



THE *Next* CHAPTER



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF MOUNT KISCO, N.Y. | January 2019

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY

9:15 a.m., Choir Practice

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

6 p.m., Iglesias Cristiana Fe Y Esperanza, Sanctuary, Education Room, Halstead Hall

MONDAY

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

TUESDAY

4:30 p.m., Interfaith Food Pantry, Halstead Hall

7 p.m., Bible Study at Panera Bread

WEDNESDAY

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

THURSDAY

8 p.m., Amway, Education Room

FRIDAY

1 p.m., Co-Dependents

Anonymous, Education Room

6 p.m., Iglesias Cristiana Fe Y Esperanza, Sanctuary and Education Room

SATURDAY

8 a.m., Wellness Wins (formally Weight Watchers), Halstead Hall

9 a.m., Golden Crown Driving School, Education Room (third Saturday of each month)

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

All-Season Traction Control

So, don't lose a minute in building on what you've been given, complementing your basic faith with good character, spiritual understanding, alert discipline, passionate patience, reverent wonder, warm friendliness, and generous love, each dimension fitting into and developing the others. With these qualities active and growing in your lives, no grass will grow under your feet, no day will pass without its reward as you mature in your experience of our Master Jesus. Without these qualities you can't see what's right before you, oblivious that your old sinful life has been wiped off the books. - 2 Peter 1:5-8 (The Message)

With the onset of winter, I've been thinking a lot about traction - specifically, getting the best traction possible for both myself, and my car, when the snow, sleet and ice come. When you have knee replacement surgery, the doctors warn about the dangers of falling, so you might say I've been a little obsessed with avoiding that possibility. So, I'm hoping that a new pair of

BENEATH THE
Spires
Rev. Joanne S. Utley

boots and snow tires on the car will give me all the traction I'll need.

According to the dictionary, traction is "the force that causes a moving thing to stick against the surface it is moving along." Traction is the grip of a shoe on the pavement, the grip of a tire on a road, and even, I'd suggest, the grip we have on being faithful Christians.

Slipping and skidding are not just confined to shoes and tires. Sometimes our faith practices hit an unexpected patch of ice, and we find ourselves fishtailing into another lane, or spinning into the opposite direction. Distractions keep us from daily Bible reading or prayer; social commitments create long gaps in our worship attendance; a confrontation sours the passion we've had for serving our church and community.

A consistent practice of spiritual disciplines, like

prayer, worship, journaling and fasting, keep us grounded in our walk with Christ. They provide the traction to handle the black ice, hairpin curves and potholes that life may throw in our paths. And these practices help to shape us as servant leaders who care for our hurting world with humility and compassion.

A blogger on the Lighthouse Network website compares the work of God to the “traction control” technology in today’s cars. A computer in our cars measures traction each tire requires and increases or decreases the power needed to give us a safer drive. It works automatically. Our only responsibility to get “this incredible life-saving service . . . is to aim the car in the right direction.”

The writer continues, “So the logical question is, why do I still make mistakes, sin, slide backwards, and fumble in these situations if God is providing all this traction, power, and guidance? The answer – you need to steer towards God. Just like a car, the power is useless if you don’t steer in His direction.”

During my first two years of college, I commuted to class in a family car. Late one winter night, my mother called the school and left me a message that it was too bad to drive the 14 miles home, and I should stay with my aunt nearby.

Well, I looked out the window and didn’t see much going on. So, I walked outside



to make certain that my mom was over-reacting – again. She refused to drive if there was even a forecast of snow. But, hey, I was a college student and I could figure out whether it was safe to drive home or not.

Less than 10 minutes later, I knew I had made a big mistake. I was only four miles from campus, and boy, had mom been right! The snow was blowing so hard I couldn’t see anything out the windshield. When I rolled down the driver’s window for a look, wet snow blasted me in the face.

I had driven this route hundreds of times but I found myself really confused. There were no tail lights ahead, no headlights behind, and actually, no lights anywhere along this two-lane county road.

Then I discovered I was on the wrong side of the road! Panic was fully setting in, and I was beginning to hear my mother’s words reverberating in my ears.

I have to admit that I did exactly what most of us would do in this predicament – I

prayed! And promised God everything I could think of if only I got home safely. I left the passenger window open, cranked up the defroster, and pressed lightly on the gas pedal. Ever so slowly, I maneuvered back into my lane and began the arduous journey home, mumbling to myself all along the way, “I can do this, I can do this, I can do this.”

And I did finally get the car home – or at least within sight of the house. As I made the left turn onto my street, the tires caught in the snow plowed up on the corner. I gave the car a little more gas, but the two tires on the driver’s side just began to spin in place. I had lost my traction in the turn.

There wasn’t much more I could do but shut the car off and walk the final 200 yards home. My parents were relieved to see that I was home, but I had to admit to them that the car was stuck in the snow down the street. I didn’t offer up the full details of my adventure through the blizzard.

I am often reminded of that story when I drive through heavy snowfalls these days. I find myself thanking God for the traction that was provided that night, and the bursts of wisdom and calm amid my stupidity and pride.

So, whether you’re skidding in your car, or your faith is on the skids, the advice is similar: steer into it. Steer in God’s direction!

In God’s grip and service,
Pastor Joanne

UPCOMING EVENTS



"As I have loved you, so you must love one another."
- John 13:34

"Hearts on Fire"

What: A fun evening of dinner, music, and dancing. Invite your neighbors, friends or family members to join in!

When: 7-10 p.m., Friday, February 8

Where: Halstead Hall

Who: Surprise DJ/emcee

Why: Brush up on your line dancing

Cost: \$15 ticket includes 3-course dinner. Tickets must be purchased by February 3; see Don McCann, Bobbie McCann or Marianne Baldwin.



Weekly Bible Study continues every Tuesday from 7-8 p.m. at Panera Bread, Bedford Hills. See Dave Visaggio or Ross Porter for any questions.

ESP: Shelter, Food & Fellowship

For the 10th consecutive winter, the church will have the privilege of hosting the Emergency Shelter Partnership (ESP). It's a very worthwhile ministry and gives us the opportunity to offer the homeless people who participate some fellowship and camaraderie, in addition to shelter from the cold. As the ESP website states: "When the temperature drops and the wind blows, we provide a welcome and a meal and a safe place to sleep."

When: The evening of Monday, January 28 through the morning of Monday, February 4.

Task: Volunteers are needed nightly to provide a hot meal for up to 25 guests, or to supply breakfast/lunch bags for the next morning. The dinners are usually prepared at home and brought in; stews, pasta or casseroles are good choices. You can make the meal yourself or get together with friends to pull it together.

Granola bars, cookies, and fruit can fill the morning "to-go" bags, which should be dropped off the night before. There are volunteer signup sheets in Halstead Hall.

Process: Arrive between 8:30-9 p.m. to warm up your dinner and then serve our ESP guests in the chapel. The chapel will

be the designated dining area for the week and will be set up with tables, chairs and eating utensils. The dinner service should be finished around 9:30-9:45 p.m.; our guests will then move to Halstead Hall for a warm night's sleep. You will be greeted by our church coordinator, Dave Visaggio, who will help you get set up. There will also be an ESP supervisor on hand every evening to monitor the whole process.

Chaperone: For insurance reasons, one member of the congregation will be designated to stay overnight in the church (Porter Library) and will be able to depart when our guests leave at around 6 a.m. They are also available to assist the ESP chaperone if needed.

Transportation: The homeless gather at the Mount Kisco police department each night and are then transported to and from the church by bus with an ESP staffer as a monitor. We indeed look forward to reaching out to serve our ESP guests the week of January 28. As Christ taught us: "As you do to the least of these, you did it for me." Please contact me with any questions or concerns at 914-262-9973, or by email at visaggiod@gmail.com.

- Dave Visaggio
ESP coordinator

Emmanuel - God With Us

By Dave Visaggio

As we enter into the New Year, we can hope in expectancy that God will never let us down. God perfectly cares for all that concerns you. We can trust the Father to lead us and know for absolute certain that God has our very best interests in mind. A word that beautifully describes how committed God is to us and to our wellbeing is: **Always** God will *always* be with you. God will *always* accept you. God will *always* love you. God will *always* claim you as God's own. God will *always* listen to you. God will *always* comfort you. God will *always* provide for you. God will *always* forgive your sins. God will *always* remember you. God will *always* work on your behalf. God will *always* lead you with love, power and wisdom. God will *always* bless your obedience. God will *always* come through for you! God will *always* answer your prayers!

Choose to flow with God's plan. Be sensitive to the new things God is doing. Stay flexible to the Holy Spirit's promptings and know for sure God directs, adjusts, moves and corrects us. God is always working to bring us into perfection.

Need to Contact Us?

Address: 300 E. Main St., Mount Kisco, NY 10549

Phone: 914-666-5014

Email: office.umcmk@gmail.com

Website: www.mountkiscochurch.org

Church office hours: M-F 1:30-4:30 p.m.

Pastor: Rev. Joanne S. Utley

Pastor's email: kiscorev@gmail.com

Pastors office hours' & F 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Music director: Paul Martinez

Head ushers: Andre Ferrara, Art Covey

Lay leaders: Bobbie McCann, Ross Porter

Administrative assistant: Marianne Baldwin

Sexton: Art Covey

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

3	Joanne Visaggio
10	Shirley Porter
13	Jane Alcala Jeff Kent
15	Leanne Summers
17	Sarah Chasey
18	Nick Kent
26	Louis Rizzotto

**"Special Happy Birthday to
Shirley Porter"**



Our monthly birthday parties are usually held on the first Sunday during fellowship.

A Prayer For The New Year

Faithful Companion, in this new year I pray:
to live deeply, with purpose,
to live freely, with detachment,
to live wisely, with humility,
to live justly, with compassion,
to live lovingly, with fidelity,
to live mindfully, with awareness,
to live gratefully, with generosity,
to live fully, with enthusiasm.
Help me to hold this vision and to daily renew it in my heart, becoming ever more one with you, my truest self. Amen.
- Joyce Rupp
From "Out of the Ordinary"

New Order of Bricks

Would you like to place an engraved brick on the commemorative pathway outside Halstead Hall? Please let the church office know of your interest. They are \$125.