

IN BRIEF

Bishop Webb reflects on recent shootings

On July 10, 2016 Bishop Mark J. Webb his reflection about the recent shooting deaths in Baton Rouge, St. Paul, and Dallas. "As we pray for the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives, we are reminded that God has called the Church to be light in the midst of darkness, to be salt that seasons the world," Bishop Webb said. Visit bit.ly/BishopWebbReflects for Bishop Webb's full reflection



Penny Proper's Walk to Africa University

In an effort to raise funds for *Africa 360*, Penny Proper was determined to walk all the way from her church (Newark First United Methodist Church in Newark, N.Y.) to Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe. She accomplished this 8,085 mile walk in less than nine months; visit bit.ly/PennyProper to read more about Penny and her amazing dedication to Africa 360.



Opportunities to serve

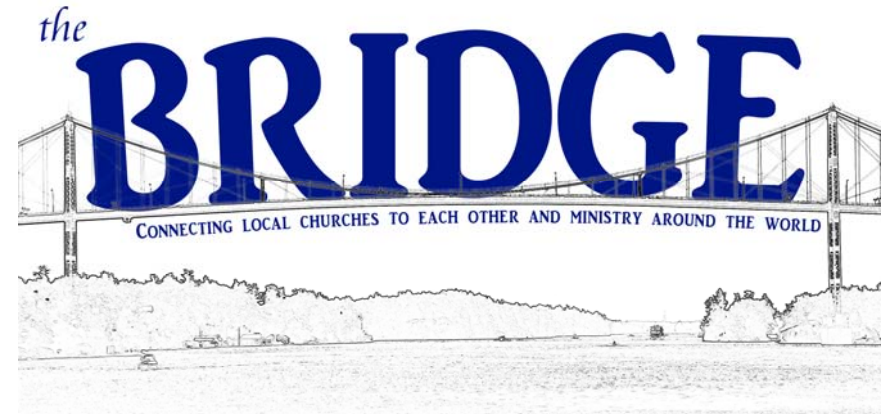
The Upper New York Conference Nominations & Leadership Development Team is still seeking gifted, passionate, and committed women and men to serve on various Conference committees, boards, commissions, and teams. An application form has been developed for those who are interested in being considered.

Please indicate how you might like to serve in the Conference in the coming quadrennium (2016-2020) by visiting bit.ly/unynominations to access and complete the form.

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

www.unyumc.org

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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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The Rev. Adam Hamilton's 2016 UNY Annual Conference study sessions videos available for all

At the 2016 UNY Annual Conference, The Rev. Adam Hamilton, founding pastor of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kas. offered three insightful 90-minute study sessions. He taught lessons on how churches can build leadership, offer effective worship and preaching, and transition visitors into members. The Upper New York Conference is happy to announce that permission has been granted to post videos of his study sessions on our Vimeo.

You can even use the same worksheet that Annual Conference attendees used during Rev. Hamilton's study sessions. This worksheet is available at bit.ly/hamiltonworksheet.

Study Session #1 focused on creating effective leaders. Rev. Hamilton said that today is a different time for the church. "The approach that worked in the past may not be the one that works in the present," he said. "If we keep doing the same things without any change, we are going to see our churches get smaller and smaller. If we are going to reach new generations of people, we need to figure out how to connect to people who don't go to church and bring them in." The following characteristics are what Rev. Hamilton said that these are the leadership principles that churches need to follow:

1. It's all about the people.
2. Healthy organizations have a clear MVP (mission, vision, and plan).



3. Change, innovate, improve, or die
4. Intentional discipleship
5. Discernment by nausea – being willing to do what unsuccessful churches are unwilling to do

To watch Study Session # 1, visit vimeo.com/170942096.

During Study Session #2, Rev. Hamilton dove into the topic of effective worship and preaching.

He began with examples of what he and his congregation do: having people pray during the week over the seats in the sanctuary for those who will sit in them, praying at the altar before wor-

ship, and beginning worship with an upbeat welcome, where he identifies himself and expresses his gratitude for those in attendance.

According to Rev. Hamilton, there are five components of preaching that people connect to:

1. Sermons should teach people something they didn't know before.
2. Sermons should inspire people and elicit an emotional response. For example, one year for Mother's Day, Rev. Hamilton showed a video where fake interviews were conducted for a 24/7, no holiday

breaks, zero-pay job, and the end of the video reveals that this job is the role of a mother.

3. Sermons should call people to action.
4. Sermons should be relevant to daily life. Rev. Hamilton once undertook a six month-long adventure with farming, all to develop a sermon series. One sermon focused on "In life, manure happens." His goal was to show people a plan for transforming and managing "manure" – life's obstacles. He told his congregation about developing an MMP (manure management plan), and coincidentally, you have to turn manure every seven days to turn it into fertilizer. Rev. Hamilton was able to use an everyday object and relate it to not only the Bible, but also to daily life.

5. Sermons need to be biblical.

To watch Study Session #2, visit vimeo.com/170947455.

Rev. Hamilton's final study session for the 2016 Annual Conference zeroed in on how to transition a visitor to a member. For example, Rev. Hamilton recommends hosting coffee time with pastors. He also advises the pastor to visit the individual in his or her home and invite them to worship as well as present him or her with a small token of appreciation like a notebook or mug.

To watch Study Session # 3, visit vimeo.com/170954752.