined for an honored place in Heaven.

It is because of the dedication of such early preachers that we have the New Connexions UMC today. May we draw inspiration from the stories of the circuit riders and redouble our efforts to live lives worthy of true Methodism.

All materials are from the 1847 New York Conference Journal, and a hand-written history of the New Paltz UMC created in about 1898.

Rev. Kennedy Mwita Visits, 2025

Jane Ruback

On August 4th, the St. James United Methodist Church in Kingston had the pleasure of hosting Rev. Kennedy Mwita from Moheto, Kenya. Pastor Grace from New Connexions, and Pastor Gia from St. James joined with church members from both churches to learn more about the wonderful work Rev. Kennedy has done in Kenya and the plans he has for future projects.



A reminder to those that might recall, and new information for those who do not know, we have a long-standing connection to the Moheto community and Pastor Kennedy as a result of Ann Craig's in-person work with this church/school community. Ann helped to bring Pastor Kennedy to the New Paltz Church about 8 years ago where we hosted him during his travels throughout the United States. He brought news from the Kenya congregation and school projects and he developed alliances with the wider church community. Ann has since moved to Texas, but she, and partner, Marisa, attend services with us via Zoom. Their new "home church" in Texas has developed a close connection with Pastor Kennedy and his work. It is through this church that we may help to provide financial support to the Moheto school in a more direct way if we wish to do so. You will learn more about this at the end of this article.

In this recent visit, Rev. Kennedy was en route from the National Conference of Reconciling Churches in Milwaukee. In his presentation at St. James, he showed a video, made with a cell phone but of very good quality, profiling one of the students attending the school. The video documented this young girl's journey walking miles to and from the school, negotiating difficult terrain, and have a condition of being bow-legged adding to her challenges. The video highlighted many ways in which the school and its various support services provided nutrition, medical and mental health supports, and hopes for an improved future for its students and their families.

Pastor Kennedy also highlighted with much appreciation the impact that our church's support has had on the school. Our McKnight Grant helped fund the electricity for the school. He told us that without our grant this would not have been accomplished. He noted the increased number of students the program has served over the years, starting with 40 students and now serving well over 100, as well as students' families.

During the presentation Pastor Eileen Daunt, and Joseph Watson, formerly of the Modena church, presented Pastor Kennedy with 14 choir robes made by a past Modena member, Helen Umberger, over 40 years ago, to be distributed to choir members in First UMC Moheto. The choir robes are in excellent condition, beautiful, lightweight, perfect for the climate in Kenya. He will happily carry them back to his church choir.



In reviewing our McKnight Grant history of partnership with Rev. Mwita and the Moheto School, I see our partnership began in 2019 with a grant of \$3910; 2020, \$1500 specifically for electricity; 2022, \$5000 to help support 16 children for a year of school; and \$5000 in 2023 and 2024, to help support 10 students. Rev. Kennedy has noted in each of the applications that the cost per student for a year has ranged from \$1600 to \$1310 per child for a year, including books, personal hygiene items, and residential care if needed. Our grants have helped to fund several students in a given year and the school has accessed needed supports from other sources.



The chief objective now is to build a large community room and 4 bathrooms. Presently the 100+ students and staff share one bathroom and there are privies also available for use. It is a difficult situation to meet the needs of the younger children along with the rest of the students and staff. Pastor Kennedy told us that one 4-stall bathroom costs about \$4000. A community room will provide much needed space for educational programs and related school activities. We can provide financial support to achieve this goal by individual donations mailing a check to:

La Trinidad UMC
(Note: Wesley Mission School)
PO Box 413
Seguin, Texas 78155

The Church has a direct link to ensure that donations to the Church do not have to contend with the costly postal, governmental processes that tend to eat up a good amount of the financial support sent.

It was wonderful to learn about the progress that has been made and the impact of church partnership over the years in Moheto. It is a very special connection. We hope New Connexions continues to be a support through individual donations and through the McKnight Fund.

Thanks to all for opening the door to this ministry and helping to keep it a vibrant part of our church experience.

New Paltz Play School News

Nancy Vance, Director

Playschool is beginning on September 8th. We have 50 children in 4 classes. This year is the first time we will have two 2 yr old classes! We are looking forward to a fun year. We will keep you posted for the date of our delicious Spaghetti Dinner, hope to see you there.

New Paltz Student Christian Center – Annual Meeting

Linda Loomis

The annual meeting of the SUNY New Paltz Student Christian Center was held on June 14th at the United Methodist Church (soon to be the New Connexion Church). In attendance were Rev. Michelle Ledesma Baer, Pastors and lay members from Redeemer Lutheran Church, New Paltz Reformed Church, and the New Paltz United Methodist Church.

Pastor Limina Grace opened the meeting. She spoke about the importance of campus ministry, and how different this is than what most of us remember. This was followed by the song "Where is the Love" by the Blackeyed Peas.

Pastor Michelle gave a presentation on the history of the NPSCC which was established in the late 1960s. She discussed how the post pandemic times is a different world. She described how the students are expressing a lot of anxiety about the future. She also spoke about the joys of chaplaincy which includes building a ministry of presence for students, faculty and staff, and members of the community.

The business portion of the meeting included voting on changes in the bylaws. These changes focus on membership options for supporting churches. The original bylaws only included an option for founding membership which required both financial support and an ongoing time commitment. The bylaws were revised to include the choice for churches to commit to being a covenant partner. This choice involves a lesser commitment for a defined period of time. These changes were voted on and passed by those in attendance.

The last part of the meeting focused on goals for the future which include: building board membership, continued work to enlist covenant partners, search for and complete applications for grants, and continued support for students and others in the campus community.

Financial News

Margaret Howe

How can it be September is a week away! How can it be that I am, again, the last to get my Newsletter article submitted! How can it be that New Connexions UMC has been birthed with so many possibilities of continued and new ministries! This is the day – month – year – time of new beginnings – new wineskins – new dreams – old dreams made new again! This is the time to be a United Methodist – right here and right now!



The above paragraph does not mean that everything is going to be easy or fall nicely in our laps. To me it means be united and connected in the spirit and work of our Methodist roots.

We continue to be busy and sometimes stressed. We celebrated merger – New Paltz UMC and Modena: Memorial UMC became New Connexions UMC – on August 17 we had the unveiling of our new logo and a wonderful display of the current and new ministries – we have our new

tee shirts and other swag to show ourselves – and now the work to dig deep and show who we are.

The merger is official – however until the State of New York approves the merger our finances remain under two umbrellas – New Paltz and Modena – when paperwork is approved by the State – we will transition into one fiscal operation. We are working well together and anticipate the transition to be seamless.

For New Paltz – our financial picture through first six months is a bit below projection – we are a month behind. You can help by making sure your commitment is current. I realize under times of stress and turmoil in a church some folks just stop giving until there is something new – whatever that new might be – or there is a new sense of stability. The finances of a Methodist church are critical – however the ministries and mission, if they are in full operation, are the foundation and money becomes the necessary second. In the Methodist denomination we are not subsidized by the greater church – we develop our own financial budget and work to maintain it. And, as Methodists we make a membership vow to serve our congregations through our prayers, presence, service, gifts and witness. I think we sometimes get so busy we forget these important vows/commitments we made – we need to acknowledge what and how we fulfill these – we do many automatically – let's do them all as a matter of recognizing what it means to be a United Methodist. I think we will be surprised that we are committed – let's celebrate and challenge ourselves to full commitment – I am! Let us see what surprises us.

Some updates since the last Newsletter

- I talked about the merger and our unveiling of Logo
- As you know Pastor Grace is on an eight-week Spiritual Renewal Leave – something all pastors are entitled to take. We have in our budget some finances to pay for guest pastors. However as this leave was not planned when we prepared the budget we do not have eight weeks of guest pastor funds. We pay the guest pastor \$200 per Sunday. If you would like to adopt a pastor for a Sunday – a gift would be appreciated – mark your check “adopt a pastor” – online giving, use “fund raising” box and mark “adopt a pastor” - Thanks
- Utility bills continue to be read monthly – usage is up and down – summer heat and air conditioners running a full capacity. Please make sure - if you are using an AC unit in the church – you shut it off when you leave – we found that there were units running all night and the church electric bill for July was VERY high – treat the church building like your home – thank you.
- It is amazing what the change in the rubbish/recycling contract means. \$157 per month verses \$800 per month.
- NYAC continues to upgrade their billing system for the payment of Pastor's Health Benefits and Pensions. That system is up and running – that monthly bill is paid online – no check is written. The next upgrade will be for Apportionments to be paid the same way. We currently make a monthly payment for apportionments.
- Organ Repairs Update – to keep you informed. The technician will be coming to review the scope of work from the earlier proposal. We expected him the last week in July when temperatures were 90+ and humidity was 90+. We are looking at end of September/early October – the technicians cannot be up in the organ room at hot/humid temperatures.

Working out the date is in process. Will keep you informed. This will be exciting to get this back on track.

If you know your John Wesley history – you know that May 24, 1738, known as Aldersgate Day – at a prayer meeting on that day – Wesley felt his heart “strangely warmed” – he experienced an assurance of God’s love and went on to share that love with all. Want some Methodist history read more about John Wesley, I suggest *John Wesley Holiness of Heart and Life* by Charles Yrogoyen, Jr. Why do I share this again – because much has happened to us at *New Connexions* – and although my heart is still financially a bit heavy – I do feel a warm spirit of potential growth and renewal – not to the past – rather to the future – we have much work to do to embrace our sustainability as a church, a parish, a district and a conference – we have opportunities - let’s grab hold – and with enthusiasm move forward with these ministries and missions.....doing good, doing no harm and staying in love with God.

The Council of Bishops and the Connectional Table of the United Methodist Church recently unveiled a new vision statement – “*love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously*”. I look forward to the growth and love and sharing and fellowship and discipleship sharing that can emerge from our new *connexion*. Forward we move on the corner of Main and Grove out and about wherever we are called.

May it be so!!!!

With love,
Margaret

Remember to check out...

- Announcements that are sent out weekly with the Sunday worship information to find out about current activities
- Our church website that contains all kinds of information and is frequently updated



Let's Celebrate



Happy Birthday!

| | |
|---------|---------------------|
| Sept 3 | Mary Rappleyea |
| Sept 4 | Natasha Buchanan |
| Sept 10 | Gina Dortano |
| Sept 10 | Sharon Roth |
| Sept 13 | Elizabeth Harding |
| Sept 13 | Sandy Kane |
| Sept 24 | Limina Grace Harmon |
| Sept 25 | Bette Sohm |
| Sept 26 | Hank Vance |
| Sept 28 | Madhurma Pachigalla |
| Sept 29 | George Weiss |
| Sept 30 | Tom TownsendPitt |
| Oct 1 | Scott Costley |
| Oct 1 | Cheryl Haughton |
| Oct 4 | Deborah Moore |
| Oct 4 | Kathy Weiss |
| Oct 5 | Bentley McNulty |
| Oct 14 | Connie Costley |
| Oct 19 | Jason Harding |
| Oct 23 | Julia Roper |

Happy Birthday!

| | |
|--------|--------------------|
| Nov 5 | Kristen Osterhoudt |
| Nov 9 | Glenn Sohm |
| Nov 15 | Suzanne Welch |
| Nov 18 | Makenna Roe |
| Nov 20 | Kate Hymes |
| Nov 24 | Amy Mellor |
| Nov 24 | Scott Lawton |

Happy Anniversary!

| | |
|---------|----------------------|
| Sept 29 | Art and Linda Mellor |
| Oct 22 | Jon and Carol Evans |

We welcome your feedback. Email the church at newconnexionsumc@gmail.com. It will be forwarded to Brenda Beane and Jacqui Vedder as current newsletter editors.