



THE *Next* CHAPTER



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF MOUNT KISCO, N.Y. | OCTOBER 2018

This week's calendar

SUNDAY

9:15 a.m., Choir Practice
10:15 a.m., Worship followed by fellowship coffee and snacks in Halstead Hall.

MONDAY

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

TUESDAY

9:45 a.m., Mediation Yoga, Education Room
4:30 p.m., Interfaith Food Pantry, Halstead Hall

WEDNESDAY

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

THURSDAY

9:45 a.m., Mediation Yoga, Education Room
8 p.m., Amway, Education Room

FRIDAY

1 p.m., CODA, Education Room
4:30 p.m., Iglesias Cristiana Fe Y Esperanza, Sanctuary and Education Room

SATURDAY

8 a.m., Weight Watchers, Halstead Hall
9 a.m., Golden Crown Driving School, Education Room (third Saturday of each month)
6:30 p.m., AA, Halstead Hall

Learning a Lesson from the Trees

*“You will go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and hills
will burst into song before you,
and all the trees of the field
will clap their hands.
¹³ Instead of the thorn bush will
grow the juniper,
and instead of briars the myrtle
will grow.
This will be for the LORD’s
renown,
for an everlasting sign,
that will endure forever.”—
Isaiah 55:12-13 NIV*

*Greetings in the name of our
Creator God!*

We hardly need to check the calendar to know that a change is upon us. We sense it in the overnight temperatures dipping into the 50s, the waning hours of daylight, and the first leaves that have fallen from the trees.

Though many will lament the coming of fall as a precursor to winter, I for one welcome the change. Fall is my favorite season and I think my fascination with trees is a direct result of that. I find something comforting in the transition that occurs with the autumnal equinox.

As a kid, I loved climbing trees – especially as a way to escape my siblings. And there were those walks to school with the crunch-crunch underfoot, and the little storm of leaves kicked up behind.

As I got older, I began to marvel at the science of trees – the rhythm and pattern of their growth, their roots constantly stretching out in search of life-giving water. The tree grows from the inside out, adding a new layer in a burst of inner growth each year. Trees live in community, taking part in the creative energy in the world around them. They breathe in the toxins of the environment and, in exchange, produce clean, fresh air.

When I became a homeowner on Long Island, I took on the task of nurturing two scraggly, long-neglected trees outside my kitchen window.

The trees turned out to be an amazing study in contrasts. The one, a sassafras, provided a great show

of color as the leaves turned from green to yellows and reds before a final splash of burgundy and bronze. Before the mitten-shaped leaves dropped, the tree has already set visible buds that that would become the next summer’s greenery.

BENEATH THE
Spires
Rev. Joanne S. Utley

The other tree, a pin oak, was quite shy in comparison to its showy companion. It was almost as if the tree had an off-and-on switch; one day the leaves would be green, the next day brown. But the pin oak held most of its leaves through the cold winter, letting them go only to make way for the new growth of spring.

Each of the trees, in its own way, casts off the old in order to prepare for the new. Fall is the chance for the trees to put up one great blast of spectacular color before entering a state of dormancy in preparation for spring. The dropping of the leaves is not an end, but part of the life cycle, a vital step in the ecosystem in which they survive. There is hope in those buds that have been set on the trees.

My fascination with trees makes the Isaiah passage above one of my favorites in the Hebrew Bible. I think of the autumn colors as the joyful face of the trees. I think about the complete level of joy required to make the mountains sing and the trees clap. Every bit of creation is joyfully praising their Maker. When was the last time I felt like that in my relationship with God?

In those two verses, and in fact, all of chapter 55, the Prophet Isaiah is attempting to speak a life-giving word of hope even when all the events seem to make that an impossibility. The Hebrew people had taken a huge hit when the Babylonians carried them off into captivity: their city is destroyed; families torn apart; houses demolished; their country lost. No wonder they questioned whether they still believed in the God of their ancestors.

They had little or no hope, but Isaiah was doing his very best to provide some. So, he turns to the created order to paint a visual image for them. The Word of God is like water in a parched land, it is life-giving and life-sustaining. He reminded them that they could count on the steadfast Word of God, that God had always been with them even when it seemed otherwise. God's people would be delivered from destructive things and replenished with all divine graces and blessings.

And that promise of healing and peace also embraces the trees of the field; the mountains and the hills will joyfully proclaim that the destructive powers have been defeated.

There are times in our lives when we feel that even the last ounce of hope has been drained from our hearts. But what our faith exhorts is to hold fast to what we know to be the true Word of God until things change around us – until the promised healing seeps into our lives.

In the words of another prophet, Jeremiah, it is the faithful who are compared to trees, *“Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.”* – Jeremiah 17:7-8

Trees are rooted in the creative force of our world and survive or adapt to the ebb and flow of life. Their roots are always growing both thicker and longer, stretching toward the source of life-giving water. Trees are ever reaching skyward, to the sun and the

heavens above. The sun is their life force, just as the Son of God is the life and core of our faith.

The cycle of a tree is similar to the patterns we embrace in the Christian church: the cycle of preparation, expectation and anticipation, the spreading of hope, and the realization of living into new life.

What an incredible possibility Isaiah is offering us! He is delivering an invitation to abundant life. The Israelites – and all who read these words – are invited to come and sustain themselves on the nurturing word of God. God offers us an abundant life.

We need to give ourselves some time to soak in the Word of God, and a time to be “dormant” in a place of reflection and meditation where we can discover the glimmers of hope. That quiet time – that down time – gives us an opportunity to tune in to what God is saying.

This fall, may you take special note of the trees around you, and be startled by the beauty of our natural landscape. May the Word of God be like life-giving water, to nourish and sustain you. May you find a time of “dormancy” to rest and reflect in the presence of God in preparation for what the coming days will hold.

In God's care and service,
Pastor Joanne



Choir Participation for Advent and Christmas

Dear friends,

It's time for the choir to begin preparing for the Advent and Christmas!

Everyone is welcome to sing with the choir (even friends from outside of our congregation) especially for the holiday season when many singing voices are needed to perform slightly more challenging pieces. Some choral or musical background is preferred. If there is a question, please feel free to contact me. We also welcome any instrumentalists to incorporate into these services (especially for Christmas Eve), and I will be happy to work with you to find the best way to utilize your talents.

The four Sundays of Advent are December 2, 9, 16, and 23 and there will be special choir anthems for each of the first three weeks. The Sunday service before Christmas Eve is typically reserved for the Children's Christmas Pageant, with no special choir anthem. Then on Christmas Eve, there are the 6:30 and 11 p.m. services, for which we learn several choral pieces, as well as

additional solo or instrumental pieces for both of these services. As many of you know, our worship attendance during this time increases significantly, and the music is a very important part of celebrating the season.

Tentative rehearsal schedule (subject to change)

Sundays, 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. in the sanctuary:
November 4, 11, 18, 25, and
December 2, 9, and 16.

Fridays, 7-8:30 in the
Education Room: November 30,
December 7, 14, and 21.

Final rehearsal in the
sanctuary: Sunday afternoon
(exact time TBD), December 23

Holiday service schedule

Advent worship, Sundays at
10:15 a.m.: Dec 2, 9, 16 (9:15
a.m. warmup and quick run-
through)

Christmas Pageant, Sunday,
Dec. 23 10:30 a.m. (no difficult
choir music)

Christmas Eve, Monday,
Dec. 24 services at 6:30 and 11
p.m. (warmup & run-through
before service)

The final rehearsal before Christmas Eve is mandatory, but I am willing to discuss any schedule conflicts. It is not necessary to attend all rehearsal times, especially if you are only singing with the choir for the Christmas Eve services. The first few Sunday rehearsals are mostly to rehearse for the Advent services. Please note that much of the music will be handed out well in advance. I

also will email you audio files for many of the unfamiliar songs so you can practice at home.

If you have ANY interest in singing with us (or know of friends who might like to participate) for any of these services, please contact me either by email or text at the contact information below, or chat with me after service. The information I will need is: name, email, cell phone, vocal part, which services you would like to sing with us, and if you have any schedule conflicts with rehearsals.

Thanks, and hope to hear from many of you soon!

Paul Martinez
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United Methodist Church of
Mount Kisco
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Need To Contact Us?

Pastor: Rev. Joanne S. Utley
Music director: Paul Martinez
Head ushers: Andre Ferrara, Art Covey
Lay leaders: Bobbie McCann, Ross Porter
Administrative assistant:
Marianne Baldwin
Sexton: Art Covey
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Website:
www.mountkiscochurch.org
Church office email:
office.umcmk@gmail.com
Church office hours
Mon-Friday 1:30-4:30 p.m.
Pastor's email:
kiscorev@gmail.com
Pastors Office Hours:
Wednesday & Friday
10:00-3:00 p.m.



September 18-October 15: Pastor Joanne will be on medical leave as she recovers from knee replacement surgery. Guest preachers will fill the pulpit for the four Sundays of her leave, including Rev. Emily B. Hall, Tom and Wendy Vencuss, Marie Bell, and some of our very own lay speakers. In case of pastoral emergency during this time, please contact the church office.

October 7 Gravestone cleaning of former pastor's of our church. Beginning at 1pm in Oakwood Cemetery. Pizza will follow back at Halstead Hall. Sign up sheets

available in Halstead Hall or call the church office.

October 10 The Pumpkins will be delivered around 4 P.M. We will have plenty of volunteers to unload the truck. We will have a schedule available in Halstead Hall beginning Sunday, September 23.

October 11-31 The Pumpkin Patch will be open and ready for business. We will need volunteers to work selling and collecting money. Once we have the schedule it will be published for all to sign up.

Sunday, Oct. 21: Laity Sunday. We will celebrate the work of all laity in our church and community.

Sunday, Oct. 28: Blessing of the Animals service.

Saturday, Nov. 17: 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Laity Convocation with speaker, Rev. Sue Nilson Kibby, a leader in the missional church initiative serving in the UMC's West Ohio Conference. Kibby's greatest passion is "breakthrough prayer," which she explores in her book, "Flood Gates: Holy Momentum for a Fearless Church." Participants are encouraged to read the book beforehand. Cost is \$30 if you need her book sent to you; \$25 without the book. Continental breakfast and lunch are provided. Location: Tarrytown House Estate on the Hudson, 49 E Sunnyside Lane, Tarrytown, N.Y. Register on the "calendar" on the New York Annual Conference website (www.nyac.com). Also, please speak to Pastor Joanne if you're interested



Sexton Art Covey shows off his new bicycle, a recent birthday gift from some of the members of the church.

A BIT OF HISTORY FROM MRS. PORTER:

Look for maps of New Castle and Kisco Depot on bulletin board outside of nursery. The maps are 1867 school district maps, the year this 3rd edifice was being built. In 1875 the two settlements were joined to form the incorporated village of Mount Kisco.



The pumpkins are coming!

THE MOUNT KISCO
Interfaith
FOOD PANTRY

You can also help regularly by donating breakfast cereal, pasta, rice, canned food.

Please make sure cans are not dented and are not out of date.

If you would like more information, please contact or speak with Lisa Porter on Lisa's email is wrporter115@verizon.net

UMCMK is responsible for staffing the Interfaith Food Pantry on the following dates: 10/10, 11/14, and 12/12. If you are available to help out please contact Lisa Porter.



With many fall projects starting up either at the church or in your community, please think about volunteering your time. The rewards are many: meeting new friends, gaining new work experience, feeling a sense of reward for yourself, And it's an eye-opening experience to realize that doing even small things can have a big impact on you and others.

Groups in the village of Mt. Kisco that are looking for volunteers:
My Second Home
Fox Senior Center
Neighbors Link
Interfaith Food Pantry



THINK
 PUMPKINS

**HAPPY
 OCTOBER
 BIRTHDAY**

- 3RD LISA PORTER**
- 7TH LELIA AMRSTRONG**
- 8TH KOOKI LAUX**
- 10TH ALEXANDRA FITZGERALD**
- 13TH LYDIA DONOHUE**
- 18TH ANNA HODGSON**
- 21ST LESLIE HALL**
- 31ST ANDRE FERRARA**

**DOES THE OFFICE
 KNOW WHEN YOUR
 BIRTHDAY IS? PLEASE
 LET US KNOW IF YOU
 HAVEN'T DONE SO
 ALREADY.**



Neighbors Link makes hiring workers simple, safe and efficient!

Skilled and general labor available including: House and Yard Clean-Up, Housekeeping, Home Companions, Painters, Carpenters, Masons, Catering Help and more

**Neighbors Link Worker Center is open 365 days a year, 7am-7pm
 27 Columbus Avenue, Mount Kisco, NY 10549 914-666-3410 •
www.neighborslink.org**

CoDA



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

Held here Fridays at 1pm in our Education Room. For more information please contact lddance@gmail.com.