

Episode 5: The Strength of Unity with the Rev. Bryant Clark, Secretary of the UNY Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW)

Host:

When we think about the strength in unity, it is not this power and might that some think about, it's really the strength in relationships: our relationships with humanity, our relationship with the marginalized, our relationship with the creator, the relationship with Christ, that's the strength in unity.



Rev. Clark:

...ultimately, it's about faith... Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the light." When we have anxiety about our disunity, we're worried about truth...(unity) is not about needing to be on the same page...What's exciting about this time in our Church is that we are starting to rediscover this "way" stuff. There is some deep, juicy stuff there—getting out into our community, meeting people, creating those relationships, and rediscovering our oneness...it matters less what our theology of baptism is... we're discovering that we really are connected in God's love.

Episode 6: Unity and New Life with Crossroads and Finger Lakes District Superintendent, the Rev. Nola Anderson

Host:

As you think about unity and new life, why is this connection important to you?



Rev. Anderson:

When I think about unity, I am drawn to the root word of unity, which is unus. When you look at the word, it's like saying you and us. We can't have unity without you, without us...Unity is a journey...we find a common ground as a foundation and then we come to things where we see differently, we develop a strong relationship, which makes it much easier to deal with difficult conversations.

There you have it, nuggets of insight from our first podcast series. Take some time to dive deeper into these insights by listening to the podcast at your convenience. And if you are really short on time, you can take Sky Lake Camp & Retreat Center Director, Matt William's suggestion, and listen to the podcast at 1.5x speed! The voices may sound like they have had some helium, but the wisdom is still there!



the **Bridge**
Connecting local churches to each other & ministries around the world



ON THE MISSION

"...the things that unite us are so much more vital than the things that we think separate us."

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The next On the Mission series is about the UNY Camp & Retreat Ministries.

The Bridge is a Conference Communications Ministry tool that delivers to local churches news and stories of ministry from around the Upper New York area and the world. For more news and stories visit: www.unyumc.org



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.



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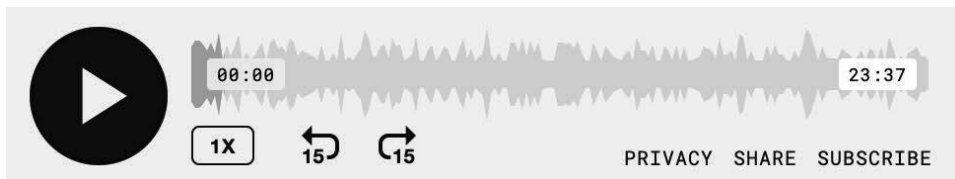
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We are better together



The Upper New York (UNY) Conference Communications Team recently released a new podcast called *On the Mission*. Leading up to Easter, they ran a series called “Better Together,” which focused on unity. The podcasts are available in both audio and video formats.

The Rev. Dr. Aaron Bouwens, UNY Director of Missional Excellencet was the host. In this issue of the *Bridge*, we highlight each of the six episodes. We encourage you to listen to the full episodes of the specific topics that grasp your interest. The whole series is thought-provoking and inspiring. At a time when there is so much division in the Church, learn how we truly can be better together!



Episode 1: The Call to Unity with UNY Area Resident Bishop, Héctor Burgos Núñez

Host:

How do you define and understand unity?

Bishop Héctor:

Some people refer to unity as a state of being undivided; some people refer to it as oneness. Other people will say that unity is a form of harmony between all the parts of an organism. I personally resonate with unity as a state of harmony.



Episode 2: Unity with our Neighbors with Kristina Clark, UNY’s Director of Missional Engagement

Host:

Is there any passage in the Bible that speaks to you about what it means to be a neighbor?

Kristina Clark:

I feel like I have a different passage every week and this week it’s Romans 12. I would really like our listeners to take time and read Romans 12 about what it means to be a neighbor.



Episode 3: Unity in the Church with Dr. Scott Johnson and Georgia Whitney, co-conveners of the Conference Commission on Religion and Race

Host:

How is the topic of unity important to you and important to the Church?

Georgia:

To me, the things that unite us are so much more vital than the things that we think separate us. The things that unite us are two basic commandments: Love God. Love each other...The Church is to be the embodiment of God’s perfect love for us...our members must have a reciprocal love for and delight with each other...



Dr. Johnson:

To build on what Georgia has already shared, especially when it comes to religion and race, I think the challenge is how individuals’ inability to love each other has been twisted into systems, socially...our history has shown us that not only have we failed to love, but we have created systems of oppression that have to be broken.



Episode 4: The Mission and Unity with Pastor Liz Aristy, who serves on both the Conference Leadership Team and Hispanic Ministries

Host:

How do you see the mission and unity meeting together?

Liz:

We need to approach this by first talking about disunity...I feel that the first church family was Eden. And (today’s) church is an extension of the kingdom and since that first church was assaulted, it has been a struggle for the church family to come back to that place of unity because there was a separation from God.



And it’s not external forces that are causing disunity, but forces from within and because of these forces, we lose sight of the mission. The mission for Adam and Eve was to cultivate the garden and multiply, but they couldn’t fulfill that mission. So, we come to where we are today, and our mission is to make disciples, to teach the Gospel, but again we have lost sight of that because we either can’t or we won’t deal with whatever struggles we have on the inside. These struggles tend to lead us toward disunity.



You can scan this QR code to access any of the full episode (most episodes are 15-20 minutes long).
<https://www.unyumc.org/news/podcasts>

The podcasts can be found on Simplecast, iHeart, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Pandora, Stitcher, and Amazon Podcasters

