



Metropolitan Association, NY UCC Newsletter

January, 2022

Ministering to the
Metropolitan Association
Churches and Ministers.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**CREATIVITY, COMPASSION, COMMITMENT &
COMMUNICATION**

EADMIN@METROUCCNYC.ORG

BOARD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2022 IS HERE! Pressing through a puzzling and persistent pandemic, 2022 has come through, new and prayerfully improved over the past year! Although the door of a new year, a new beginning is open, some might hesitate to walk through it. With strength depleted, so many people find themselves debilitated, depressed, discouraged, and defeated. This is why the work we do is so important, for we must voice both the encouragement of God while acknowledging and addressing the discouragement of the people of God.

The Mission of the Metropolitan Association is *following Christ*,

empowering our churches to change the world. We have a vision of Communities of justice and extravagant hospitality transformed by God's love.

Yet amid impossible circumstances, as an Association, God used us over this past year, to reach a suffering world, to bring hope, light, love and joy in the world. We got a bit of an experience of the dance of the Trinity in working as Association, Congregations, and Clergy, rhythmically moving together to address the pressing needs of our day: food insecurity, COVID testing sites, social justice, social isolation and so much more.

Through the power of prayer, in a season of prayer, we began taking steps to strengthen our Association, while engaging in

open, honest, and transparent dialogue with our Conference leaders. It is our aim to tap into the resources that will aid us in doing all we can *to follow Christ and empower our churches to change the world.*

It is a new day! It is a new year! Who we are becoming as the Metro Association is far better and greater than who we ever were! John's letter says, "*...it does not year appear what we shall be...*" Our vision statement is unfolding, coming to fruition: *a vision of Communities of justice and extravagant hospitality transformed by God's love! Be bold in this new year! Step out in faith.* The process IS grueling; but step out anyhow! As Philippians 1:6; "*being confident of this, that [the One] who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*"

Soar in the Spirit, on eagles' wings! HAPPY NEW YEAR--- #METROSTRONG!

Rev. Dr. Ruby M. Wilson

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Of all of the things I have done in my life, and there have been many, this position by far is perhaps one of the most enriching and exciting! From my perch as the ED, I am reveling in the richness that is Metro Association. And I haven't even scratched the surface of discovery of the depth of the riches and jewels that are like a treasure trove of God's gifts.

Where shall I begin? This Association hosts such a rich diversity of gifts and talents, all focused on serving the people of God. I am eternally grateful! Here in Metro, we have a Vice President of the Association, **Rev. Dr. Gary Percesepe**, an accomplished author of riveting fictional stories in 11 books, an ordained minister of 26 years, a pastor of an historic church that hosts a vibrant nursery school, a masterful community

organizer and racial justice advocate who has studied under his dear friend, the late Rev. CT Vivian; and he is a professor of philosophy at Fordham University. When Rev. Gary talks about Hegel's Master Slave Dialectic, very few know what he is talking about. He will run circles around your head in a few short sentences!

Rev. Micah Bucey, a beloved minister at Judson Memorial Church is a recent author who has been published by a very prestigious publishing house. The book is the *Tiny Book of Prayer*, a work he authored while he was quarantined and suffering the effects of long term COVID. Micah is a dedicated immigration rights activist, walking the Jericho walk every Thursday for YEARS around the Federal Building where immigrants were being torn from their families and lives in America.

Rev. Michael Piazza, Senior of Pastor of Broadway UCC is a refreshing pastor and fairly new in the Metro Association. His company, Agile Consulting has helped thousands of churches reimagine what church can do to truly live the

gospel message of inclusion and love. Services at Broadway UCC literally feature BROADWAY actors, actresses, singers, poets, and prophets. His ideas and strategies literally lifted us in Metro out of a sense of despair in the early days of COVID when he offered us virtual free consultation and Reimagine Church sessions!

Rev. Kaji Dousa, of THE PARK, (Park Avenue Christian Church DOC/UCC) is NOT to be messed with. A fierce preacher and teacher, Rev. Kaji is also a litigant against an oppressive government who she alleges violated her rights while she was advocating for people at the borders. A fierce woman of God, Rev Kaji also shepherds' new ministers, is a prolific writer for the UCC devotional, and my Lord, can she pray heaven down!

Rev Reuben Nuno, an international church planter and community activist leads the historic Church of the Living Hope in East Harlem, bringing hope and joy to many in East Harlem and beyond. Rev. Nuno is an EXPERT at community partnerships and casting a vision of

how groups and non-profit entities can partner with churches to enliven communities and bring hope. I am confident that his vision, passion, and experience will help this Association maximize the limitless possibilities of partnership throughout the Metro Area.

Our lay leaders in Metro are also AMAZING!

Deacon Judith Jones of Safe Haven UCC has led a group called Sassy Seniors for decades, bringing together the elders of the Church of the Evangel and Safe Haven to stay vibrant, engaged and productive. During these plague years, Deacon Judy has hosted Talk Tuesdays, a forum for seniors to learn history, share stories, pray, laugh and love on each other to encourage vibrant community in the midst of the storm.

Sister Sandra Johnson of Hollis Avenue Congregational Church has been the power behind the throne at the Hollis Avenue Congregational Church Food Pantry, tirelessly assisting James Thomas, Food Pantry Director and the faithful pastor, Rev. Jerry Greene to organize and

mobilize to get food to the hungry. We are richly blessed.

Beloveds, this section of the Newsletter would be volumes if I go on and on. **A whole newsletter could be dedicated to our anointed and gifted Association President Rev. Dr. Ruby Wilson.** Each month in 2022, I will share joy and gratitude for the unsung heroes and sheroes of this great Association. I am sure I will only scratch the surface, so share with me who YOU admire! Send me the stories! We are **METROSTRONG!**

GOD IS FAITHFUL!

I leave you with this from Paul's letter to the church at Philippi (Message translation)

Every time you cross my mind, I break out in exclamations of thanks to God. Each exclamation is a trigger to prayer. I find myself praying for you with a glad heart. I am so pleased that you have continued on in this with us, believing and proclaiming God's Message, from the day you heard it right up to the present. There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing

finish on the very day Christ Jesus appears.

7-8 It's not at all fanciful for me to think this way about you. My prayers and hopes have deep roots in reality... (God) knows how much I love and miss you these days. Sometimes I think I feel as strongly about you as Christ does!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**Rev. Dr. Kris Watson,
Executive Director**

HELP US TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF OUR ASSOCIATION BY MAKING A DONATION MAIL CHECKS TO: METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION, UCCNY AT

**102-19 34TH AVENUE,
CORONA, NY 11368**

OR GO TO OUR WEBSITE DONATIONS PAGE AT [Donation \(eservicepayments.com\)](https://www.eservicepayments.com)

METRO OFFERS POLITY CLASS MID-JANUARY:

The Metropolitan Association is offering a UCC Polity Class this January. If you are new to the UCC, seeking Privilege of Call, or just want to know more about our history and polity (governance structure), as well as all this unique denomination has to offer contact our Executive Director at eadmin@metrouccnyc.org to register. Classes start

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on **January 12, 2022**.
The class will be
taught by **Rev. Henry
Simmons** virtually.

**JOIN US FOR MLK
DAY: A DAY OF
REFLECTION AND
ACTION!**

**MONDAY, JAN 17,
2022, 11AM-1PM**

[https://metro
uccnyc-
org.zoom.us/j/
89433119109](https://metrouccnyc.org.zoom.us/j/89433119109)

**BISHOP DWAYNE
ROYSTER, Senior
Pastor of Faith UCC in
Washington DC, and
founder of the Society
for Faith and Justice
will be our keynote
preacher for our
Martin Luther King
Day Celebration.**



Bishop Dwayne D.
Royster, a leading voice
in modern faith-based
activism, wants to

change the world.
Whether
he is serving as a
pastor, challenging the
status quo as a political
activist, educating and
empowering
communities as a radio
show host, or
encouraging and
inspiring audiences
around the country as a
writer and public
speaker, Bishop
Royster's work is fueled
by deep faith and
passionate commitment
to bringing about social
justice.

**During the offering we
ask that you text, tweet
or e mail your local
senator to urge the
passage of
comprehensive
VOTING RIGHTS
LEGISLATION.**

***THE METRO
ASSOCIATION
PARTNERS WITH
HOLLIS AVENUE
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH AND ITS
FOOD PANTRY TO
FEED THOUSANDS!***



On December 23, 2021,
the Metropolitan
Association partnered
with the Hollis Avenue
Congregational
Church and its Food
Pantry under the fine
leadership of Rev.
Jerry Greene and JT
Thomas to provide
prepared meals and
groceries to
thousands of the food
insecure in the Metro
Areas.

Wantagh Memorial
Church, The
Congregational
Church of South
Hempstead, Safe
Haven UCC, Christ

**Church, Grace
Congregational
Church of Harlem,
Sacred Fellowship
Ministries, UCC and
Hollis Ave
Congregational each
fed the hungry, in an
extraordinary
partnership that will
expand and continue
throughout the winter.**

**This winter we will
expand our
partnerships to work
with other community
groups and leaders to
get food to those in
need.**

**Another food
distribution is
scheduled for January
10, 2022.**

**Here are some
testimonials from
those who participated
in the food
distribution:**

“What a joy it was to have 6 members and friends of Wantagh Memorial Congregational Church participate in the food and produce distribution on December 23rd. WMCC has a long-standing relationship with the Long Island Council of Churches food pantry in Freeport. Our church collects non-perishable food items on Monday of each week in the parking lot of our church and delivers it to the pantry. Our collection

started out as a church mission and has now extended to the community that surrounds WMCC. The pre-prepared meals and produce we received on December 23rd was taken to the pantry. By 2 PM in the afternoon all of it had been given to the food insecure. Our pastor, Rev. Ron Garner, is treasurer of the Long Island Council of Churches and serves on its Board of Directors”

Alfre Johnson of Grace Congregational says:

“It did my heart good to know i played a part in caring for, sharing and feeding my community. We reached out . . . And touched.”

**IF YOU, A FAMILY
MEMBER OR
CONGREGANT NEED
HELP WITH FOOD
PLEASE CONTACT
HOLLIS AVENUE
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH, Rev. Jerry
Greene, Senior Pastor
211-04 Hollis Avenue,
Queens Village 11429.
HOURS OF
OPERATION:
8am-11am: The Food
Pantry is open every
Tuesday. If you have
special needs or an
immediate need
contact James
Thomas at 516-528-
2422**



SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL WHO MADE A YEAR END DONATION TO THE ASSOCIATION! WE APPRECIATE YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND PLEDGE TO USE YOUR GIFTS TO THE BUILDING OF THE BELOVED COMMUNITY!

Divine Love, flowing through us blesses and increases all that we give, all that we have and all that we receive.



SOW A SEED INTO THE METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION TODAY.

YOUR DONATION IS TAX DEDUCTIBLE

#METROSTRONG: Our Association is following Christ, empowering our churches to change the world.

We are committed to be communities of justice and extravagant hospitality that are transformed by God's love.

JANUARY 2022 #METROSTRONG

PLEASE VISIT AND LIKE OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HAPPENINGS IN THE METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION!

Spread the news of all that Metro Association is offering to its members, churches, and ministers!

Share this newsletter with your congregation!

Reach out to us to see how you can get involved and volunteer your time talent and treasure!

Do you have a bright idea or project for us to engage in? Develop the idea and share it by e mailing our Executive Director at eadmin@metronyucc.org

Does your church need pulpit supply? We have a diversity of ministers willing and able to help. Please reach out to eadmin@metronyucc.org or call Rev. Kris Watson on her cell at 646-523-1936.

