

**WEEKLY UPDATE**

**February 14, 2025**

Erwin First UMC

920 Euclid Ave, Syracuse, NY 13210

(315) 472-4082

*"A dynamic network of disciples of Jesus Christ*

*Growing deeper in faith. Growing wider in mission."*

<http://www.erwinfirstchurch.org>

**Discerning God's Vision for SUMM**

April will make it 7 years since the United Methodist Churches in Syracuse signed the Uniting Covenant and officially became Syracuse United Methodist Ministries (SUMM). Syracuse United Methodist Ministries (SUMM) stands at a pivotal moment in our shared journey of faith. Following a meeting with our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Sherri Rood, we are embarking on a transformative period of spiritual discernment to better understand God's preferred future for SUMM.

Understanding that the most profound wisdom comes through prayer and reflection, we are launching a dedicated 40-Day Prayer Journey. This sacred time will begin with a special kickoff gathering on April 5th and culminate in a joyous celebration on May 17th. During these meaningful forty days, we will join together as one community in Christ, seeking divine guidance for our path forward.

Each participant will receive a journal booklet to record their daily prayers, insights, and reflections. This personal chronicle will serve as a testament to our individual and collective spiritual growth throughout the journey. To deepen our connection with God and each other, we encourage all members from our city churches to join a small prayer group that will meet weekly for intimate discussions and shared prayer time.

At the celebration event, we will lift our voices in worship, share the visions God has revealed to us, and make a unified commitment to pursuing His divine plan for SUMM. This celebration will mark not an ending, but a new beginning in our ministry's story.

We invite every member of our church family to participate in this vital season of discernment. Through our united prayers and open hearts, we trust that God will illuminate the path He has prepared for SUMM's future ministry and service to our community.

Remember the words of Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Let us step forward together in faith, eager to discover God's preferred future for Syracuse United Methodist Ministries.

Blessings!

I invite you to join us on Sunday for worship in person or online. The Scripture reading is from Jeremiah 17:5-10. The sermon title is, “Where is Your Heart Anchored?” Below are the links for the service this Sunday, February 16, 2025.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/592647490293165/>

<https://youtube.com/live/WLBYg0VCkTg?feature=share>

### 2025 Lenten Devotional

Back by popular demand! The Syracuse United Methodist Ministries (SUMM) has created a Lenten Daily Devotional Booklet entitled, “Many Parts, One Body.” The booklet will feature a devotional by Bishop Héctor Burgos, our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Sherri Rood, the SUMM clergy, and SUMM congregational members.

TO ORDER: Please complete the form below or email SUMM at [SUMMinfo@syracuseumministries.org](mailto:SUMMinfo@syracuseumministries.org) or call University UMC at 315-475-7277 to place your order. You may pay online at [SyracuseUMMinistries.org](http://SyracuseUMMinistries.org) or mail a check to SUMM, 1085 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13210.

All proceeds go to the ministries of SUMM in the city of Syracuse, NY.

ORDER FORM (Please indicate in the box the quantity of that item you wish to order.)

8X10 Large Print Booklet (\$6.00 each)

5½ X 8 Booklet (\$6.00 each)

PDF version (\$4.00).

If shipping is required, a two-dollar (\$2) shipping and handling fee per booklet will be added to the cost.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Here at Erwin First

The Office is open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 am to 2 pm. It will be closed on Monday, February 17, in observance of Presidents' Day.

28 Days of Prayer and Fast



You are invited to join us in prayer every Thursday at 12 pm during the month of February. You may gather with us at the church or pray from wherever you are. Let us unite our hearts as we seek God's wisdom and discernment for ways to share the love of Christ with our community.

Upcoming Events

February

28 Days of Prayer and Fast

February 14- Happy Valentine's Day

February 17-Office closed in observance of Presidents' Day

February 20- Pause for Prayer at 12 pm

February 28- Pause for Prayer at 12 pm

March

**March 5- Ash Wednesday Service, 7 pm**

**March 11- Bible Study, 6:30 pm**

**March 18- Bible Study, 6:30 pm**

**March 25- Bible Study, 6:30 pm**

April

**April 1- Bible Study, 6:30 pm**

**April 8- Bible Study, 6:30 pm**

**April 18- Good Friday Service at 7pm**

**April 20- Easter Sunday service at 10:30 am**

### **A Letter from Erwin First Trustees.**

Greetings Sisters and Brothers in Christ.

After approximately 15 years of service, the boiler failed, and we replaced most of it. This was a necessity to ensure our space remains welcoming and functional for all who come to encounter Christ. Of course, replacing a large piece of equipment that is vital to the use of this large building came with a significant cost.

***The current estimate for the boiler repair is \$30,000.*** That is for the boiler parts and installation.

The question is... how is the church going to pay for it? While we are fortunate to have endowments that we can draw upon, this is a substantial withdrawal. It's a moment that calls us to reflect on our shared responsibility for the stewardship of this sacred space.

That leads us to the next question: Will you help? Will you join us in preserving our church home by making a special financial contribution towards the boiler repair? Every gift, no matter the size, makes a difference. If you can't contribute financially, please keep this community of faith in your prayers. Your support, in any form, is a profound act of faith and love.

This community of the United Methodist Church is here, at this corner in Syracuse, as a beacon to all. We are on a drumlin (a small rounded hill) at a place where so many can see our steeple or can hear our carillon ringing out. In this space, on this little hill, we can represent Jesus as written in Matthew 5... also known as the Sermon on the Mount... where he gave us The Beatitudes.

We are here to minister to those around us in whatever state they are in. We are surrounded by families and students. We are called to make disciples of Christ.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to speak with me. I'm happy to discuss them with you.

***Please consider making an additional contribution this year to help with the boiler repair.***

**So far, we have collected about \$10,000. Thank you to those who have already responded to this appeal. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!**

Blessings and Peace!

**Rod Freeman, representing the Trustees of Erwin First UM Church**

### **The House of Light Bible Study**

Our young adult group meets on Fridays at 5:30 for college students and young adults from the community. We are also looking for volunteers to provide dinners. Please contact Dorcas for the dinner schedule if you would like to provide or donate a dinner.



### **Exciting News for Erwin: Erwin's Thrift Store is Opening Soon!**

Contact Rebecca at [redeccaserves1111@outlook.com](mailto:redeccaserves1111@outlook.com) or Dorcas at [deerdz28@yahoo.com](mailto:deerdz28@yahoo.com) for more information



## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



### February Birthdays

February 9 Dorcas Rodriguez  
February 13 Diana Rodriguez  
February 24 Andy Daley

### No February Anniversaries



### Pray for those who mourn the loss of loved ones:

Families of all those who lost their lives in the recent plane crashes. The families of those who lost their lives in the stampede in India. Families of those who lost their lives in the fires in LA. All others mourning the loss of loved ones.

### Pray for the sick:

Ruby, Glo, Carol, Cindy, Diane, Barbara, Taylor, Yong Kim Fah (Monica's brother), Ann Crawford (Terry's sister), Lisa, Elsa, Laurena, Dennis, Myrta, Debbie, Connie, and two of our congregants with ailing parents in other parts of the world.

College Students:

Asriel, Evelyn, Natalie, Precious and others

Other Concerns

Pray for all Asylum Seekers, Refugees, Migrants, Immigrants, and Emigrants, as well as those who are victims of snowstorms, wildfires, typhoons, hurricanes, tornados, and other natural disasters. Also, pray for the unemployed and underemployed, those in detention centers, and those being deported.

The Church

Upper New York Conference Staff, Bishop Héctor Burgos, the members of the Cabinet, and the congregations of SUMM.

World Concerns

People in Lebanon, Congo, Venezuela, Syria, South and North Korea, South Africa, Italy, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Afghanistan, Haiti, Taiwan, Israel, Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, Greece, and Indonesia. Pray for humanitarian relief efforts around the world.

Our Country

Pray for all elected leaders, peace, and security in our country. Also, pray for the homeless and solutions and support for the most vulnerable in this country.

**Do you have a prayer request?**

A sign-up sheet has been set out on the entry lectern where we place the service bulletins for you to write your prayer concerns, send us an email, or call the church office.

**SYRACUSE UNITED METHODIST MINISTRIES (SUMM)**



**United Methodist and Friends Night at the Ballpark- July 24, 2025**

## **MONTHLY MISSION: March -Bag lunches for the homeless in Syracuse**

We, the members of Syracuse United Methodist Ministries, which includes members from Bellevue Heights, Brown Memorial, Erwin First, Gethsemane, St. Paul's, and University UMC, reaffirmed the importance of strengthening collaboration within the Syracuse community. We agreed to focus on deepening our relationships, staying informed about activities at each site, and providing mutual support to foster this collaboration. Our goal is to create a culture of shared learning and growth. To this end, each month we will spotlight one of our locations or engage in a mission project. For the month of March, SUMM will provide bag lunches for the homeless in the city of Syracuse.

### **SUMM WEEKLY ONLINE PRAYER GATHERING:**

Join with clergy and members of Syracuse United Methodist Ministries online on Wednesday mornings at 7 am to 7:30 am.

Zoom Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86875827407?pwd=dTRsNENoNW1hNGJURG9CVzJvNnJWUT09>

Meeting ID: 868 7582 7407

Passcode: 076716

### **SUMM FUNDRAISERS**

The Syracuse United Methodist Ministries leadership team, consisting of Bellevue Heights, Brown Memorial, Erwin First, Gethsemane, St. Paul's, and University UMC, is attempting to raise \$12,000 to assist with the ministries. We have planned some fundraising events to help us realize that goal. Your support for the following is needed.

Lenten Booklets- February- March

Coins for Lent -March 5 to April 20

Bottles and cans – January to December

See the details for the bottle and can drive below.

#### **SUMM Bottle and Can Drive:**

The Syracuse United Methodist Ministries (SUMM) has organized a yearlong bottle and can drive.

**FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE – YOU CAN BRING RECYCLE CANS & BOTTLES TO ERWIN**

Erwin has two designated drop-off places at the church:

1. A smaller recycling container is in the narthex area for smaller amounts.
2. For full bags, you may set them in the stairwell off the main floor (parking lot level).

Volunteers at Erwin will periodically take them to the **Express Bottle Return, 2312 Erie Blvd. East.**

We welcome volunteers who are willing to take a turn to make that run. Please let them know that you are depositing toward the Syracuse United Methodist Ministries Fundraiser.



**The RESTART Ministry Needs twin, full and queen size blankets in new or like new condition**

For the families we are helping, this is something they are always needing. We run out of them quickly! And please, they must be in good condition. **Thank you!**

**We can also use volunteers:**

**Mondays:** 1 – 3 pm at the RESTART headquarters (4845 West Seneca Turnpike, Syracuse, NY) - to help sort and put away donated items, focusing mostly on linens and kitchen supplies.

**Tuesdays** – Picking up and delivering donations. 2 different shifts: 12pm – 4:30pm & 5pm – 6:30 pm

**Household Repairs:** Restart needs someone to repair lamps and small furniture (tables and chairs).

Your help would be greatly appreciated! If interested, call or email Evelyn Disinger at 315-857-7634 or [edisinger235@gmail.com](mailto:edisinger235@gmail.com).

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES from the Interfaith Community Co-op at University UMC**

For more information contact Galyn Murphy-Stanley at University United Methodist

Church [outreach@uumcsyracuse.org](mailto:outreach@uumcsyracuse.org) or 315-475-7277

**Friday, February 14, 2025** ❤️ 8:45am-12noon Assist with the Emergency Food box distribution

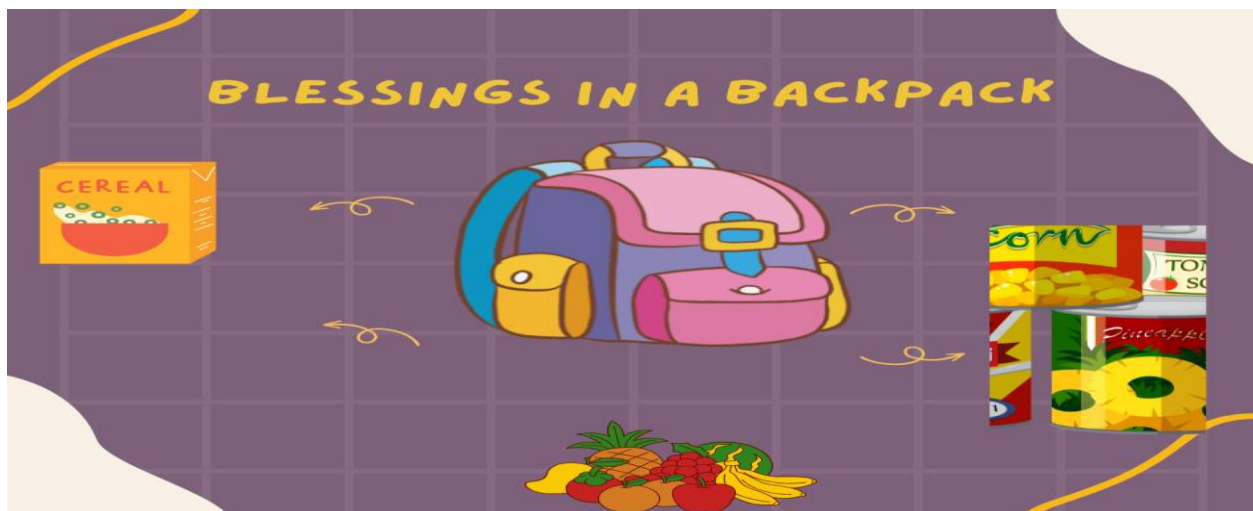
~SIRDN (Syracuse Immigrant Refugee Defense Network) will be holding a **KYR (Know your Rights) Training for allies on Tuesday, February 18th, from 5:30-7:00 on Zoom**. Mohammad Ali. Seraji will be leading this training. We will post the link here closer to the date.

If you know people who want/need this kind of training, but are not on this listserv, please tell them to request access to this training by sending a message to [sirdn315@gmail.com](mailto:sirdn315@gmail.com).

The training will be in English.

**SIRDN (Syracuse Immigrant Refugee Defence Network)** is a group of volunteers who work for immigrant justice in CNY and beyond in organizing, advocacy and solidarity support for directly affected individuals and their families. Born of the Workers' Center of CNY who join with us in showing up as allies and accomplices in the fight for human dignity for all people.

Interest in volunteering? Contact [sirdn315@gmail.com](mailto:sirdn315@gmail.com) for more information



## **BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK**

### **Bellevue Heights United Methodist Church Chapter**

*Celebrating 9 years of ensuring hunger-free weekends for over 400 Delaware Primary School students throughout the school year.*

The children receive school breakfast and lunch during the week. Our Blessings in a Backpack program at Delaware Primary School makes sure they're getting healthy, kid-friendly, ready-to-eat breakfasts, entrees and snacks over the weekend.

Your gift of \$150 will feed one child every weekend of the school year. Our program is made possible through charitable giving. Your gift in any amount is gratefully appreciated.

Please give today:

1. **Securely online** by clicking [Donate](#).
2. By **Check** payable to Bellevue Heights UMC with **BIBP in the memo line.** Mail to Bellevue Heights United Methodist Church, 2112 S. Geddes Street, Syracuse, NY 13207

Join us in making a difference. For more information about BIBP at Delaware School, click [HERE](#)

*\*Donation forms can also be found on the Erwin community board table with self-addressed envelopes.*

## **DISTRICT & CONFERENCE NEWS**

### **District Event**

#### **A Note from Our DS, Rev. Sherri Rood**

When we become United Methodists, we promise to support the church with our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Our membership extends to the work of the district, conference, jurisdiction and general church. We need clergy and laity, called and gifted by God, to serve, so that we may make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world and be God's love with our neighbors in all places.

The Crossroads and Finger Lakes Districts need persons who can serve on the following committees:

**The District Committee on Ordained Ministry** - an extension of the Board of Ordained Ministry and work with candidates for ministry, certified lay ministers and licensed local pastors. Most dCOMs meet approximately six times a year in person, during the day.

**The District Committee on Church Location and Building** – works with the churches on the district when they wish to purchase, improve or sell property. The committee meets only when a church requires their input or approval and does most of their work by email.

**The District Committee on Superintendency** – provides support to the district superintendent and consults with the Bishop when a new superintendent is assigned. This committee meets by Zoom.

If you would like more information on any of these committees or feel called to serve, please send an email to Betsy O'Flynn at [betsyoflynn@unyumc.org](mailto:betsyoflynn@unyumc.org)

The only way we can accomplish our work is by doing this work together!

Grace and peace,  
Sherri

### Conference info

#### ERT Basic Training:

Celebrate UMCOR Sunday a day early by joining an Early Response Team Training on March 29th! This training will give you the skills you need to make a difference when disaster strikes in your community. You'll learn key skills like roof tarping, debris removal, and how to care for survivors.

**Date:** March 29th, 9AM - 5PM

**Location:** Rush United Methodist Church ( 6200 Rush Lima Rd, Rush, NY)

**Cost:** \$35 (includes materials, lunch, background check, and ID badge)

**Register here:** <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/vimtraining/event/ertspring25/>

**Questions:** [disasterresponse@unyumc.org](mailto:disasterresponse@unyumc.org)

### 2025 Safe Sanctuaries Training Dates

Below are all the 2025 Safe Sanctuaries Training Dates with Registration Links. There is also attached a flyer to post and share.

We are back to doing in-person trainings, so if anyone is inquiring, please send them my way and we will do what we can to set them up. Please make sure they know that we will not do an in-person for less than 10 people in attendance. So, we are encouraging churches that want an in person to let you know, so you can send out information to either area churches or to your entire district, the more we can train at one training the better.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out.

#### 3.5hr Basic Training

Saturday, May 3, 2025 9am - 12:30pm Registration Opens April 1, 2025 @ Midnight & Closes April 30, 2025 @ Midnight (no exceptions)

Registration Link: <https://forms.gle/UGSg1m3ASA9yLsqW8>

Saturday, August 2, 2025 9am - 12:30pm Registration Opens July 1, 2025 @ Midnight & Closes July 30, 2025 @ Midnight (no exceptions) Registration Link: <https://forms.gle/NZbjx91525fEw5629>

Saturday, November 1, 2025 9am - 12:30pm Registration Opens October 1, 2025 @ Midnight & Closes October 29, 2025 @ Midnight (no exceptions)

Registration Link: <https://forms.gle/c7vuv36VFcT2315F7>

#### TOT – Train the Trainer

Saturday, March 1, 2025 9am - 12:30pm Registration Opens February 1, 2025 @ Midnight & Closes February 26, 2025 @ Midnight (no exceptions)

Registration Link: <https://forms.gle/zqj2TJ9aZXw5oJ5E7>

Saturday, October 4, 2025 9am - 12:30pm Registration Opens September 1, 2025 @ Midnight & Closes October 1, 2025 @ Midnight (no exceptions)

Registration Link: <https://forms.gle/2N1Vv8h4nWHb6V1k7>

\*\*\**In-person training available for 10+ participants by contacting [safesanctuaries@unyumc.org](mailto:safesanctuaries@unyumc.org)*

**Click on the link below to stay up to date with what's happening in the Upper New York Conference.**

- <https://conta.cc/3QeeJ9Z>
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## COMMUNITY NEWS

### **WESTCOTT COMMUNITY CENTER FOOD COLLECTION**

**A large, designated bin is located in the sanctuary area.**

Aside from its food pantry, the WCC offers an array of services for the elderly, youth, and people with basic needs, including legal advice, mental health, education, job training, and job search programs. To take a closer look, check out their website: <https://westcottcc.org/>

[Thank you for your donations.](#)

**WESTCOTT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOC.** Actively engages the greater Westcott neighborhood in order to strengthen the quality of life in the Westcott community. They aim to enable residents to collectively enjoy and improve “their” neighborhood.

To see their calendar of events or how you can get involved click the link to their website.

<https://westcottsyr.com/>

*Blessings!*

