



From the Moderator

Congregational Meeting Scheduled for April 25th

The Church Council voted last night to schedule a Congregational Meeting on April 25th immediately following the morning service. The meeting will bring before the congregation the Search Committee's recommendation that the Reverend Rickard G. Reed be presented to the TUCC congregation as the Settled Pastor candidate.

As required by the constitution, this special meeting of the congregation will be announced during services April 11th and April 18th and will be included in bulletin announcements these Sundays.

As part of the Search Committee's process, Reverend Reed answered 15 central questions in writing. A brief version of his answers is included in this Stepping Stones and the full set of answers will be emailed to members in the next two weeks. After reviewing the written responses, members may raise additional questions in three ways: by sending questions in writing to the church office before the meeting, by bringing written questions to the Congregational meeting, or by questioning Reverend Reed directly during the meeting.

In order to take action on the Search Committee's recommendation at the April 25th meeting, the constitution requires a quorum of ten percent (10%) of the active church membership. The quorum will be determined based those members in attendance in person or via Zoom.

Voting will be done with paper ballots for those attending in person or by targeted chat room votes for those attending via Zoom.

Should you have questions about any aspects of this process, feel free to contact any member of the Church Council.

SYNOPSIS of Answers to TUCC Search Committee Questions 2021 Reverend Richard G. Reed

1. What excites you about becoming our settled pastor?

The list of ideas for programs, ministries and worship types that was generated at the Transition Team Visioning Workshop early last year is an exciting roadmap for ministry ahead. I am anxious to get started.

2. What concerns you, if anything, about becoming our settled pastor?

The process of deciding and selecting a pastor was long and difficult and caused anxiety in the congregation and the community. I am hoping we can get down to work – especially after the pandemic is over. See my long answer to read what the Apostle Paul had to say to the Church at Corinth that I think applies to us a well.

3. What is the most exciting aspect of ministry for you?

The connections and interconnectedness between God, humanity and the created order/environment.

4. How do you go about developing a sermon?

There are many steps to developing a sermon. Reading the passage, praying over the passage, keeping abreast of what is happening in the world, reading commentaries and other sermons about the passage, doing word studies, bringing in supportive material from literature and quotes. In all it takes a minimum of six hours and often times more.

5. What do you do to relax?

I enjoy cooking, stamping, sewing, travel, reading, gardening, board games, live trivia competition, spending time with family and friends.

6. How do you work collaboratively with the leadership of the church?

The first step is to get to know the leadership of the congregation. Learn their connections to the community, to the congregation and within their family system. Listen to their personal, faith and congregational history. Get to know the strengths and limitations of the leaders and for them to know those strengths and limitations about me as pastor, and to work together using the strengths and supplementing the limitations. And of course, like Jesus, to show patience and offer forgiveness, one to another.

7. Share some ways in which you have improved communication in your church between groups.

Listening and valuing what is said. Treating all with empathy, equity and intrinsic worth. Asking questions for clarification. Endeavoring to be clear. Advocating for those whose voice is not as strong or in dissent. Helping to reframe comments and promoting speaking in ways that are inclusive and not defensive. Praying for a spirit of patience and understanding.

8. Describe your conflict management style. Discuss a recent conflict situation in a congregation you served. How did you work it through?

Show respect. Manage feelings around conflict. Look for solutions, not blame. Be humble. Seek common humanity. All these are aspects of human interaction – especially in conflict.

I think the best example of a conflict situation at church that I managed successfully was when the church dismissed Doug as pastor. The skills enumerated above were all used to help keep us together as a congregation.

9. Tell us about a program you implemented that resulted in church growth?

The Friday Night Bible Study at my former church in Cortland was a program that I started for people in the congregation, most but not all younger and with children, who wanted to learn more about the Bible. Food was provided, folks brought their own Bibles and we compared how different translations rendered the passage we were studying. It was very participant oriented and I was there to provide direction, support and to answer questions. After about an hour and a half, we then joined hands and prayed. It had enormous results in personal spiritual growth and many of the participants became leaders of the congregation. They also brought friends and that added to membership at church.

10. What is your management style? Tell us about your greatest leadership success.

I have a collaborative management style. I have told every church secretary that I have worked with that they are in charge of the office, so if I have missed a deadline, they print without me. I support my staff and make it a point to tell them I appreciate them. And I say "thank you." I say it a lot. I am appreciative of the work that folks do – both paid staff and volunteers. The least I or any of us can do is say thank you. Frequently!

Perhaps my greatest leadership success to date has been to hold this congregation together when Doug was dismissed. It was a bit of a powder keg and could well have blown totally apart.

11. What are some of the programs you have developed? What were the needs you were trying to address?

Elsewhere in the in the long answers I tell about the Friday Night Bible Study group (#9), the Children and Families Holiday Workshops (#14), and the Praise Band (#13) and outlined the needs that generated them. Also in the long answer, I tell about the partnership between the United Community Church of Cortland and the Cortland YWCA that made an unused Sunday School space into a day care M-F.

12. How have you brought stewardship emphasis to a congregation? How has it made a difference financially?

We make a mistake if we think of stewardship as a program, emphasized once a year, in order to raise money and establish a budget for the coming year.

Stewardship is commonly described as including your time, talent and treasures. Biblical Commentator, R. C. Sproul has pointed out that "stewardship is about exercising our God-given dominion over His creation, reflecting the image of our creator God in His care, responsibility, maintenance, protection, and beautification of His creation."

This is how I understand stewardship and I seek to express that theology in pastoral and offertory prayers, in sermons, and in responsive readings and to provide leadership and direction to the Stewards Board and the congregation to deepen and broaden our understanding of what it means to be good stewards.

The resources we need to support ministry in this place *are already here*. Our task as pastor and leadership is to pray for the vision, unite in our understanding of the vision,

promote and interpret the vision, pray for the Spirit to help move us toward fulfillment of the vision. “Without a vision, the people will perish” has an implicit corollary: “With a vision, the people will prosper.”

13. In what style worship are you most comfortable? Can you effectively lead a more contemporary style service?

It is no secret that I am high church for a Baptist. A Baptist colleague from years ago told me that I am closet Anglican, and it stuck. I suppose he is kind of right. I don't see it as rejecting my Free Church upbringing, rather, it is to me embracing a wealth of Christian tradition and history and heritage.

I am comfortable with contemporary style worship. At the same time, studies suggest, contrary to some popular opinion, that contemporary style worship is not essential to bring in young people. And I say this to remind us that it is because there are some who like that kind of music and feel uplifted and blessed by it that we would incorporate it into our worship – not because of a false narrative that we have to have it to bring in young people.

That said, we have a LOT of wonderful musicians in our congregation – maybe more than I know of. I love us to use voice, guitar, flute, cello, organ, bells, piano, kalimba, marimba, drums, and saxophone – all of which we have available to us that I know of – in worship; whether traditional, contemporary, or somewhere in between. Whatever we have to offer, we offer it in praise to God, and those gathered to worship God are lucky because we get to hear and participate.

Read in the long answer about the Praise Band that we organized at the Cortland Church that performed at the Tully Coffee House years ago!

14. How effective is the ministry to children and youth in your church? What programs have you led and what was your role?

We know the answer to the first part of this question: Sunday School/Ministry to Children is faltering and Ministry to Youth/Youth Fellowship is small but solid. There are fewer children and youth to begin with at this time. The Transition Team has reported such and we know it from those involved in the Tully School System that the classes are smaller. And church is not a priority as it once was in our society as a whole. That doesn't mean that Sunday School is doomed to extinction. It does mean that we may have to come up with new ideas and ways to minister to children that don't resemble the old Sunday School model of the past.

My program idea of holding Christmas and then Easter workshops for children and their adult guardians generated enthusiasm from both our Christian Ed and Deacons boards. Folks were energized as they made plans for craft ideas, food, and activities to celebrate the season. The intention was to continue to hold these during the major holidays, expanding them as we went along, and to slowly emphasize the religious component. As children, parents/guardians and the community saw and experienced our love and commitment to ministering to children and families, the hope was to grow back a program of religious education (Sunday School). Participation had already grown from the Christmas to the Easter workshop as children shared their experience

with their friends and invited them to come along and adults enjoyed the activities with their children.

15. What can we expect to be different as a settled pastor compared to an interim pastor?

Stability - that will come with naming a settled pastor and will allow the congregation to get back down to the work of Christ and the Kingdom here in Tully United Community Church. And the community will feel more secure knowing there is someone named as pastor and no longer in an interminable holding pattern.

Community - That is, being a part of the community, being recognized by the community, and serving the community.

Authority - By this I mean standing before the congregation as *the leader* chosen to move us, and move with us, forward into ministry; as opposed to being asked to act in a caretaker or place-keeper role while we search for the “real” leader. It means being recognized by the congregation and the community as the leader, the pastor, of a congregation. There is no question, “Is that really the role of an interim pastor?” and no suggestion, “Let’s wait until we have a settled pastor.”

Residency - I believe it is important for the pastor, especially of a church in a small community, to live in the community. Members of the congregation (as well as the community) will see me daily or at least regularly. And you will know that I am right next door – and not 20 minutes away. That’s part of the stability I also wrote about above.

From the Pastor

In just a few days we will once again celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus. And if you aren't sure you believe in resurrection, then just consider where we were a year ago. Huddled in our homes, isolated from the outside world, washing hands until they were raw, covering our faces, keeping way clear of others as we walked past them. The coronavirus pandemic, our modern plague, felt like defeat, felt like death. And while we are still fighting the fight against it, the power of that darkness will not prevail! More and more are getting vaccinated and with the coming of spring we see the renewal of our spirits.

The Church is like that. There may be dark times for individual congregations and for the Church universal, and indeed for all religious faiths. Now marks the first time that attendance in church, synagogue or mosque by people in the USA is under 50%. We need a renewal of the Church and a renewal of our church. And the beginning of that is to attend. But it doesn't stop there. It isn't like a gym membership – where you pay your dues and go as you choose. We belong to a church because we believe in the mission and ministry there and we participate!

Recently the Board of Stewards requested that you fill out a form indicating what gifts, talents and abilities you have that you would share in ministry with the congregation. I hope that you have filled it out and sent it back. And more, I hope that you will see opportunities for ministry that you can be involved with and seek others to join you. This is the mission of the Church. To minister to those around us and to invite them into the

glorious presence of God through Jesus Christ in this place called Tully United Community Church.

Resurrection life is come again! The renewal of spring is upon us!

Thanks be to God!

Peace,

Pastor Rick +

Holy Week Services

Holy Week began on March 28th at 9:30 am with the joyful Hosannas and the solemn remembrance of Christ's Passion of **Palm Sunday**

On Thursday April 1st at 7 pm, there will be a **Maundy Thursday** service. This service commemorates the Last Supper, Jesus washing the disciples' feet, and his mandate to "*... love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another*" (John 13:34b). This service comes to its dramatic end at the Tenebrae service of Light and the Stripping of the Church.

Good Friday service will begin at 12 noon on Friday April 2nd with prayers, meditative silence, moving music and the proclamation of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The service flows immediately into a 24-hour prayer vigil. You can sign up for the prayer vigil at the church.

The celebration of **Easter** will begin at 9:30 am, Sunday April 4th. The sanctuary will be filled with the fragrance of spring flowers and the joyful music of the organ, piano and bells.

You can attend any of these meetings in person following COVID 19 protocols or via Zoom.

NYUMAH FAMILY UPDATE

By Peter Huntington

Our church sponsored a refugee family from war torn Liberia in January, 2006. Since then all members of the family have become United States citizens and have integrated into our society. Hannah, Dalton Sr., Dalton Jr. (John), Keith and Wilma have recently moved to Burlington, NJ where they are buying a home. Dalton Sr. works full time as a school bus driver. Hannah works at an Amazon distribution center and, of course, braids hair on the side. John graduated from SUNY Cortland and works full time at a child center.

Robert and Philicia live in Syracuse. Robert graduated from Cornell University and is receiving his Masters degree in Marriage and Family Counselling from SU this spring. Philicia works full time as a home health care aid and has a three-year-old son, Stephen. She has her GED and hopes to obtain additional higher education. Jonathan is a junior at RIT where he is studying civil engineering,

In a letter sent to us in 2002 Hannah said "My whole family I just want to thank Pastor Keith and the whole Tully United Community Church for sponsoring us as a family and may the blessings of the Lord rain upon you and your families."

TABS TABS TABS

We continue to collect can tabs to help with equipment, supplies, and transportation needs for patients at St. Jude's Children's Hospital in Boston. Small and large tabs from pet food, vegetables, soups, beverages can be placed in the large jar located in the hallway leading to the Fellowship Hall (either on the shelf, cart, or high chair tray). The tabs Tucc collects are taken to the Shriner's Office in Solvay for shipment to Boston. Your contributions are greatly appreciated.

Spring Church Activities

As you plan your calendar for our much-anticipated Spring, please add these upcoming church events.

- Stewards are having a **Chicken BBQ, April 24th** starting at **11am till gone**. First one of the Season. Still doing drive through.
- **Peter's weeders** start beautification of our gardens on **May 5th at 9 AM** and immediately after church on **May 16th**, spring cleaning of the church begins.

More information about each activity will follow, but the Stewards and Trustees wanted to get on members' busy calendars.

Vaccine Appointments

30 and over Have your insurance information with you.

GO TO:

[covid19health.ny.gov vaccine](https://covid19health.ny.gov/vaccine)

click on "check eligibility"

click on State Fair Expo Center and enter your information.

Also **Kinneydrugs.com** **click on** "Get Started"

For questions or information about the state-run Fairgrounds clinic, please call the NYS Vaccination Hotline, 1.833.NYS.4VAX (1.833.697.4829).

If you need assistance call the Church office at 315-696-8066.

Birthdays and Anniversaries (Upcoming)

BIRTHDAYS:

Apr. 3rd – Laurie Snow; Apr. 4th Bernice Potter-Masler, Jolene Cook LaFrance;
Apr. 5th – TK Krom; Apr. 9th – Loren “Smiley” Prince; Apr. 10th – Brian
Bartholomew; Apr. 11th – Marcia Martin; Apr. 12th Mary Burgett, Amber Kruth, Greg Moore



ANNIVERSARIES:

Apr 14th - Steve & Chris Kruth

Prayer and Praise

Prayer Requests:

Joe Puccia is recovering from surgery. Sam Colombo had some tests for his heart, he is doing well and is at home. Jaci and Sam are thankful for your prayers.



Continue prayers for:

Also remember to keep in our prayers the following individuals who we hope are all getting better and staying healthy: Charlene Gale's daughter-in-law and granddaughter; Rick Reed and Laura Currie's friend Allyson Hill; Both Barb and Art Berg are in Loretto for a short rehab. Tammy Huyge's brother Mike. Don Bickelhaupt; Rick's friends, Randy from college, Jenny from seminary and Tony Campolo, retired Professor at Eastern University; Jim Canole friend of Pamela Poulin; Harold- friend of Karen Rankin; Dawn Cox's sister Tammy James; Liz Spaulding's daughter; Amy Christopherson; Marie Kemp's friend, Maria; Bill Wright, Mary Thompson, Betty Ketcham, Liz Spaulding, Hugh Reed's mother- in- law, Barbara Stanley; Nancy Foster's daughter, Breanna; Wendy Dale's Aunt Claudia; Kay and Jim Butkus' daughter Pam Falge; Brenda Millis, Pamela Poulin, Cheryl Haskins' nephew Eric; Sharon French and Edie Cook.



Mark Your Calendar

A quick review of Holy Week Services important dates

April 1st - Maundy Thursday – service will be at 7:00 pm

April 2nd - Good Friday - service will be at Noon

April 4th - Easter Sunday 9:30 am

April 24th- Chicken BBQ starting at 11:00 am until gone

May 5th Peter's weeders 9:00 am and May 16th immediately after church

Prayer Shawl Meetings- **There will be no prayer shawl meetings until further notice.** Requests are still being taken. Shawl makers will be knitting and crocheting at home. Finished shawls can be left at the church office. If you have any questions, please call Sandy Burgett at 315-696-5197.

Bell Choir meets each Wednesday at 6:30p.m. No experience is necessary.

Ways to Support Your Church and Community

Ministries come in many forms. Some take time, some take money, and some take both! Here are some suggestions for giving to others:

1. Offerings to TUCC – mail or drop off at church; use the PayPal link on the church website or pay through the electronic bill payment process of your bank.
2. St. Leo’s Food Pantry and Outreach, POB 574, Tully, 13159. Attn: Cheryl Paccia. Pantry needs monetary donations for fresh produce, meat, and dairy
3. Donate sauce, tuna, canned veggies, PB, jelly, toiletries, paper products, etc., for the Food Pantry. A donation box is at the church or they can be left just inside St. Leo’s hall between 9am – 2pm or just outside the door.
4. Shop *smile.amazon.com* and select TUCC as your non-profit. A percentage is returned to the church!
5. Contact the Pastor, any Board chair or the Moderator to offer your ideas, time or talent. A vibrant church is built around the passions and talents of the congregation.

Meditation and Sunday Service in our Sanctuary

Our sanctuary is open daytimes for prayer or meditation. Hand sanitizer is provided by the door. Homemade masks are available for you to wear and take for added protection during COVID19.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87556610214?pwd=WE9kMnhaK2lSS3dFSk51WTI4MVVQZz09>

Meeting ID: 875 5661 0214

YouTube service: Please watch your emails, our website and TUCC Facebook for the update.

TUCC INDOOR WORSHIP GUIDELINES are on our bulletin board and website tullychurch.org.

***Remember: Wash your hands. Wear your mask in public. Stay home if you are ill.**