



## Stroudsburg UMC

547 Main Street, Stroudsburg Pa

[www.stroudsburgumc.com](http://www.stroudsburgumc.com)

[sumc@stroudsburgumc.com](mailto:sumc@stroudsburgumc.com)

570-421-6020

Worship Sundays at 8:30 and 11:00 am

*The Courier                      February 2022  
The Reverend Monica B. Guepet, M. Div., Lead Pastor*



**"[Love] Trusts God always, always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end." 1 Corinthians 13: 7**

There is a story that is told about Rosa Parks, not when she was 42 years old and sitting down on the bus. This story instead has to do with different transportation. When Rosa Parks was 82, she was consulted about a road sign in Missouri. You might have remembered this. You see, the Ku Klux Klan applied to sponsor a section of the Interstate 55 near St. Louis, Missouri. When you sponsor a section of the interstate, you clean up the road and then your group's name appears on the road sign announcing the sponsorship.

The state was not keen on this request, so the department turned the KKK down. And it was appealed to the Supreme Court. When the Supreme Court declared that the state had to allow the participation in the program, the Missouri Department of Transportation went about their objective a different way. They called Rosa Parks about naming said section of the highway Rosa Parks Highway. When she was asked for her thoughts on this honor, Parks is said to have replied, with a gleam of *mischief* in her eyes, "It is always nice to be thought of."

It would have been understandable to be bitter or even cynical in the face of repeated oppression, prejudice, racism, and suffering. And yet, the grace and playfulness shown in this exchange gives us an example of faithful living. Paul's letter to Corinth reminds us that love is an intentional choice made each day in how we respond to those around us. As the pandemic wears on and the word worn is the most common answer to how are you doing, let me invite you to care for yourself:

1. Rest. (Take naps when necessary).

2. Expect less from yourself and more from God.
3. Do something that makes you smile every day.
4. Unplug.

**Each of us are called to a playful creativity in the face of challenge,  
if only we can find it.**

**Play enlarges our experience of God, and our awe for God. Go forth and  
play!**

**In God's Love,  
Pastor Monica**

#### **To Serve You in February**

##### **Head Ushers**

DeAnn Harris & C.J. Penwell

##### **Counters**

C.J. Penwell & Claribel Sebring

##### **Altar Guild**

Gigi Johnson & Jackie Herrero

##### **Soup Kitchen**

6 First Baptist Church - Pastor Paul  
13 First Baptist Church - Pastor Paul  
20 Elk's Lodge - Carol Hutson  
27

#### **Our Church Staff:**

Lead Pastor: The Rev. Monica B. Guepet  
Pastor of Visitation: Pastor Margie Good  
Pastors Emeritus: Rev. Tom Anderman  
Pastor Ted Good  
Church Secretary: Jackie Herrero  
Choir Director: David Lantz  
Organist: Marti Lantz  
Youth Leader  
Custodian: Craig Banner

#### **Our Church Leaders**

Daniel's Dream Team: Cathy Doane  
Worship: Pastor Monica Guepet  
Property & Building: Kay Bucci & Drenen Tucker  
Staff Parish Relations: Krista Montgomery  
Giving and Funding: C.J. Penwell  
Missions: Ruth Weber  
Membership & Evangelism: Peggy Stewart  
Lay Leader:

#### **Victories**

Two of my favorite Hymns are *It is Well With My Soul* and *Victory in Jesus* as both speak to me every time we sing them. We have “victories” in our church ministry that often people are not aware of. I would like to share one with you but must keep it a bit vague to protect privacy. A few years ago, someone who had a very poor self-image and led a fairly tough existence started attending our services. They lived in a one room “apartment” sharing a bathroom with the other rooms on that floor. There was no kitchen or means to prepare food other than a microwave in the room. With encouragement they found faith and self-esteem over time. A member of our congregation provided a dorm size refrigerator



Dear Church Family,  
I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your love and support during my mother's and my stay at the Spring Village at Pocono. Your card ministry is just fabulous; we received many, much appreciated cards and visits during our stay there. I had already

to enable them to save on food costs and be more self-sufficient. Praise God things are turning around, and this person says, "thank God for this Church". Another "victory" are the Prayer Mailboxes located outside in the front and back of the church. Many prayers written on a slip of paper are placed into the boxes especially by homeless folks. It shows they still have hope. These are some of the ways your tithes and offerings are at work in our community through these ministries.

- C.J. Penwell

Dear Pastor Monica and the SUMC Church family,

I would like to thank all of you for the lovely personalized wooden plaque of our church which I received for my birthday. I cherish personalized items and this one give me such joy. In addition to receiving it from all of you, having a painting of our church on it just is the icing on the cake. Thanks again for all of your support, help and assistance in making our church the best.

Love,  
Pastor Margie

moved here, to the Masonic Village, in Elizabethtown; when my mother passed away. I was so strengthened by all of the cards and calls I received at that difficult time. Pastor Margie was remarkable with calling and praying with me; she officiated at an over the telephone Celebration of Life Service for my mother. She included prayers, Bible readings, consisting of a eulogy and even had three hymns contained in it. I feel so fortunate to have such a marvelous church family; they even sent me a beautiful sympathy bouquet.

With deepest love and sincerity,  
Jill Warner

Dear Pastor Monica and congregation,

On behalf of the Neola UMC volunteers, we thank you for the opportunity to serve your Soup Kitchen. While we may have gotten off to a shaky start, with your help, we recovered and served the community. The volunteers in this group are all new to Neola in 2021. This was their first opportunity to join in a community outreach through Neola UMC. At the end of the afternoon, all look ahead to the next opportunity. I have enclosed a check to help reimburse you and the needs of the Soup Kitchen.

Your brother in Christ,  
Paul Milligan

## Financial Update

During 2021, we received 40 pledge cards totaling \$105,044.00. At year's end we have received \$122,281.30 towards our pledged amount (\$17,277.30 over!) Your generosity is appreciated so very much!

Brenda Rambo  
SUMC Financial Secretary



Winterfest is coming on February 19th -

Consider helping us open the church, give tours, welcome our community and guests as they enjoy ice sculptures on Main Street. Let us know if you can help out.

## New Director of Pocono Plateau Announced.

Carmen O'Shea grew up in Annapolis, Maryland, and has

lived in Nashville, New York City, Atlanta, and Philadelphia throughout her adult years. She is a life-long United Methodist and actively engages in church ministry and discipleship wherever life takes her. Carmen has been married to her husband Brian for 18 years, and together they have two children, Madison, a senior in high school, and Dylan, a 7th grader. Being true animal lovers, they also have two senior rescue dogs and two cats. The O'Shea family loves to camp, kayak, hike, and be outdoors. Brian and Carmen also love to ride on his motorcycle and Carmen loves a good acoustic guitar and banjo jam session around a campfire! Brian is a paramedic and currently works for Plymouth Meeting EMS in the Norristown, PA area.



Carmen plays the guitar and sings in the Rising Son praise band at Paoli United Methodist Church. She is also co-chair of her church's Ad Council, leads youth group, and organizes several large, annual events and activities. Carmen has organized family and youth retreats in past churches, participated in eight summers of the Appalachia Service Project, and engaged in many different missional opportunities and fundraising campaigns. Being a true Methodist, she also loves a good potluck dinner and a rousing church hymn!

Carmen felt a call to ministry building within her heart over the years. In early 2021, she answered this call and began her Masters of Divinity at Drew University in their part-time, hybrid program. Currently, Carmen is a Vice President of Finance at Chubb Limited, the largest global property and casualty insurance company. She leads teams across many countries for financial systems planning and analytics. She has over twenty years of experience in the corporate arena and also has a CPA license and an MBA in Finance from New York University. Carmen's gifts and strengths in leadership, communication, and strategy will be valuable assets in a camp and retreat ministry setting.

Carmen is looking forward to transitioning to a vocation that glorifies God and fosters communal and spiritual development. With their commitment to stewardship of God's creation, Carmen and Brian are excited to be surrounded by the simple splendors of nature and have the opportunity to honor the tradition of providing a sacred space set apart for children, youth, and adults to grow in their faith. The O'Shea family is eager to begin this new journey in partnership with the staff to continue the wonderful ministries at Pocono Plateau.

Carmen began her ministry at the Plateau on January 15, 2022.

## Church Budget Information

This is the church budget for 2022 as approved by Daniel's Dream Team at their meeting on November 21, 2021. Giving for 2021 was up compared to 2020 and for the first time in a few years the use of Endowment Funds was not required to meet expenses. The good Lord has certainly blessed us. Heating costs are expected to be higher this year due to the increased price of natural gas. Your generosity allows us to continue to reach out to our community to Gather, Grow and Make a Difference. The Technology Team continues to do a great job of improving our ability to provide live streaming of our services over the internet. We do have a large gap between income and expenses. So, we do need to increase income and be innovative in lowering our expenses so that we may be a blessing to our community.

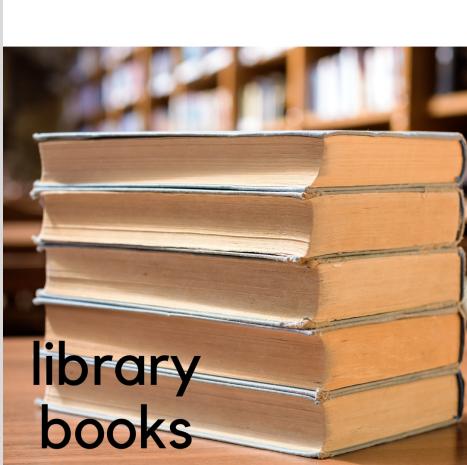
<https://files.constantcontact.com/c256f2f0901/6fc43025-7748-4ddd-a3ae-a87086f94354.pdf>



Join us 2-3:30 pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays  
in the Youth Room.  
All Youth in 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to  
come.

#### Soup Kitchen

Thank you to all those who have serving our neighbors. We are now scheduling dates in the summer and fall. Pitch in with your family or a few friends to serve our neighbors. Sign up to prepare and/or a meal for our neighbors with the soup kitchen. We standardly serve between 45-60 persons. Contact Jackie in the office with your questions and interest in serving others.



#### Check out this new book:

The World is Awake: A Celebration of Everyday Blessing by Linsey Davis - This book explores Psalm 118 through the eyes of siblings. This is the day that the Lord has made – we will rejoice and be glad in it! As you turn the pages and drink in the illustrations, you will find joy in the day as well.

## Lenten Bags

Back by popular demand! Advent bags provided an opportunity for us to walk through the Advent season at home. Our Lenten bags do the same. Lenten bags will be available starting on Sunday, February 27th. Pick them up at the church, connect with the office or a member of the church to get them delivered! We would love to get them delivered to you. You will not want to miss your Lenten bags as we prepare to walk through the 6 weeks of Lent with Jesus. They also include our devotional: Let Go and Grow. You will not want to miss a day.

## Lenten Cluster Services

Our Pocono United Methodist Churches will be hosting Lenten services this year on Wednesday evenings. Please save the dates March 9<sup>th</sup> – April 6<sup>th</sup>. You can attend

from the comfort of your home as all services will be available online. Look for details to come with the links as we tell the story from the Rising of Lazarus, the Entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, the Washing of the Disciples Feet, and the Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus. See you on the couch!

### Church Mice

*(A feature on those people working like church mice behind the scenes. Look forward to those you might not know about. Consider submitting a story of people who you want to recognize who are working like church mice)*



Did you know our technology team is growing? We recently saw the retirement of Bill Weitzmann who gave generously of his time and expertise to the soundboard ministry across many years. We have also seen the addition of Adelle Kopec behind the camera during worship and Bella Kopec under the headphones at the streaming computer on occasion. Our Sunday morning regular technology team now includes Jackie and Alex Herrero, Alisabeth Guepet, Kevin Kopec and Crista Kopec. Supporting the team ready to substitute when call upon are Peggy Stewart, CJ Penwell, Steve Guepet, and Buddy Rambo. Maybe you would consider getting trained on the soundboard, the camera, or the streaming computer? Thanks for connecting our congregation across geography and time.

On February 2nd, we join communities of faith around the Stroudsburgs in Worldwide interfaith Harmony Week at 7pm. Each will meet at that time in prayer, and the one Spirit will unite us. Join



The Eastern PA Conference will sponsor its 2022 Tools for Ministry on Saturday, March 5, 9 AM to 12:30 PM. Classes will be offered virtually on Zoom once again.

Here is the link to see the full list of workshop descriptions:  
<https://www.epaumc.org/wp->

Pastor Monica on Zoom as we pray together.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89930966587?  
pwd=NmdsN0JBc3Q5ZXhHaHdhRy9WR1Urdz  
09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89930966587?pwd=NmdsN0JBc3Q5ZXhHaHdhRy9WR1Urdz09)

Meeting ID: 899 3096 6587  
Passcode: 853069

[content/uploads/2022\\_ToolsForMinistry\\_Brochure.pdf](content/uploads/2022_ToolsForMinistry_Brochure.pdf)

## Scouting Sunday - February 13, 2022

Pack and Troop 86 are an important part of our community and connected with our church. Join us for Scouting Sunday on Sunday, February 13<sup>th</sup> as we celebrate scouting and have an opportunity to be with our scouts in worship.

### 2022 Giving Envelopes

THEY ARE HERE! Pick up your envelopes from the Fellowship Room. You can get them after church or during the week. Thank you for your patience as we waited out the shipping delay!



### Giving Statements

Giving statements were sent out in the mail for 2021. If you have not received your statement or have any questions about your giving statement, please contact Brenda Rambo, our financial secretary. You can reach her at [Rambo.brenda@gmail.com](mailto:Rambo.brenda@gmail.com) or 570-872-4181.



# amazon smile

You make a difference! In the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2021, we received \$35.97 as a result of qualifying purchases made by you and other customers who have selected our church when making purchases at Amazon. Over time, Amazon has

The Church Office is Closed on Monday, February 21<sup>st</sup> for President's Day.

given \$347.94 to Stroudsburg United Methodist Church. How can you sign up? Go to Amazon smile and select Stroudsburg UMC as your charity. Thank you for making a difference.

### From the Bishop:

One of the essential roles in the life of The United Methodist Church is District Superintendent.

Superintendents work with the Bishop to lead the church to fulfill its mission, *to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world*. We are blessed with gifted and faithful District Superintendents.

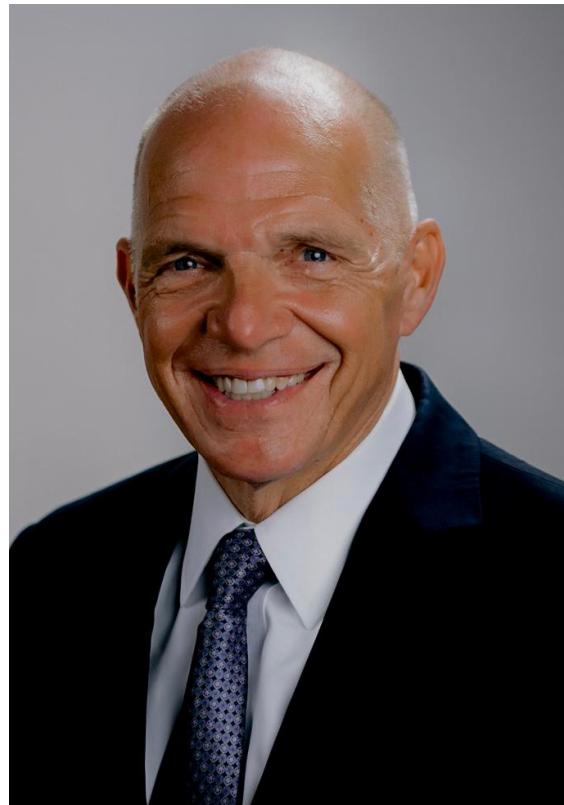
District Superintendents serve for up to eight years in the role of superintending, and I am sad that the Rev. Bumkoo Chung will finish his tenure as a superintendent on June 30, 2022. He has served EPA and the West District faithfully. In the short time I have known him, Rev. Chung is deeply committed to leading congregations to health and vitality, growing lay leadership and supporting clergy. He is committed to a full Gospel, reaching new people with God's love through Jesus Christ, and engaging congregations in the community to serve and bring justice. He will be deeply missed as a superintendent.

I am also sad to share with you that Superintendent Steve Morton, in this time of his life and career, has requested to receive a new part-time appointment as of July 1, 2022. I have known Steve for much of my ministry career and have found him to be an exemplary leader in growing churches, developing leaders and supporting clergy and laity in their ministry. His leadership in the North District has led to innovative and strengthened ministry. He too will be deeply missed as a superintendent.

A District Superintendent, by our Book of Discipline, must be an ordained elder in The United Methodist Church. A superintendent orders the life of the district and is the chief mission strategist for the district. He or she develops lay and clergy transformational leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ and grow vital missional congregations for the transformation of the world. Superintendents work with the bishop to appoint clergy to congregations and to support clergy and laity in leading congregations.

I am happy to announce two new District Superintendents in EPA, **Rev. Jenny Freymoyer for the West district** and **Rev. Hun Ju Lee**.

Hun Ju Lee will serve EPA as Superintendent for the North District beginning



July 1, 2022. Hun Ju is a leader who is:

- Born of and called by God – When Hun Ju was born, the doctors told his parents that he would die within a week. God had other plans. His parents dedicated his life to the service of God. Hun Ju accepted his calling to serve God in ministry while in graduate school. His birth into the world and into ministry has made him see everyday as a gift and to serve God each and every day.
  - Anchored in the tradition and seeks to transform the future – Hun Ju recognizes the value of tradition and culture as anchors for his faith, leadership and service. He also recognizes that we are called to explore what God has for us next. He envisions that God has a great future for The United Methodist Church.
  - A teacher and a discipler – Hun Ju was trained in the finest schools in South Korea and the United States. He has master degrees in education and theology and a doctor of ministry degree in leadership. While well trained, he is humble and seeks to disciple others into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and into being better leaders for the church.
- Jenny Freymoyer will serve EPA as Superintendent for the West District beginning July 1, 2022. Jenny is a leader who is:
- Positive and hopeful – A sign of a quality leader is how they lift the spirits of others to achieve something greater. Jenny's spirit is joyful, positive and hopeful. While being realistic, she sees opportunities in the challenges and potential in every person and congregation that wants to change, grow and develop.
  - Passionate about development and growth – Jenny is not satisfied with the status quo in herself or the church. She recognizes that God wants all of us to grow and be better disciples, leaders and congregations. She begins with herself and wants to consistently improve her leadership and believes that each of us can grow in our faith, ability and service to God.
  - Thoughtful and spiritual – Sometimes people and the church are a mile wide and an inch deep. Jesus taught that we go further and wider by going deeper. Jenny deepens herself spiritually and in gaining wisdom. She seeks to understand before being understood and she wants to grow in her own knowledge and understanding to better serve God.

Hun Ju Lee will serve EPA as Superintendent for the North District beginning July 1, 2022. Hun Ju is a leader who is:

- Born of and called by God – When Hun Ju was born, the doctors told his parents that he would die within a week. God had other plans. His parents dedicated his life to the service of God. Hun Ju accepted his calling to serve God in ministry while in graduate school. His birth into the world and into ministry has made him see everyday as a gift and to serve God each and every day.
- Anchored in the tradition and seeks to transform the future – Hun Ju recognizes the value of tradition and culture as anchors for his faith, leadership and service. He also recognizes that we are called to explore what God has for us next. He envisions that God has a great future for The United Methodist Church.
- A teacher and a discipler – Hun Ju was trained in the finest schools in South Korea and the United States. He has master degrees in education and theology and a doctor of ministry degree in leadership. While well trained, he is humble and seeks to disciple others into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and into being better leaders for the church.

I am excited for the future of EPA because of these two leaders and the many other leaders serving our congregations and our conference. God has a great future for the United Methodists of EPA. I invite you to welcome and pray for Hun Ju and Jenny during their transition.

On Sunday, January 30, 2022, 1:00 PM a new webpage will be unveiled for the 2022 appointment season. It will include:

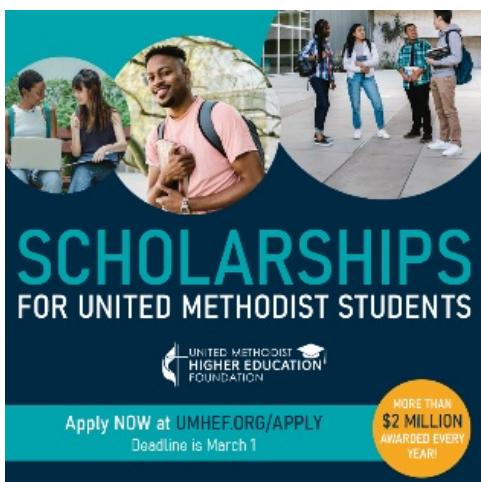
- The Book of Discipline paragraphs about appointment making.
- The mission values we use to make appointments.
- Appointment practices.
- The 2022 class of retirees.
- New appointments.
- Open appointments the cabinet is discerning.
- Transition resources.

Let's continue to serve together to make disciples, grow healthy vital congregations and transform the world.

*Keep the faith!*

John

Bishop John Schol  
*The United Methodists of  
Eastern Pennsylvania & Greater New Jersey*



The United Methodist Higher Education Foundation is accepting scholarship applications for the 2022-23 academic year. **Through March 1**, United Methodist students are invited to apply for funds available to help pay for attending colleges, universities or seminaries related to The United Methodist Church. [To learn more](#)

**THERE IS A NEW PHONE NUMBER FOR THE DISTRICT OFFICE IN VALLEY FORGE:**

**857-253-0225**

**PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF IT**

**Philadelphia church hopes good overcomes evil after hate mail and burglary -**

Literally adding insult to injury, Emmanuel UMC in Philadelphia, a historic African American church, received a hateful, insulting message scrawled on notepaper this week, less than a month after the church was broken into, ransacked and robbed of cherished church property. Local police are investigating both serious offenses. The barely legible, racist note, mailed to the church, located near Temple University in North Philadelphia, was received on Tuesday, Jan. 18, a day after the nation's celebration of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. The destructive break-in and burglary happened on Sunday, Dec. 26, a day after Christmas.



[See the December 29 story:](#)

The message, full of racist epithets, harshly criticized the congregation and its African American community for the break-in and vandalism and called for “death to black lives.” It was signed “The Man in the High Castle,” a reference to a popular American novel and television show depicting a dystopian alternate history where Nazi Germany and Japan won World War II. The note was signed with two Nazi swastikas.

The Rev. James Duckett, pastor, shared the break-in news and the subsequent note with the Rev. Andrew Foster III, East District Superintendent. “There was a great deal of damage to the interior of the church building along with some of the windows being removed,” he reported after the church was vandalized. He said the police were notified and examined the crime scene to make a report.

“My heart is heavy at this moment in time,” said Duckett, citing as a source of comfort Genesis 50:20, a verse about God turning intended evil to good.

“When we find evil coming our way in today’s world, we must reaffirm our faith in God and know that His will be done. Let’s look to the Lord in prayer, knowing that God, the Father Almighty is in control. We, Emmanuel Church, will survive!”

Keith Williams, who chairs the finance committee, expressed sad amazement, when interviewed by NEWSpirit Friday, that heavy, antique, recently upholstered pulpit chairs were taken, along with 10-foot-tall doors removed from their hinges, cut-glass and precious stained-glass windows, now replaced by plywood. But they didn’t take easily accessible and easy-to-sell electronic equipment.

“I was really hurt and devastated, as if someone went into my own house,” he told a Channel 6 ABC-TV news reporter, estimating the cost of the damage at over \$11,000.

“For somebody to come in and disrespect the church the way they did, they probably had some real serious illnesses or addictions that need to be addressed,” said Williams. “I had to remember the scriptures and forgive. I said a prayer for those that came and did this damage because they’re probably hurting more than we are.”

He said that he too is hoping that good somehow comes from the evil the church experienced. One silver lining may be that the congregation, which had been worshiping solely on Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has returned to worshiping in the sanctuary on first and third Sundays, while also remaining on Zoom.

"We needed the community to see us using the building again," Williams said. Meanwhile, the church plans to purchase camera equipment to upgrade its security.

"I'm devastated that the community where I used to walk around feeling safe when I was younger is now so full of street violence," said Williams, a former teacher. "I think of how strong spiritually our church must be to stay and serve here with all the crime and violence."



## Update aims to make Bible translation more accurate

A 2022 edition of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible updates language, grammar and punctuation aimed at increasing the Bible's accuracy.

**Is it important that the skin disease Jesus healed people from wasn't leprosy as we know it today?**

**Does it matter whether John the Baptist said he was not fit to untie the "thong" of Jesus' sandals or the "strap?"**

**Should a verse in Isaiah be changed from the poetic "wild grapes" to the more accurate "rotten grapes," even though it is less pleasing to the ear?**

The NRSVue, or the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition Bible, includes thousands of substantive edits and 20,000 total changes in the Bible translation, which includes alterations in grammar and punctuation, according to Friendship Press. It is an update, not a new translation, which would be a more extensive project.

The NRSVue Bible is available for the Word@Hand app ([iOS](#) and [Android](#)) and on [Kindle](#).

The answer to all three questions is "yes," say scholars who worked on the 2021 update to one of the most popular Bible translations, the "[New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition Bible](#)," published by Friendship Press. The [National Council of Churches](#), of which The United Methodist Church is a member, holds the copyright on the translation, which was last updated in 1989. [The Rev. Joseph Crockett](#), a United Methodist, is the CEO and publisher at Friendship Press.

### Leprosy, sandals and grapes

**So how can there not be leprosy in the Bible?**

"It's become clear that what we call today 'leprosy,' Hansen's Disease, apparently did not exist in the Mediterranean basin in the second millennium, first millennium B.C., or even around A.D. times," said [Michael W. Holmes](#), who was an editor of the New Testament in the "NRSVue."

"So there's one case where our understanding of the term was changed by modern medical

research,” said Holmes, the University Professor of Biblical Studies and Early Christianity, Emeritus, at Bethel University.

So, in the “NRSVue,” Leviticus 13:9 says “defiling skin disease” instead of “leprosy.” The change of “thong” to “strap” in the John the Baptist verse was done because “thong” in English has come to primarily refer to underwear. And even though “wild grapes” rolls off the tongue better than “rotten grapes,” it was changed to be more accurate.

### An update

The “NRSVue” makes about 12,000 substantive edits and 20,000 total changes in the Bible translation, which includes alterations in grammar and punctuation, according to Friendship Press. It is an update, not a new translation, which would be a more extensive project.

“It’s an update to the translation, so that they could take care of things like making sure the grammar, tenses and punctuation are correct,” said the Rev. Jean Hawhurst, ecumenical staff officer for the United Methodist Council of Bishops. “And things like capitalizing Jewish holidays when that’s appropriate. ... Then there’s this other category of the updates that are philological, that have more to do with the meaning of words and how they change over time.”

Those changes include substituting “enslaved person” for “slaves,” so as not to define someone as only that.

The “NRSVue,” done in partnership by the NCC and [Society of Biblical Literature](#), is intended for a mainstream audience, but also scholars. If the reception is the same as the 1989 version, it will be more popular among mainline than evangelical churches, Holmes said. It’s approved for Protestant, Anglican, Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches.

The United Methodist Church does not have an official Bible. [The United Methodist Publishing House](#) publishes several translations, including the popular Common English Bible.

### Layers of vetting

Most of the work was done using Zoom, partially due to the coronavirus threat but mainly because it was more convenient, said Ronald Hendel, the Norma and Sam Dabby Professor of Hebrew Bible and Jewish Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. He was one of the editors of the Old Testament portion of the updated Bible.

“General editors would discuss changes that were proposed by the book editors, and we decided to accept their proposal or reject their proposal or change it,” he said. “So it went through a couple layers of vetting. But it was fun, because these are all specialists and we love to talk about this stuff.”

### A continuing process

The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered 1946-56 in what was then Jordan, are still in the process of being incorporated in Bible translations, Hendel said.

“They started to be incorporated in the ‘NRSVue’ in the 1980s, but there were hundreds of fragments just for the Biblical scrolls, and there’s non-Biblical scrolls from the Dead Sea Scrolls also,” Hendel said.

This took years to sort, so there are updates from the Dead Sea Scrolls in the “NRSVue.”

“This is not about the political winds changing course and somebody wanting a more conservative or more liberal (Bible),” Hendel said. “You end up with something that’s an improvement on the original. But you know, some of our decisions were probably wrong. So

people will have to fix those in the next go around."

*Jim Patterson is a Nashville, Tennessee freelance writer.*