

his illness bring him down.

“He brought community back through his plight,” said Pastor Mike Kelly, of the Newfield and Reynoldsville United Methodist churches, who met Colin while serving as chaplain



of the Allegiance Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club, for which Colin was an honorary member. “He became a community icon. Every time you saw this young boy, he had a smile on his face, and he never gave up.”

In memory of Colin, children attending Sunday school and Vacation Bible School at Newfield and Reynoldsville UMCs are fundraising for St. Jude’s Children Hospital – which provided Colin medical care at no cost – and Trumansburg Takes on Pediatric Cancer.

“The idea of helping both organizations in Colin’s name, to really be able to honor him, his memory, seemed appealing to me,” Pastor Kelly said.

The children began various fundraisers on April 1 and will continue to raise funds through Aug. 1. Pastor

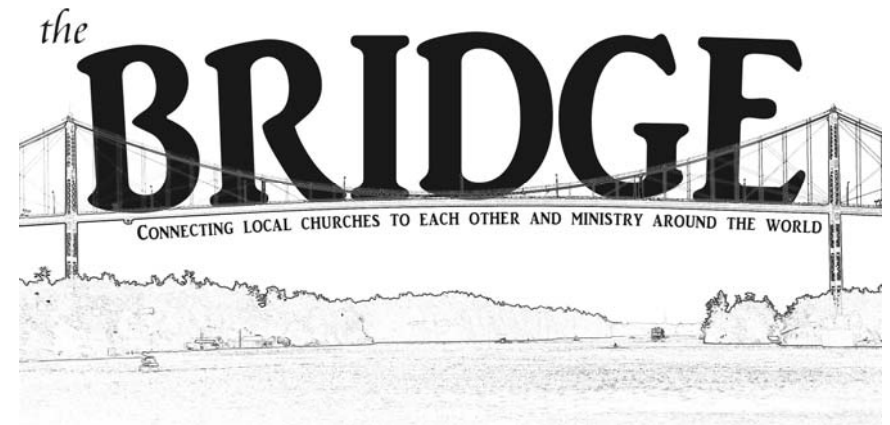
Kelly said it made sense to fundraise during Vacation Bible School because this year’s theme is “benevolence.”

Kids from both Sunday schools have been selling boxes of candy, the Reynoldsville UMC will have a bake sale and can drive from 8 a.m.-noon on May 12 in front of the Walmart in Watkins Glen, and the Newfield UMC will host a spaghetti dinner, with all proceeds going toward the effort. In addition, both churches are partnering with Texas Roadhouse for gift certificates and sales.

“I just think that this is an opportunity to really teach the kids how blessed they are and that kids just like them aren’t always as lucky, even though people like Colin didn’t understand that – he always had that positive spirit no matter what,” Pastor Kelly said.

*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.*

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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.

A look inside!

From the Desk of Bishop Mark J. Webb: United Methodist Bishops recommend a way forward

Page 2

UNY churches, children raise funds in memory of a boy

Page 2

From the Desk of Bishop Mark J. Webb: United Methodist Bishops recommend a way forward

On May 4, 2018, Upper New York Area Resident Bishop, Mark J. Webb, sent the following letter to the Upper New York Conference.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Over the last week, the Council of Bishops (Council) met in Chicago to receive the final report from the Commission on a Way Forward (Commission) and discern the recommendation that would be sent to the special session of General Conference to be held in St. Louis, MO in February of 2019. This meeting was bathed in prayer, dependence on the Holy Spirit, and caring, honest conversations.

The Council of Bishops adopted the following:



Motion:

Having received and considered the extensive work of the Commission on a Way Forward, the Council of Bishops will submit a report to the special session of the General Conference in 2019 that includes:

- All three plans (The Traditionalist Plan, The One Church Plan, and The Connec-tional Conference Plan) for a way for-ward considered by the Commission and the Council.
- The Council's recommendation of The One Church Plan.
- An historical narrative of the Council's discernment process regarding all three plans.

Rationale:

In order to invite the Church to go deeper into the journey the Council and Commission has been on, the Council makes all the information considered by the Commission and the Council of Bishops available to the delegates of the General Conference and acknowledges there is support for each of the three plans within the Council. The values of our Global Church are reflected in all three plans. Most of the Council recom-mends The One Church Plan as the best way forward for The United Methodist Church.

While a majority of The Council of Bishops did express a preference for the One Church plan, this report and its rec-ommendation reflects the wide diversity of perspectives within the Council of Bishops on our best way forward as a

denomination. It also provides the Gen-eral Church with three specific and de-tailed options for moving out of our cur-rent impasse. Ultimately the decision on this matter lies within the 800+ clergy and lay delegates from around the world who will convene at the General Confer-ence in St. Louis on February 23-26, 2019. Please pray diligently for the members of our Upper New York delega-tion.

Full details of the plans and accompa-nying legislative proposals will be re-leased as soon as final editing of the entire report is completed and translat-ed into the official language(s) of the General Conference. It is estimated this will be no later than July 8.

Over the next few months, we will announce ways in which we may gather together throughout the Upper New York Area for continued conversation and prayer. These are indeed critical and anxious days for our beloved United Methodist Church. Yet, let us remember Jesus is Lord of the Church, the mission of the Church is clear, and our calling and opportunity to use the gifts of God's Holy Spirit remain.

Let us pray and not be paralyzed; let us hope in the midst of our uncertainty;

let us care for one another in the midst of hurt; let us love one another in the midst of disagreement; let us be the Church effectively and fruitfully "making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transfor-mation of the world."

As always, I am blessed to share this journey of following Christ with you. You remain deeply in my prayers. Sincerely,

Bishop Mark J Webb

Editor's note: Bishop Webb also wrote a letter to the UNY Conference expressing sadness over two United Methodist con-stitutional amendments regarding gen-der equality that did not pass. Despite these two amendments not passing, the first constitutional amendment related to gender justice was voted on using the wrong language. A new ballot is being prepared for voting by Annual Confer-ences at their next meeting; however, some Conferences will not meet again until 2019. Visit <http://bit.ly/BishopWebb> to read Bishop's letter about these amendments.

UNY churches, children raise funds in memory of a boy

By Kathleen Christiansen
Colin Hayward Toland always had a smile on his face.

He dreamed of being a police officer,

which became a reality when the Ithaca Police Department made him an honor-ary member at 9 years old and later when the Memphis Police Department

promoted him to lieutenant and a mem-ber of the department's tactical unit at 10 years old.

Colin battled brain cancer since the

age of 2, and sadly succumbed to the illness at the age of 10, but he never let

Continued on page 4