

## WHAT'S NEW ONLINE?

Follow the AC' 15 session with our live stream when it goes active at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 27:

[www.unyumc.org/events/ac-live](http://www.unyumc.org/events/ac-live)

Human sexuality topic of conversation circles at AC '15

[www.tinyurl.com/ConvoCirclesAC15](http://www.tinyurl.com/ConvoCirclesAC15)

Need the *Pre-Conference Workbook*? Get your copy of it now:

[www.unyumc.org/events/pre-conference-workbook](http://www.unyumc.org/events/pre-conference-workbook)

Council of Bishops to meet in Berlin

[www.tinyurl.com/CounBishopsBerlin15](http://www.tinyurl.com/CounBishopsBerlin15)

## CONFERENCE CALENDAR

May is Asian / Pacific American Heritage Month

Pre-Conference Briefings

9-11 a.m. May 9 at the Potsdam UMC

3-5 p.m. May 9 at the Saratoga Springs UMC

9-11 a.m. May 16 at the Casowasco Camp & Retreat Center

2-4 p.m. May 16 at the Sky Lake Camp & Retreat Center

May 10 – Festival of the Christian Home/Mother's Day Brunch

*(Honors the mother's role in the Christian family, the community, and the world.)*

[www.tinyurl.com/FCHMothersDay2015](http://www.tinyurl.com/FCHMothersDay2015)

May 25 – Memorial Day, Conference & District offices closed

May 27-30 – 2015 Annual Conference session, OnCenter, Syracuse

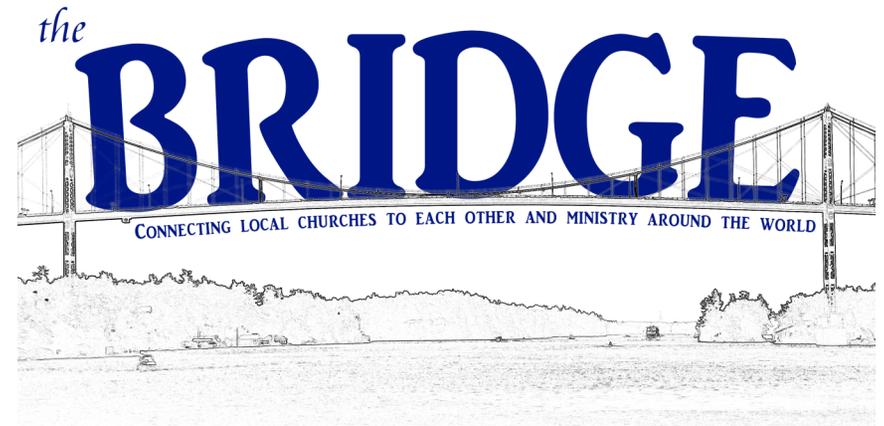
May 31 – Peace with Justice Sunday

[www.tinyurl.com/PeaceWithJustice2015](http://www.tinyurl.com/PeaceWithJustice2015)

*The Bridge is a Conference Communications Ministry tool that delivers to local churches news and stories of ministry from around the Conference and the world.*

[www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)

PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY IS MAY 31!



The Upper New York Conference's vision is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be God's love with our neighbors in all places.

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# What does 'conference' mean to The United Methodist Church?

When you hear the word "conference" in relation to The United Methodist Church, it refers to one of five things: a regional body, an organizational body, Annual Conference session, General Conference, or Jurisdictional Conference.

## 1. Regional body

The regional conference is described by the church's Constitution and *The Book of Discipline* as the "basic unit" of the Church.

In the United States, a conference may cover an entire state, part of the state, or parts of two or more states. There are also three missionary conferences in the U.S., which rely upon the entire denomination for funding.

The U.S. has 57 conferences, supervised by 46 bishops. There are 76 conferences in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines, supervised by 20 bishops.

The Upper New York Conference of The United Methodist Church was created when the New York churches within four former conferences – North Central New York, Troy, Western New York, and

Wyoming conferences – united.

## 2. Organizational body

In the U.S., the conference has a central office and professional staff that coordinate and conduct ministry and conference business. The UNY Conference Office is located in Syracuse.

It likely has a director of connectional ministries, a treasurer, directors of program areas – such as camping, a communications director, and other staff. Clergy and laypersons may also serve on conference boards, commissions, and committees.

## 3. Annual Conference session

Each year an equal number of clergy and lay members attend their conference's annual session for worship, fellowship, and to conduct the business of the conference, which may last three to five days. This year's UNY session is four days, May 27-30, at the OnCenter in Syracuse. For more information, visit [www.unyumc.org/events/annual-conference](http://www.unyumc.org/events/annual-conference).

During these sessions, members of the

conference hear reports of past and ongoing work; adopt future goals, programs, and budgets; ordain clergy members as deacons and elders; and elect delegates to Jurisdictional and General Conferences (every four years). The bishop presides over these meetings. The bishop for the UNY Conference is Area Resident Bishop Mark J. Webb.

## 4. General Conference

The General Conference is an international body of nearly 1,000 delegates that meets every four years. The delegates – split evenly between clergy and laity – represent conferences around the world.

During General Conference, delegates discuss and vote on petitions and resolutions proposed by individuals, agencies, conferences, annual conference sessions, and other groups within the denomination. These actions can result in a revision to *The BOD*, the denomination's book of law, and *The Book of Resolutions*, policies of the denomination on current social issues.

At General Conference, the Church's official stance and Church policies are made regarding such issues as human sexuality, abortion, war, and peace, as well as determination of ministries and funding.

## 5. Jurisdictional Conference

In the U.S., The United Methodist Church is divided into five areas, known as jurisdictions: Northeastern, Southeastern, North Central, South Central, and Western – the UNY Conference is part of the Northeastern Jurisdiction. These provide some program and leadership training events to support the conferences. Every four years the jurisdictional conferences meet to elect new bishops and select members of general boards and agencies.

Conferences located outside the U.S. are organized into central conferences, much like jurisdictions. There are seven central conferences: Africa, Central and Southern Europe, Congo, Germany, Northern Europe, Philippines, and West Africa.

## Baldwinsville church issues 'Stop Hunger Now' challenge

In response to the need for funds to support the **Stop Hunger Now** (SHN) project at the 2015 Annual Conference session, the Administrative Council at the **Baldwinsville First United Methodist Church** has extended a challenge invitation to each congregation within the Conference to make a commitment to the Conference's goal of raising \$43,500 to underwrite the packaging of 150,000 meals during the 2015 Annual Conference session. Further, the admin council also encourages Upper New York's members to help in packaging the meals for distribution.

"To that end, we are committing \$1,000 to the *Stop Hunger Now* project," the admin council notes. "Would you join us?"

To learn more about SHN or to make a donation, visit [www.tinyurl.com/DonateSHN15](http://www.tinyurl.com/DonateSHN15).



## Celebrate Mother's Day with a brunch at one of the Camp and Retreat centers

Mother's Day is right around the corner on Sunday, May 10. Why not celebrate the holiday at one of Upper New York's scenic Conference Camp and Retreat centers? The Aldersgate, Casowasco, and Findley Camp and Retreat centers will each host a Mother's Day brunch on May 10.

The menu includes scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, assorted pastries, fresh fruit, fresh assorted salads, and more.

Reservations are required and can be made by calling toll-free (855) 414-6400 to book a table.

You can download a PDF advertisement for your church by visiting [www.tinyurl.com/MothersDayBrunch2015](http://www.tinyurl.com/MothersDayBrunch2015).

