



FROM YOUR MINISTER JIMMY READER

Welcome to December 2020! Not a year we probably want to remember. A difficult, challenging, often lonely and frustrating year - but we are in this together. We have "been there" for each other throughout the year through phone calls, Zoom meetings, emails, texts, cards, and sometimes personal visits. Thank you all for being a caring and faithful church.



As you know by now, we had to "pause" **Sunday services** (and all activities in the church building) again indefinitely. Hopefully, it will not be four months again before we can resume services, but the winter looks like it may be even worse than early in the pandemic. We will keep you informed every week. In case you missed it by email, my original message to you on November 24 about what we will be doing during Advent and Christmas (and beyond) can be found below.

We will be using Zoom this time for our Sunday services, rather than having a video recording session, so you can join us "virtually" on Sundays at 10:00 am. We will, though, record the service that way and post it on our website and app as we have been doing. (*See instructions below for how to join the Zoom meetings.*)

The Christmas season (beginning with Advent) is always a very special time for any congregation. We are sad to not be able to meet in person in the beautifully decorated sanctuary this year. We will, however, still have special services:

Nov. 29 - We did have a **Hanging of the Greens** service on Zoom. I hope you were able to join us.

Dec. 6 - We will have **Communion** from the perspective of **Christmas**. (You may want to be prepared with your own bread and cup to participate that day.)

Dec. 13 - Kathy Borden's trio, **Luminessence**, will fill our service with beautiful music that day. Much of the service will be **Christmas music**, some of which you can join in singing from home. - And they will have a 15-minute mini-concert of non-religious Christmas music after the service is over, if you want to stay.

Dec. 20 - We will ask some of our children and families to join us that day for **remembering the Christmas story** together during the service. Not a Christmas program as we usually have, but a family-oriented service.

Christmas Eve - At 7:00 pm (on Zoom, of course), you and your family (wherever they may live) can join us for a Christmas Eve service in your home.

Our **December 6 congregational meeting** will happen on Zoom. [See instructions for joining that meeting below as well.] For the work and ministry of our church, it is essential for us to **elect a pastoral search committee** and to **approve the proposed Constitution & Bylaws**. We will do both that day. Details for watching a video and reviewing the Constitution & Bylaws are also in the message below. We had two in-person opportunities (on Zoom as well) and have made everything available for 3 weeks in advance. If you have any questions, concerns, or feedback, please contact any of the team members who worked on it – Richard Ashworth, Sue Miller, Charlie Page, and Verna Hazen. And a huge THANK YOU to the team for their many hours of faithful work on this project.

These next six months will be unusual for the church in another way. As you know, I will be **retiring after 51 years of ordained ministry** at the end of May. My last Sunday with you will be **May 16**, and our plan is to have a party at the church to celebrate. (Please mark the date on your calendar.) Here is **what will happen** during these six months:

My hope is that **the pandemic** will mostly be behind us by then, so I will have been able to continue as your pastor through it.

We are **changing the structure** of our church leadership and how we do our work and ministry together, and I am excited to help see you through the early months of those changes.

Covid has confirmed what many people already knew – that churches in America must have a **digital ministry**, including multimedia technology to use in our services, apps and websites and social media, and the ability to livestream services and events so people can join from wherever they are. We have been working toward this for several years, and I hope that we will be able to complete this transition by May.

The **pastoral search committee** will be hard at work, beginning in December, and should be able to make very good progress toward finding a candidate to recommend as your next pastor. You are a healthy small church, and I'm confident you will be able to find a good pastor to come after me.

For now – and for ending 2020

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!

Pastor's Message on November 24:

2020 continues to be a challenging time for us all. None of us have ever been here before. As a pastor for 50 years, I have never faced **the decision to stop in-person Sunday services** even once, let alone twice, but here we are again.

On Monday, Governor Cuomo designated the City of Rochester and some surrounding suburbs **an Orange Zone**, meaning new restrictions on houses of worship. That includes Brighton, and part of the Town of Pittsford. The Council and I feel that for the sake of our community and our congregation, we need to "pause" Sunday services at church yet again.

For a month before we resumed in-person services back in July, Monroe County had several weeks of less than 50 people a day who tested positive for the virus. Now **our 7-day average is about 300 per day**. Two months ago, Monroe County's positivity rate was under 1% for some time. Now it's been in the 3% to 4% range for most of the last month. With Thanksgiving and Christmas coming up, this upward curve is not likely to go down until at least into January, if then.

We will use Zoom for our Sunday worship this time. Richard Ashworth has been recording and editing videos of our services since mid-March, giving several hours of his time every week. We very much appreciate all he has done. It's time to try something different. We also do not want 6-8 people meeting together at the church every week to record the services as we did before.

Zoom is not difficult to use. Here is what you need to know:

On Sundays at 10:00 am, click on this link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82175594833>

If you have not used Zoom before, it will ask you to download Zoom. It's easy to do, but sign in early to give yourself time to get set up.

Enter this passcode: **093485** - and you're "in."

Please click the "mute" button on the far left at the bottom. If you participate in the service at some point, you can click it again and "unmute" yourself.

If you don't want everyone to see you, click the "video" button next to the "mute" button.

Be sure to turn up the sound on your computer.

We will record the service on Zoom and post that video on our website. If you prefer to simply watch it on video on our website, you can do that later on Sunday.

The Advent and Christmas season begins this Sunday. We had hoped to have in-person services through Christmas, but we cannot do that. We will plan our services on Zoom to include as much as we can of “normal” Advent and Christmas services. Our Christmas Eve service will also be on Zoom. Please watch the email blast each week for updates. Or check the website (<https://ucpittsford.org/>) and be sure you signed up for the “general notifications” on our church app.

Our December 6 congregational meeting will also happen on Zoom. We do not know when we will be able to have an in-person meeting again, and it is important to the church that we elect a pastoral search committee and approve the new constitution & bylaws so we can pursue the nomination process for 2021. This meeting will have its own sign-in: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82175594833> and passcode: **093485** . That Zoom meeting will begin at 11:15 on Dec. 6. Remember that you can watch a video presentation and read or download the new Constitution & Bylaws at <https://ucpittsford.org/constitution> with this password: **UCP2020**.

Continue to pray for one another and for our nation and the world during this difficult and uncertain time. God will be with us.

Poinsettias for Christmas spirit!

Even though we will not be decorating the sanctuary for Christmas this year, we still like to have some of our traditions. We will be taking orders for poinsettias starting **NOW!**

6.5” poinsettias will cost **\$8**, and **4.5”** poinsettias will be available for **\$5**.
Color choices: **Red**, **White**, **Pink** or **Marble**.

We will be ordering the poinsettias to be delivered earlier than usual, so that we can enjoy them in our homes for the Christmas season. So, there will be a shorter window of time for you to get your orders to the Church office. **Orders are due by Thursday, December 10th** and will be delivered to you by our elves, or can be picked up at church by Sunday, December 13th. (More information about pick up times to follow).

When you call or send a note with your check to the Church office, let Briana know:

1. What **SIZE** you want
2. What **COLOR(s)** you want
3. **HOW MANY** you want.
4. Do you want it **DELIVERED** to your home **OR** will you **PICK IT UP** at church?
5. Do you want to add a **DEDICATION** (to be posted in the email blast)? If so, write it out.
6. Enclose your **CHECK** made out to UCP for the total due (please note its for poinsettias).



You can still donate the cost of a poinsettia for someone else, or just make a donation, if you like. Note that as well.



PITTSFORD FOOD CUPBOARD

Bags

*(Wegman's style reusable bags, Paper bags, Plastic bags)
Feminine Hygiene Products, Cleaning supplies*

Thank you for your continued giving!

ROCHESTER FOOD CUPBOARD

There was a fire at the Rochester Food Cupboard in November. Please consider making a monetary donation to help rebuild portions of the pantry and replace some of the foods lost.



Hats and Mittens

We can still do this tradition in a modified way. Instead of displaying them on a tree in Howard Hall, there will be a plastic tote bin outside the back door starting Thursday, Dec. 3rd for your donations of new, unused hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves. **No need to go into the church building - just put them in the bin and make sure the lid is on.**

THANK YOU!

Coffee Connection

Looking for gifts for friends and loved ones this Holiday Season?

Our Coffee Connection has gift baskets, individual gifts, and lots of coffee to choose from.

Support local!



Habitat PIE report:



UCP had a very successful pie sale to support the next Pittsford Habitat Interfaith Partnership build.

Thank you to everyone who purchased pies, crisps and/or donated cash.

Total pies = 31, crisps = 6 (23% increase over 2019)

Total "profits" = \$222.25

Total cash donations = \$132

Thank you REMAX East for the donated use of a truck to transport all baked goods to Pittsford from Hilton.

The Pittsford Habitat Interfaith Partnership is St. Louis, Pittsford Presbyterian, United Church, Islamic Center and Mount Sinai.

-Dick Krager and Jen Cranch



SUPPORT RAIHN!

Save-the-date for a shopping fundraiser at *A Horse with Wings*, located at 775 University Avenue, on Wednesday, December 2nd from 5 – 7pm. 25% of all sales on that day and for two weeks after will be donated to RAIHN.



Visit the store's Facebook page for more info!

<https://www.facebook.com/A-Horse-with-Wings-improbable-beautiful-things-324688144219116/>

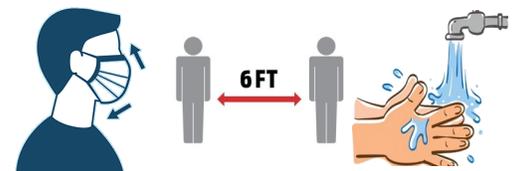
MISSION & MINIS-

COVID Updates

Five people died every two seconds yesterday across our nation due to COVID. In Monroe County in the past two days, we have hit new highs of new cases reported and positivity rate in the Orange Zones (including Brighton) above 7%. During this holiday season, everyone expects the numbers to increase dramatically.

We will not have in-person services or activities until "the numbers" decrease to a manageable level, which may be well into the winter months, at least. For now, join us on Zoom for Sunday services, our congregational meeting, and other activities as announced. Stay in touch with each other by phone, email, text, letters - whatever you can do. Or meet outdoors in small groups and socially distance with your masks.

We will get through this. God will provide a way through. Continue to be safe. Do all you can to care for yourself as you care for one another.



HEALTH & SAFETY



There are some items in the church we often forget we have available for your health and safety. One of those is our AED (Automatic External Defibrillator). This important emergency equipment is located on the first floor of the education wing, opposite the restrooms.

We have had this in place for many years. There are ongoing costs with battery and pad replacement. Like all electronic equipment there can be issues with circuit boards and technology changes. Our AED had a recall. The manufacturer was offering excellent rebates for replacement at the same time as we were going to have the expense of new pads. Due to this defect, the age of our device and the need to replace our pads the cost of replacement was very reasonable. We now have a new device.

The new device is slightly different, easier to use and has the most up to date software. As with all AEDs the directions are on a card in the unit and it will talk you through use. I also have available the more complete directions from the manufacturer.

We need to know who in the congregation is currently certified in CPR/AED. Please let me know if you hold that certification. I have been a trainer for CRP/AED. I cannot currently certify but I can train for hands only CPR, orient folks to the unit and make anyone interested comfortable with the AED. If you are interested in more information or training let me know. I will work on a process to provide this training while following COVID precautions.

Anne Passmore

Constitution & Bylaws

COUNCIL APPROVED MINOR CHANGES TO PROPOSED CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS:

Responding to questions about election and replacement of church officers, the Council approved this revised section. It has been changed on the version posted on our website.

Section 1. COUNCIL

There shall be an organization of officers of the Church known as the Church Council. Its responsibility shall be to consider matters of general concern to the whole Church. The Church Council shall be the coordinating body for all teams and committees. In the case of conflict, if a mutually agreeable solution cannot be obtained, the Church Council shall refer the matter to the Members.

Section 2. ELECTIONS

All Council Officers shall be elected annually by Members of the Church.

Section 3. VACANCIES

If a Council Member shall resign, die, cease to be an active member or decline to act, the office shall be declared vacant and a replacement shall be appointed by the remaining members of the Church Council to serve until the next Annual Meeting



AND FOR THE DECEMBER 6 CHURCH MEETING

Our December 6 congregational meeting will also happen on Zoom. We do not know when we will be able to have an in-person meeting again, and it is important to the church that we elect a pastoral search committee and approve the new constitution & bylaws so we can pursue the nomination process for 2021.

This meeting will happen RIGHT AFTER SERVICE. If you are attending zoom service, just stay online. If you are coming in late, sign in using THE SAME LINK AND PASSCODE: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82175594833> and passcode: **093485**. The meeting will begin right after worship on Dec. 6.

View the video presentation and download a copy of our Constitution & Bylaws here -*

***note:** this is a password protected page.

Password: **UCP2020**

<https://ucpittsford.org/constitution>

THE CHURCH APP

Have You Downloaded The Church App yet?



- Stay in touch
- Watch Sermons/Worship Services
- Check out scripture readings
- Learn, Serve, and Care all on your smart phone!



Follow these steps to download the app to your smart phone!

On your **smartphone's** web browser, search for "ucpittsford.org"

Click on "Download our Church App to Get the Latest Updates" in the **grey-ish bar** under our mission statement. (A window will open with 3 choices.)

iPhone Users:

- click the blue download button under "iTunes App Store" (your app store will open)
- click "get"

Android Users:

- click the blue download button under "Google Play" (your app store will open)
- click "install"

The app will begin installing. Once it is finished, open the app.

Click "lets go."

Click "Enable Location" this will allow the app to find UCP. OR if you're out of the area, click "Search by name" and type in "United Church of Pittsford"

Click "turn on notifications"

Congratulations! You've successfully downloaded our app!



Already Have The Church App? Follow the instructions below to allow notifications!

On your smartphone, open the Church App. Then follow this 5-step process to get the notifications:

1. Click the 3 bars at the top left of the App.
2. Click the "gear" icon.
3. Select "notifications."
4. Select "United Church of Pittsford."
5. Click on any of the groups you want to belong to.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT BAGS

How can you disappoint a
child by not having our annual Christmas Craft Party? Jen Cranch, Lynda Page, Karen White, Michelle Kwarta and Donella Ashworth decided to put together some crafts that the children could do at home.

We contacted the church families with children to see how many would be interested in doing this. Five families replied and we have a total of twelve children.

Each child will receive a bag containing seven crafts, instructions and pictures of the finished crafts. The bags will then be delivered to the families on December 6th.

UCP Christmas Tea

You read that right. This will be a virtual event on **Sunday, December 13th** following the regular Zoom Sunday Service.



Stay on line after the service is over and bring your favorite Christmas mug or fancy teacup with beverage of choice and maybe a cookie or 2. We will be able to enjoy more singing by Kathy Borden's group **Luminescence**.

P.S. If anyone is interested in doing a recipe exchange of your favorite fruitcake, you can sign-up on our website to participate in a recipe swap via email! (see the "online events" tab on our website to sign up!)

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/13 Karen White

12/15 Marty McCollum

12/22 Jaxon Young

12/22 Debbie Weiss

12/25 D'Arcy Dobbertin



OUR UNITED CHURCH CONNECTION

Nominations Invited for Mowbray Ecumenial Award

The American Baptist Church is looking for nominations for this award. It recognizes an individual for their ecumenical work. This work can be at any level, state, local or national. The winner will be selected by the Committee on Christian Unity and Interfaith Partnership and will be awarded at the Biennial Summit in 2021.



Learn more or make a nomination here: <https://tinyurl.com/ecumenial-award>

ABCUSA Holds First Online Board Meeting

The board met this past month on their first online meeting during the pandemic.

Feelings of warmth and thanks filled the conference call as the members spoke highly of each other's dedication and hard work, especially during these trying times.

They voted in favor of COVID relief funds and recognized members who are retiring after years of service to the board.



Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/ABC-Online-Board-Meeting>

What is the History of Advent?

Advent was originally organized as a the time for final baptism preparations. It began in ancient Rome when Christianity was made the legal religion and more than half the population had to convert. Since a single season couldn't accommodate the large crowds, advent was created as a second baptism season.



Over the centuries, advent has changed a lot. It wasn't until the mid 20th century that it developed into what is celebrated today.

Learn more here: <https://tinyurl.com/a-history-of->

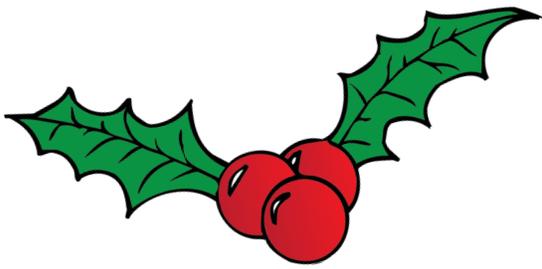
Church Must Hear Hispanic/Latino Voices *(a commentary)*

Methodist churches are filled with a variety of people, cultures, and voices. However, some of these voices are not heard as loud as others. The church is globalizing, and it is important that the people are heard, and that everybody is given the same attention.

Today, the churches population contains people from all different walks of life, but still only really hears from a certain group. It is now pertinent that we open up our ears to others.

Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/hearing-more-voice>





DECEMBER 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	
6 10:00am Worship Service	7	8	9 National Christmas Card Day 	10	11	12
13 10:00am Worship Service 11:15am Virtual Christmas Tea	14 7:00pm Trustees Meeting	15	16	17	18	19
20 10:00am Worship Service Dialogue Deadline	21 7:00pm Church Council	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day 	26
27 10:00am Worship Service	28	29	30	31 New Years Eve		



**PLANNING AHEAD?
LOOKING FOR UPDATES?**
Check out the calendar on our website!
www.ucpittsford.org/monthly-calendar

— NAMES AND NUMBERS YOU SHOULD KNOW —

Office Phone Number:	586-6870
Rev. Dr. Jimmy Reader, Minister	315-9241
Dot Borden, Choir Director	624-2284
Chen Liang, Organist and Pianist	
Briana Hanson, Administrative Assistant	586-6870
Don Reeve, Chair, Trustees	704-3748
Jennifer Cranch, Chair, Deacons	749-4758

Office Hours

Monday-Friday 9:00am-12:00pm

COLLECTION CONTAINERS

We have the following containers in the office:

Used eye wear & HEARING AIDS

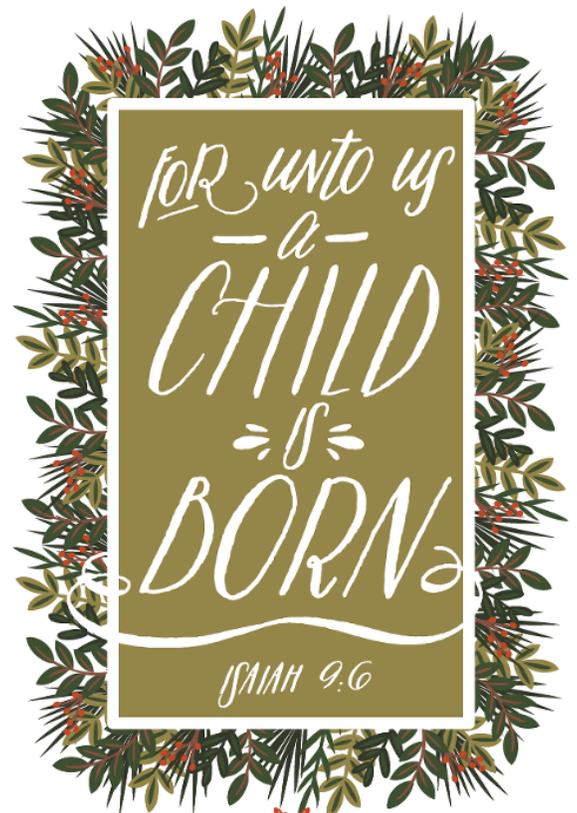
(including batteries, etc.):

These go to Lions Clubs International.

Can pull tabs

(from canned fruits, vegetables, soups, meats, sauces, and beverages):

These go to McDonalds for Shriner project funding.



UNITED CHURCH of PITTSFORD

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We're on the Web!

www.ucpittsford.org

Email us at: ucpittsford@gmail.com

Follow us! @ucpittsford  

Find us on the church app! 

If you would like a hard copy of the Dialogue mailed to you, please contact us.