

The Reporter

July 2026

First United Methodist Church, Oneonta
www.firstumc-oneonta.org



Pastor's Article

In his Episcopal Address at Conference this year, Bishop Burgos offered a hopeful and inspiring vision for the future of the church, emphasizing unity, courage, and faithful discipleship. Acknowledging the diversity of perspectives within The United Methodist Church, he reaffirmed his conviction that there remains room for all people within our denomination. Rather than allowing differences to divide the church, Bishop Burgos called on us to listen deeply to one another, to seek understanding, and to live out our shared faith with both grace and conviction.

Bishop Burgos highlighted what he sees as a growing commitment across the conference to move forward together in mission and ministry. This unity, he noted, is not rooted in uniformity of thought or opinion, but in the shared identity believers have in Jesus Christ. By remembering that we belong to one another, we can continue to navigate challenges while remaining focused on God's call.

Throughout the address, Bishop Burgos encouraged clergy and laity alike to embrace bold and faithful leadership. He challenged the church to "rise up, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously," reminding us that God's presence continues to guide and sustain the church. Drawing on the example of the early Methodists, he expressed confidence that the same Christ who called previous generations is still calling the church today.

Concluding with a message of hope and blessing, Bishop Burgos expressed his prayer that the conference's work would bear good and faithful fruit for the glory of God and the well-being of the people the church is called to serve. His address served as both an encouragement and a call to action, inviting the church to step confidently into its next chapter of ministry together.

As we enter the summer months here at FUMC, things tend to get a little quieter. Many of our small groups are on hiatus until the fall. Worship attendance tends to be a little low as people travel and enjoy the summer. Perhaps this is a good season to start thinking about what our next chapter is. How might we as a church rise up, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously?

Summer Worship is Here

You've asked some great questions this year, and this summer we're going to explore them together.

Throughout the summer, Pastor Casey will be selecting questions and topics submitted by members of the congregation and using them as the focus for Sunday worship and the sermon message. It's a chance to wrestle with some of the biggest questions of faith, theology, and Christian living.

Some of the topics we'll be exploring include: What did John Wesley have to say about animals? How do we reconcile God's goodness with the existence of evil? What role should the church play in making space for Christian Nationalists? What is a soul?

These thought-provoking questions, and many more, will shape our worship throughout the summer. Whether you're seeking answers, curious about different perspectives, or simply enjoy engaging with meaningful questions, there's something for everyone.

Join us this summer at FUMC as we learn, wonder, question, and grow together in faith.

Staff Vacation Schedules

Kieran Andrews (church secretary) will be on vacation July 9 – 16. The office volunteers will be present on Tuesday – Friday mornings as usual. If you need anything from Kieran before he leaves, or if you have announcements for the July 12 & 19 bulletins, please contact him by July 1 if possible (secretary@firstumc-oneonta.org).

Pastor Casey will be on vacation August 14 – 24. Contact information for pastoral care will be available in the Sunday bulletin or church office during that time.

Summer Jingles

Each month, the “jingle” of loose change in the offering plate goes to a different organization or cause that serves the local community. In addition to putting loose coins in the plate, you can also give via check or cash – just write “Jingle” on the memo line or envelope.

The July Jingle will go to the Family Service Association’s (FSA) collection for Back to School Supplies. The FSA has been part of the area human service community since 1909. It is a private, non-profit human service agency. Funding is provided by United Way of Delaware and Otsego Counties, as well as area foundations, churches, and contributions from area residents. The mission of the Family Service Association is to support individual and family strengths and to assist area residents in meeting their own needs. The Association provides a variety of services, including a clothing program and emergency assistance (prescriptions, help with transportation, etc.). For more information, go to <https://fsaoneontany.org/>.

The August Jingle will support the Jail Ministry of Otsego and Schoharie County. The Jail Ministry provides inmates with worship services and spiritual support/counseling. There is also an Aftercare Ministry that seeks to assist people who have been released to become adjusted to life outside the prison or jail in a constructive way. For more information see <https://jmoconline.org/>.

Social Principles Study

How does our faith speak to the challenges and opportunities of today's world? How do Christians thoughtfully engage issues such as community life, creation care, economic justice, human dignity, and peace? Beginning in September, we invite you to join us for an engaging study of the United Methodist Social Principles.

The Social Principles are the United Methodist Church's prayerful reflection on how we live out our faith in the world. They offer guidance on a wide range of topics and help us think faithfully about the relationships between our beliefs and our daily lives.

Whether you are familiar with the Social Principles or have never read them before, this study is for you. In 2024, the General Conference adopted a major revision and restructuring of the Social Principles, making them more accessible, easier to navigate, and more clearly grounded in Scripture and theology. If you've participated in a Social Principles study in the past, this is an excellent opportunity to revisit them with fresh eyes and explore what has changed.

The study will be offered both in person and online via Zoom, making it easy to participate even if you're not local to Oneonta.

Together, we'll explore how our Wesleyan faith calls us to love God, love our neighbors, and engage the world with grace, compassion, and justice. We hope you'll join us for this meaningful conversation as we seek to grow in faith and discipleship together.

Watch for additional details, including meeting times and registration information, later this summer.

“Back to School” Reporter Deadline

The “Back to School” edition of the Reporter will go out mid-August. The deadline for submissions is **Friday, July 31**. Content should be sent to Amy at communications@firstumc-oneonta.org.

In Springfield, Ohio Deportation Is Paused: What's Next?

Sunday, July 12 after the 10:30 a.m. service

Last year the Trump Administration vowed to terminate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 350,000 Haitians in the U.S., but on February 3, a federal judge paused the action temporarily. Now the Supreme Court has taken up the case and will issue its ruling by early July. What's next? Following the 10:30 am service on Sunday, July 12, Rev. Dana Horrell will provide an update on what's happening in Springfield. He will show a brief "work in progress" reel (fifteen minutes long) for a documentary film he is producing and will lead a discussion on how we can love our immigrant neighbors targeted by the Trump Administration.

Why it matters:

- The Trump administration seeks to deport 350,000 Black persons nationwide by shifting their status from legal to illegal.

- Ohio Governor Mike DeWine said ending TPS would have a catastrophic impact on Springfield's economy.
- Haitians can't return to their country safely. The United Nations reported 8,100 killings in Haiti between January – November 2025. Gangs control large swaths of the central region of the country.

Update on Rummage, Bake & Book Sale

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU to ALL who made the Spring Rummage, Bake & Book Sale such a success! The combined income from the Sale was \$2,843...an all-time high!

The profits from the Spring Rummage, Bake and Book Sale go to the UWF (United Women of Faith) who support women, children and youth both locally and around the world. The UWF pledges \$7,000 to the UNY Conference/National UWF. In addition, their budget includes \$3,870 to missions of their choosing.

To promote supportive community, the UWF offers a twice a month Book Group, a Winter Tea, and a one-day Soul Care Retreat. Other activities include making Boomerangs; the Cream Team, which makes personal care items, tick spray and healthy dog biscuits; and the Social Action Creation Care and Grey Matters Teams. There's something for everyone!...including men!

FYI – The profits of the Fall Rummage, Bake and Book Sale go to the Annual Budget of First UMC.

For more information on UWF and how you can get involved, contact President Marty Van Lenten Becker, or those who make announcements in the Reporter or on Sunday mornings.

UWF promotes putting Christian Love into Action!

Congregation Creation Care Team

Water is Life. No argument there. Try living without it. Because of the concern over water shortages and pollution caused by Data Centers, activists around New York State fought successfully for the NYS legislature to enact a one-year moratorium on approving Data Centers. A win for the good guys. Well, we hope anyway. Governor Hochul has yet to sign it. She has until December 31, 2026. Calls and emails to her office supporting the moratorium could be instrumental in her signing.

Fortunately, Google and Microsoft have pledged to become completely water-positive by 2030 (replenish more water than they take). Stated simply, they are making infrastructure investments that will use air-cooled solutions and reclaimed water, rather than fresh water in running their data centers.

Unfortunately, despite their promises, data centers consumed roughly 1 trillion liters of water across North America, which prompted arguments from environmentally-friendly groups that there is a need for more transparency and site level data usage disclosures. Also, **unfortunately**, Amazon Web Services, META, Oracle, and Open AI, as well as third-party providers like Compass data centers and Evolution data centers need to commit to using zero-water cooling technology as well.

The proposed moratorium gives tech companies the opportunity to protect our water. Let's hope they and the Governor do the right thing.

Saturday's Bread Needs You!!

It is a hot meal program that has been providing a free meal every Saturday for over 34 years. During the School Year, many of the volunteers are Hartwick & SUNY Oneonta students. They are gone for the summer, so the need for other volunteers intensifies.

COME! SPREAD THE LOVE!! BE PART OF A CARING COMMUNITY!!!

Contact Joyce Miller at 607-434-4963 if you are between 13 and 93 and can help between 8:45 and 1:30 any Saturday in July and August. Get that “Good Feeling” that comes from caring for others. Be a Good Samaritan!! Be in Community with our Neighbors.

Saturday's Bread is temporarily moving to the First Presbyterian Church next to City Hall (296 Main St) for 3 weeks while work is being done at First UMC for the installation of the new heating/cooling system. The dates for the move are **June 27, July 4 and July 11. To enter, please **use the side door on the driveway side of the building** – the handicap entrance. There will NOT be an indoor waiting area, so please plan accordingly. Some parking is available at City Hall, and more parking is available across the street at St. James Episcopal parking lot.**

Call to Action: Helping Hands Thrift Store: Serving Oneonta with Faith and Compassion

Helping Hands Thrift Store stands as a quiet yet powerful example of how a community can come together to serve others. The thrift shop reflects FUMC's deep commitment to outreach, stewardship, and neighborly care. Helping Hands has become more than just a place to shop; it is a mission in action.

At its core, Helping Hands Thrift Store offers affordable clothing, household goods, and everyday essentials to individuals and families throughout the Oneonta area. For many in the community, it provides access to items they might otherwise struggle to afford, while also encouraging sustainability through the reuse and recycling of gently used goods. Every donated item and every purchase contributes to a larger purpose: helping others live with dignity and hope, as well as returning proceeds to other helpful organizations.

For our congregation, volunteering at Helping Hands is more than charitable service; it is an expression of our mission to serve the community. This work strengthens connections among church members and with our Oneonta neighbors, creating opportunities to build relationships, hear people's needs, and respond with care.

Helping Hands Thrift Store shows what is possible when faith and action come together. Through the dedication of our FUMC community, it remains a vital resource and a sign of hope in Oneonta. As a congregation, we can lead by example and invite others to join us in this shared mission. Just a few hours spent sorting donations or helping with inventory can make a meaningful difference.

Church Family Picnic

Sunday, August 30, 2026

10:30 a.m. - ?

Wilber Park – Large Pavilion

Our annual church picnic will be on Sunday, August 30, following the 10:30 a.m. worship service in Wilber Park. This will be a potluck picnic with hamburgers, hot dogs, and buns provided. Please bring a dish to pass and your own table service. **NO NUTS.** Feel free also to bring lawn chairs if you would like them.

The form below will help us plan for the food. Please contact Laura Hurley (607-435-1786 or LFHurley@hotmail.com) or fill out the form and drop it off in the church office by Friday, August 28.

Yes, planning on attending!

Name: _____

of Adults: _____

of Children: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

_____ I can help with set-up (cover tables, get charcoal ready, etc.)

_____ I can help serve

_____ I can help cook

_____ I can help with clean-up (clean tables, collect garbage)

PLEASE STAY IN YOUR CAR – EVENT STAFF WILL UNLOAD

Otsego County's Household Hazardous Waste Day 2026



**FRIDAY EVENT: AUGUST 14
8AM – 11AM**

Unadilla Hwy Building
216 Co Hwy 3
Unadilla NY 13849

**SATURDAY EVENT: AUGUST 15
8AM – 1PM**

Meadows Office Complex
140 Co Hwy 33W
Cooperstown NY 13326

For Saturday: Arrive According to Last Name

A-H 8am – 9:30am

I-Q 9:30am – 11:30am

R-Z 11:30am – 1pm

SMALL BUSINESS COLLECTION

Friday August 14, 2026 – 2pm – 4pm

First \$100 will be subsidized by the county

Meadows Office Complex

Small Businesses must register by Aug. 1 by calling 607-547-4225 or emailing solidwaste@otsegocountyny.gov

Supporters: County of Otsego, Town of Unadilla, Otsego County Conservation Association, & NYSDEC

Events are partially funded by a grant from NYSDEC.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ACCEPTED

Paints, Pesticides, Solvents,
Mercury, Chemical
Cleaners, Batteries*, Anti-
Freeze, Hobby & Pool
Chemicals, Fluorescent
Light Bulbs, & More.

Not Accepted: Motor Oil,
Explosives, Ammunition,
Tires, Electric Vehicle
Battery Cells, Propane
Tanks, Microwaves,
Electronics

Pharmaceuticals
(Cooperstown Only)

Expired & Unwanted
Prescriptions, Vitamins,
Veterinary Medications,
Over-the-counter
Medications, Lancets, &
More. **NO Syringes.**

***Batteries**

12 Volt Car Batteries,
Alkaline/Zinc, Ni-Cad
(dry/wet), Nickel Iron
(wet), Nickel Metal
Hydride (dry/wet),
Lithium Ion, Lithium
Primary, Mercury, Silver
Oxide, Button Cells, and
Lead Acid

FOR MORE INFO: OTSEGO COUNTY SOLID WASTE • 607-547-4225 • www.otsegocountyny.gov

https://www.otsegocounty.com/departments/s-y/solid_waste/household_hazardous_waste_day.php

First United Methodist Church, Oneonta

Church Address66 Chestnut Street, Oneonta, NY 13820
Church Office Phone.....(607) 432-4102
Church Emailsecretary@firstumc-oneonta.org
Pastor, Casey Bradley pastor@firstumc-oneonta.org
Choir Director, Carolyn McMastermakemusic24@frontiernet.net
Organist, Leslie Bauer.....lgbauer144@gmail.com
Communications Coordinator, Amy Rockwellcommunications@firstumc-oneonta.org
Secretary, Kieran Andrews..... secretary@firstumc-oneonta.org
Technology & Facilities Coordinator, Randall Wilson wilson_randall_@hotmail.com
Treasurer, Carol Halter finance@firstumc-oneonta.org
Nursery Care & Hospitality Assistant..... Danielle DeLuca
Volunteer Caretaker..... Christopher Brashear