



New City United Methodist Church

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June - July 2025 from Pastor Amanda

For the most part, reactions to my upcoming leave of absence (June 2 – July 13) have been positive – most church members are happy that I am pursuing a calling in taking time away to write a book based on my doctoral thesis for other clergy, not because they want me gone (or, at least, I don't think so), but because they see my leave and project as a way of pushing back in our currently uncertain times. My doctoral thesis was entitled "Incorporating Difficult Conversations in Worship," and focused on why potentially divisive/political subjects should be broached in worship and how to do so well. My suggested title for the book version (I say "suggested" as I've been told publishers often go their own way) will be "Preaching Politics." Fellow clergy have been asking for such a book, and the Spirit is telling me "It's time." So here I go.

I want to thank you, because you go with me.

This church is the place where I have been able to openly discuss things from a political perspective, and lead you into those discussions, too. Sure, there has been pushback, but not nearly as much as would occur in many (most) churches. You've gifted me with a place to try out my ideas, and to applaud you in your own efforts. And I love that your openness to politically-charged conversation didn't start with me! Your Church & Society Committee has been bringing political topics in need of discussion to your attention since the Civil Rights era. You are a special church, indeed.

And now, it is because you are such a special church, that I am able to attempt to take the step I'm taking. According to the Book of Discipline (the rulebook of the UMC), pastors are entitled to a leave of absence every six years of full-time ministry. As such, I should have already taken two such leaves, but this is my first. Why? Because many churches are not equipped to continue on without the pastor for an extended length of time. Many clergy never even ask for a leave because they know it's not possible where they are. But it's possible here, because you are a church who adequately cares for one another. You are a church where members volunteer to serve as preachers (and they're GOOD!). You are a church that understands what needs to be done, and what doesn't, so I have full confidence that you will be fine over the next six weeks.

And so I thank you – for being you. For being a church that understands “church.” A church is not a building, it's the people. You are a church that wants to make a difference toward the better in this world (caring for other people), and you are church that can stand on its own two feet (caring for yourselves). Not all pastors can say that about where they serve. But I can. And that's what's making my leave possible.

Thank you, again. As I said, you go with me. And I'm grateful.

Peace,

Pastor Amanda



Birthdays

June 4-Patrick Mensah, Jr.
June 9-Megan Delo
June 10-John Pizzutello; Roy Kepler
June 11-Joyce Brooks
June 12-Kalia Soong
June 13-Rev. Barbara Hoffman
June 16-Dan Ansaldo
June 22-Vincent Forchelli
June 24-Isabella Zepeda
June 27-Sue Delo
June 28-Ryan Nolan
June 29-Destiny Ann Georgopoulos
July 1-Lupe E. Villanueva
July 2-Sachiko Soong
July 3-Benjamin Alexandro; Matthew McGuy
July 4-Nicole Rohrs Richey
July 10-Rev. Amanda Hemenetz
July 13-Frank Brooks, Jr.

July 16-Gayle Rasso

July 21-Doris Atzl

July 25-Norbert Rainford

July 20-Peter Alexandro; Konrad Soong

July 31-Donna Fimmano

Anniversaries

June 1-Mary & Adrian Krzkowski; Julie & John Tomich

June 12-Carol & Roy Kepler

June 18-Rev. Barbara & Dan Hoffman

June 25-Janice & Kenneth Shaw

June 27-Judy & Joe Troia

June 28-Winsome Downie & Norbert Rainford

June 29-Konrad & Sachiko Soong

July 3-Sue & Chuck Delo

July 5-Marcy & Omodele Akingboye

July 13-Sheila and Pat Conroy

July 19-Claire & Steve Seward



Prayers...

for Burt & Senya Renfroe and all those in nursing facilities;

for Doug Caulk as he continues chemo;

for Ray Castel as he awaits a lung transplant;

for Eleanor Frank (Jean Craig's mom) as she recovers from a broken hip;

For Jeannine Alexandro as she recovers from open heart surgery;

for Rita Negrón Maslanek as she recovers from spinal surgery;

for Mihea Kim as she recovers following a severe dog bite;

for Julia Vitzhum who is battling leukemia;

for all those who are or have recently been hospitalized;

for those recovering from illness or injury;

for those awaiting medical tests;

for those with cancer;

for those suffering without a diagnosis ;

for all who are traveling;

for family and friends getting together over the summer;

for all graduates;

for India & Pakistan;

for the newly installed Pope Leo;

for all who mourn;

for our Annual Conference of the UMC;

for Ukraine;

for the people of Gaza;

for the Sudan;

for peace in the world.



Mission Updates
OUR MISSION STATEMENT:
“SERVING GOD THROUGH SERVING OUR COMMUNITY”



Food Pantry Sunday is the first Sunday of the month. Our next Food Pantry Sunday will be Sunday, July 6th. Donations of non-perishable food can be brought to in-person worship, or left outside the office door (first door with an overhang) anytime the week prior.

In May 321 pounds of food was donated to People to People. The staff were thrilled with the donation. Thanks to all who donated.



Monthly Mission for 2025



JANUARY: UMC Native American Ministries (scholarships, grants, advocacy, and education)



FEBRUARY: UMCOR. Support those affected by wildfires in California



MARCH: Health Lifeline Clinic— our own Norbert Rainford's free Nyack Clinic



APRIL: The Nature Conservancy. Preserving important habitats & beautiful places



MAY: Martin Luther King Jr. Multi-Purpose Center Nanuet. Education, food, programs



JUNE: The Trevor Project. LGBTQ+ suicide prevention hotline and support



JULY: World Central Kitchen. Feeding the hungry in the US and the world



AUGUST: Innocence Project. Proving innocence and releasing the wrongfully accused



SEPTEMBER: Hatua Likoni. Helping Kenyan youth through school & into professional careers



OCTOBER: Spring Valley UMC Food Program. We'll cook for a Thursday dinner!



NOVEMBER: Project Joy. People to People's Christmas gifts program for Rockland children



DECEMBER: Helping Hands. Support for Rockland County homeless

Monthly Mission for June: THE TREVOR PROJECT



The Trevor Project is an American non-profit organization founded in 1998. It focuses on **suicide prevention efforts among lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, queer and questioning youth**. Through a toll-free 24-hour telephone number, it operates the Trevor Lifeline, a confidential service that offers trained counselors. Two and a half decades ago, they responded to a health crisis and now they are building a safer, more inclusive world.

LGBTQ young people are four times more likely to attempt suicide, and suicide remains the second leading cause of death among **ALL** young people in the U.S. In 2024, 39% of LGBTQ+ young people considered attempting suicide in the United States. 50% of LGBTQ+ youth who sought mental health care were not able to receive it. The Trevor Project aims to lower these statistics.

The Trevor Projects' five key programs are: Crisis Services, Peer Support, Research, Public Education, and Advocacy.

Please consider supporting the work of The Trevor Project with a financial gift. You can give during in-person worship, by sending a check, dropping off a check at the church, or giving online at newcityumc.org. If giving by check, please write "Trevor Project" in the memo line.

Monthly Mission for JULY:

WORLD CENTRAL KITCHEN

What is it?

World Central Kitchen (WCK) is a non-profit organization founded by chef José Andrés in 2010. It is dedicated to providing fresh, nutritious meals to people in need during times of crisis, including natural disasters, humanitarian emergencies, and conflict zones. WCK believes that food is a universal human right and responds rapidly to feed communities when they need it most.

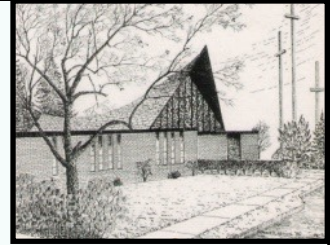
How you can donate?

- You may opt to visit the church website newcityumc.org and utilize the donation platform
- Make a payment via check made out to the church.
- Donate in cash and specify that the funds are for the World Central Kitchen organization



Worship Service Time: 10:30am

Both in-person in Fellowship Hall (masks optional)
and on Zoom

**Worship/Sermon Topics**

Pastor Amanda will be on leave June 2 - July 13. We look forward to inspirational messages from guest preachers in her absence!

June 1: **Ascension Sunday.** "Our United Methodist Vision" - Part 2. Sacrament of Holy Communion. Food Pantry Sunday. **Pastor Amanda's last Sunday** before leave (see p 11).

June 8: **Pentecost. Ray Boyd** preaching and leading worship.

June 15: **Father's Day.** 1st Sunday after Pentecost. **Mihea Kim** preaching and leading worship.

June 22: 2nd Sunday after Pentecost. **Maureen Gallagher** preaching and leading worship.

June 29: 3rd Sunday after Pentecost. **Norma Christian** preaching and leading worship.

July 6: 4th Sunday after Pentecost. **Rev. Sarah Borgstrom Lee** (Communications Dept, Greater New Jersey Annual Conference) preaching and leading worship. Sacrament of Holy Communion. Food Pantry Sunday.

July 13: 5th Sunday after Pentecost. **Konrad Soong** preaching and leading worship.

July 20: 6th Sunday after Pentecost. **Pastor Amanda returns** to worship.

July 27: 7th Sunday after Pentecost. **Christmas in July.**

Volunteer Opportunities

Contact Pastor Amanda to volunteer or with questions.

Thrift shop sorting—We are in need of some additional sorters on Monday mornings and during Saturday shop hours. Come join a fun group of workers who love what they do and have a great time together! Monday sorting is 9am-12pm (unless otherwise noted in worship announcements). Saturday hours are 9am-2pm. Come for an hour, come for two, come for the whole time! Totally up to you. Any and all help is appreciated.

Work Our Thrift Shop!—Thrift shop hours are Thursdays 10-12 and Saturdays 9-2. We are in need of additional volunteers as cashiers and "floaters" on BOTH days. Speak to Sue Delo.

Fellowship Hour

Our last Sunday for Fellowship Hour will be June 8th. Fellowship Hour will be off for the summer months. We'll see you again in September. THANK YOU to Joanne Hegarty for all her work in leading this important ministry! And thank you to everyone who has made coffee, brought in goodies, set up and cleaned up over the 2024-2025 season.



Angel's Attic Thrift Shop

Hours

Saturday's 9:00-2:00

Thursday's 10:00-12:00 noon

To volunteer in any way, please call Sue Delo (845-304-8798)

Sorting is Monday's 9:00 am-12:00 pm



Important Dates

Sunday, June 1: Food Pantry Sunday. Pastor Amanda's last Sunday before her leave.

Monday, June 2 - Sunday, July 13: Pastor Amanda on leave (see p 11).

Sunday, June 8: Regional Youth Group Gathering 6-8pm (location TBA).

Sunday, June 15: Father's Day.

Thursday, June 19: Juneteenth.

Friday, July 4: Independence Day.

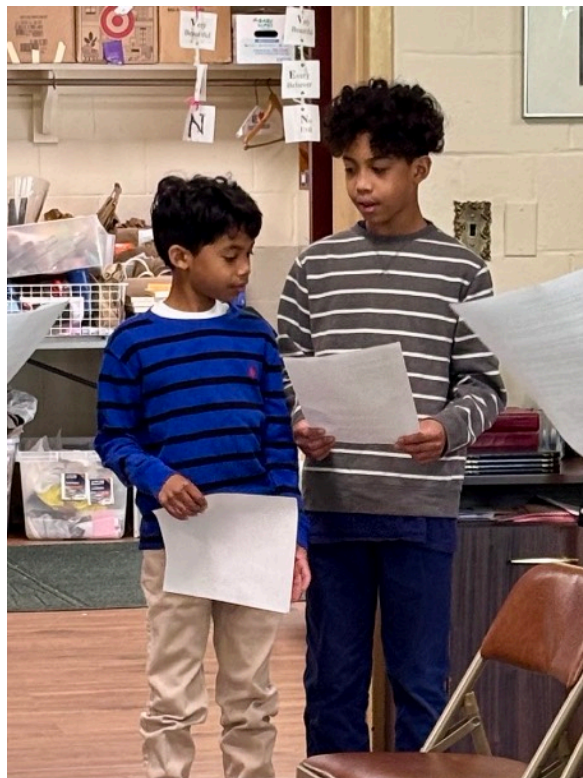
Sunday, July 6: Food Pantry Sunday.

Monday, July 14: Pastor Amanda back from leave.

Sunday, July 20: Church Council - 9am on Zoom

Pastor Amanda on "Spiritual Growth and Renewal Leave"

Monday June 2 - Sunday July 13. She'll be spending about an hour each day keeping the church office running, but will be working the rest of the time away from the church on developing her doctoral thesis into a book for other clergy. Rev. Warren Brandt is on-call for pastoral care. His cell: 845-800-0113. There are two "back-ups" for Warren, should they be needed -- Pastor Kristine Melius of the Suffern UMC for June 2 - June 11 (cell: 201-675-6185) and Pastor Woo Lim Kwak of the Thiells Garnerville UMC for June 12 - July 13 (cell: 908-922-6673). In cases of true emergency, all are welcome to reach out to Pastor Amanda at 973-978-5162. She will also be checking email Monday - Friday.



Sunday School

We had a fabulous year!
Thank you so much to our
students, teachers, assistants,
and families. We'll be back in
September!

Youth Group!

We had an awesome time at Youth Group in on May 4th at the Suffern UMC! The theme was Star Wars, complete with light sabers and a Jedi training course. Yoda even made an appearance.

Our next Regional Youth Group

Gathering will

be Sunday, June 8, 6-8pm. Location TBA. Youth Group is for those in 6th grade - high school. Come have dinner, play games, worship, and make new friends!



Let's Celebrate Our Graduates!

Are you or a loved one graduating (*8th grade, high school, college, higher ed. or trade school*)?

Congratulations! Fill out the following info, place this form in the offering plate, and our graduates will be celebrated in August's Tidings.



Your name: _____

Graduate's name: _____

Your relationship to the graduate: _____

Where are they graduating from? _____

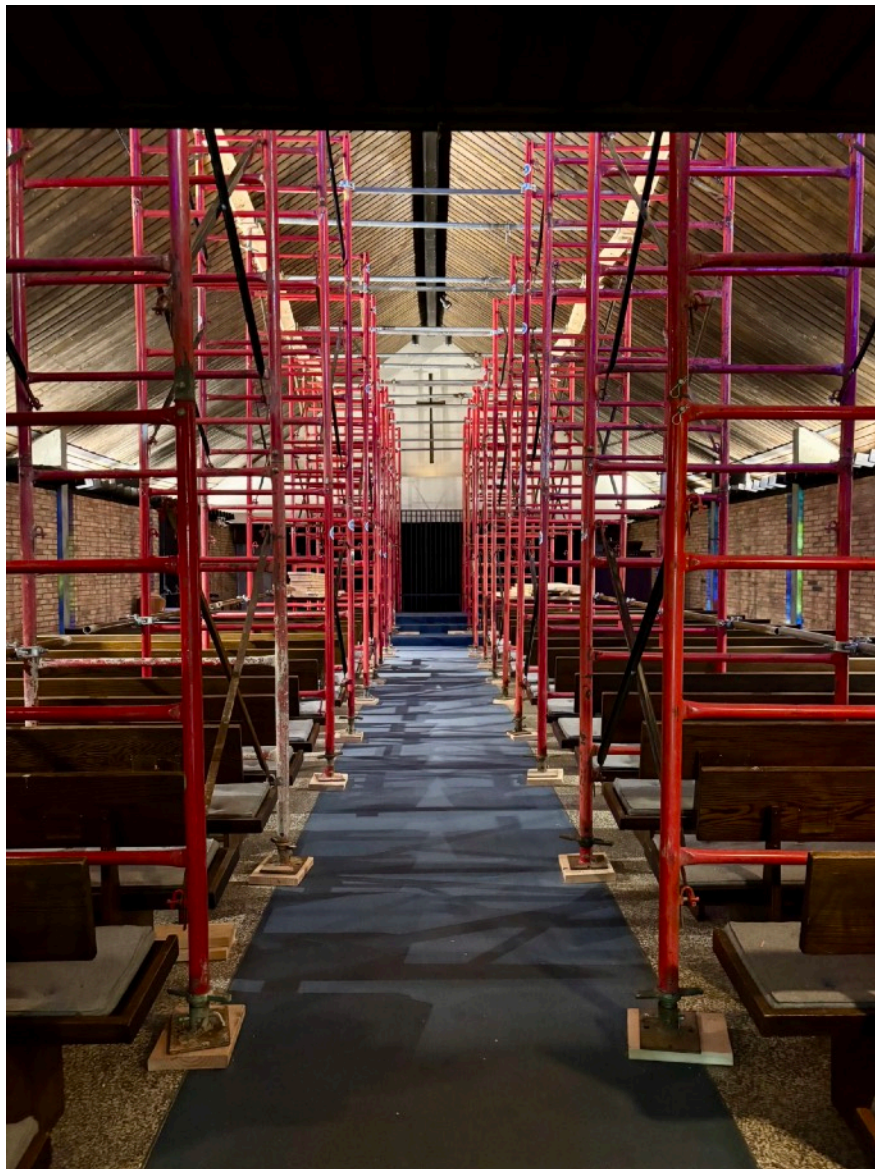
With what degree/certificate? (if applicable) _____

Where are they attending next? (if applicable) _____

Completed forms/information due to the church office no later than July 21.

Update on our Sanctuary

The shoring has been installed! We're currently awaiting clearance from the town, which we anticipate happening soon, and then we will no longer be in violation for having an unsafe structure on our property. While there was some anticipation that we may have been able to worship inside the sanctuary once the shoring was completed, that will not be possible as the necessary scaffolding is too extensive in the space, so worship will remain in Fellowship Hall. We are thankful to our Building Committee for their work thus far.



Church Financial Update – April 2025

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for your faithful giving and generous hearts. Because of your support, we carry out ministries that make our church a place of hope, compassion, and community outreach. We could not do it without you.

This is to inform you that we are in relatively good financial standing. With contributions through plate offering, thrift shop collections, and building use donations, we had a bank balance of \$241,255.91 on April 30, 2025.

Within this amount, there is a separate fund called the “Sanctuary of Hope”, which reserves expenses specifically related to the sanctuary roof.

At the time of this writing, the Sanctuary of Hope Fund holds \$102,870.22. We do expect expenses for roof to increase.

As we continue “Serving God Through Serving the Community”, our hope for the future continues to rise. The outcome of the sanctuary roof relies on this hope. Please continue supporting the hope through contributions to the “Sanctuary of Hope” fund. Kindly keep in mind the “Sanctuary of Hope” fund is different from the Building Fund, which is reserved for Capital Improvement projects independent of the sanctuary roof. This is an important distinction to make on the offering envelopes.

Thank you for your ongoing support in ministry and partnership with the “Sanctuary of Hope” fund.

Faithfully,

Konrad Soong
Co-Treasurer

Church Family Picnic



Church visitor



Pastor Amanda presenting at Annual Conference



Anita's home!





Reading the Scriptures



A lovely visit with Esther



AAPI Sunday

