

WHAT'S NEW ONLINE?

Check out your 'Back-to-School' photos

The Upper New York Conference placed a call out to local churches for photos and a brief write-up about their "Back-to-School" or Sunday school kick-off events. Go to www.unyumc.org/news/article/back-to-school to view photos of submitted events as well as brief stories about how UNY churches celebrated the "Back-to-School" season.

Note: If you haven't submitted your church's photo(s) and write-ups, you can still do so by emailing them to news@unyumc.org with the subject line "Back-to-School."

Prayer partners: Another life-saving tool in the *Africa 360* toolkit

For Every Child, Save a Child is a pilot program specifically geared toward *Imagine No Malaria*. The program is the result of a partnership between *Africa 360* and the Liverpool First United Methodist Church, which will be the first church in the Upper New York Conference to participate in the program that pairs children and congregants as prayer partners and raises money for *Imagine No Malaria*, one half of the Conference's holistic plan for health and education initiatives in Africa. Go to www.tinyurl.com/o7v4o69 to read the full story.

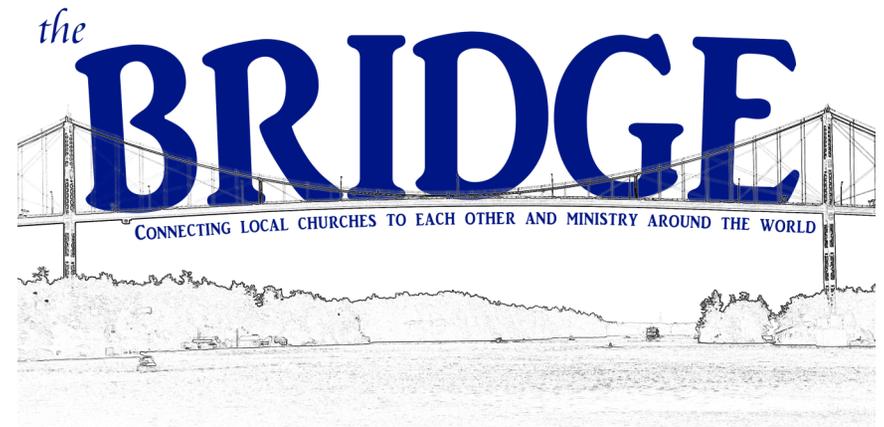
An open table: How the church understands communion

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMNS) – The sacrament of Holy Communion is such a common occurrence in the landscape of our worship that its uncommon richness sometimes gets lost. With the approach of World Communion Sunday on Oct. 4, Joe Iovino shares how United Methodists understand the Eucharist. Visit www.tinyurl.com/UMCEucharist to read the full story and visit www.tinyurl.com/AboutWCS2 to learn more about World Communion Sunday.

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

CHILDREN'S SABBATH IS CELEBRATED ON OCT. 11
VISIT WWW.TINYURL.COM/CHILDRENS-SABBATH-2015 FOR RESOURCES



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!

Foundation helps setup training center at Palermo UMC	Page 2
What is Laity Sunday?	Page 2
Bishop Webb ready for next District Days tour	Page 3
Another useful, fun <i>Africa 360</i> tool: Prayer partners	Page 4

When needs are identified, call in the experts

By Kathleen Rubino

It all started with a research project for a class taught by the Rev. Craig French, retired, at the Course of Study Extension School of Wesley Theological Seminary in Buffalo. Rev. French challenged his students to discover the needs of their communities by interviewing key leadership individuals.

The Rev. Tammie Nipper, pastor at the Palermo and North Volney United Methodist churches, began by interviewing a school principal and later social services, the youth bureau, and the Cooperative Extension in Mexico, N.Y.

She found two major needs in the Palermo community: Parenting classes and budgeting preparation.

Rev. Nipper designed a program, centered on a “wellness wheel” with nine wellness areas – nutrition, finance, etc. –

that would offer classes to address those needs, particularly budgeting and parenting. She networked to find experts who could teach the classes. A few teachers from the Cooperative Extension and the Palermo Elementary School, a personal trainer who attends the Palermo UMC, and two nutritionists all agreed to help.

“It’s all about networking and making your building available,” Rev. Nipper said. “For us, it was making our building accessible.”

Though Palermo UMC’s setup was not ideal, Rev. Nipper saw potential in the dining room. To create a better teaching environment, Rev. Nipper needed financial support. She turned to the Richard S. Shineman Foundation in Oswego, which offers grants to individuals and organizations that seek to improve the quality of



A Catalyst for Change

life in the community.

She began the application process. In the grant proposal, she requested chairs, an LED projector, and Modern-fold soundproof accordion doors so the dining room can be divided into four classroom spaces.

Her proposal was accepted and the program received \$13,000 in grants.

“Our vision is to make disciples. One

of the best things we can do is to teach and equip other people and build those relationships and connections so those people can teach other people,” Rev. Nipper said.

The chairs have been ordered and received, and the church is currently ordering custom dividers. Rev. Nipper hopes to begin offering classes this October.

What is Laity Sunday?

Laity Sunday is observed on Oct. 18, and this year’s theme is *Disciples Called to Action: Creating Unity in Ministry*. According to www.umcdiscipleship.org, Laity Sunday is “a time to recognize the work and mission of all laity – not only within the walls of the church but in everyday lives.”

Planning for the first Laity Sunday began in 1928, with the first recorded observance of “Laymen’s Day” in 1929 in the then Methodist Episcopal Church. By 1930, the Evangelical Church had started celebrating the work of laity at each annual men’s retreat. When the factions of the Methodist Church merged in 1939, the General Board of Lay Activities approved Laymen’s Day and selected Feb. 23, 1941, as the first observance. In October 1942, *The Methodist Layman* recommended the observance of Laymen’s Day on the last Sunday of February each year.

Laymen’s Day is first mentioned in the 1944 *Book of Discipline* (§1483) – where it is placed under the auspice of the General Board of Lay Activities – and later in the 1964 *BOD* (§1499.3) – where it is designated as the second Sunday of October – and the 1972 *BOD* (§163) – where it was renamed Laity Sunday to be gender-neutral.

Today, Laity Sunday is celebrated on the third Sunday of October, and themes are set by the Association of Annual Conferences of Lay Leaders and approved by the board of directors of Discipleship Ministries.

Go to www.tinyurl.com/laity-sunday-history for more information about Laity Sunday.

Bishop Webb gets set for next District Days tour

Upper New York Area Resident Bishop Mark J. Webb will embark on the 2015-2016 District Days tour from October through April 2016. Go to www.tinyurl.com/15-16-district-days for more information about a District Day event near you.