



We voted on April 6, 2014, to become an Open and Affirming Church of the United Church of Christ. On May 19, 2014, we became the #1192 church in the UCC official listing.

Board of Trustees

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Lori Schmidt

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Coordinator:

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Jan Jeffers

Holiday in Homer July 18, 2015

Well it is hard to believe that we are less than a month away from the 34th year of Holiday in Homer!

Vendors are still coming in and we hope to have a full show. I am so excited for new vendors - most of all when it is word of mouth, by other vendors recommending the show.

If you have not yet done so, please LIKE us on Facebook and share with friends. This is such a huge way to promote the show! Advertising has just begun and this year we will be promoting the show all over the state. We have received a tourism grant making this possible. We will have ads online and in print in Rochester, Ithaca, Binghamton, Elmira, and Utica. We will also have a Time Warner commercial that will begin 10 days before the show. And of course the banner and lawn signs will be up and about very soon! Please listen for our radio spots, sponsored by Cortland Self Storage on WXHC radio. As you can see, we are inviting more people than EVER to the show !!

Also Facebook will have the latest updates from Dunk Booth updates (this year being run as a fundraiser for the Homer Music Boosters) and additional vendor updates

Entertainment is set and we are so excited for our regulars that make our show such a great tradition, The Homer Brass, Dan the Snake Man and Doug the Bubble Man. This year we have Crown City Brass and The Jeff Love Band making their debut with us. Please come and invite your friends to bring a chair and enjoy the day. Such amazing talent and I look forward to some great music!

And we cannot forget the FOOD !!

The Homer Elks will be back with all the summer food from hot dogs to salt potatoes. But we can't forget that pulled pork luncheon!! 11:30-1pm, \$8.00 gets you the best lunch, with those baked beans that just get better and better.

As we really start putting things together and calling on the congregation to help - remember it takes a village - we need everyone to make this day the success that it always turns out to be. From the kitchen to the vendor check in and to cleaning up - we need the entire congregation. This is the day we welcome the community from near and far to see who we are; we are a family and we welcome all to our Green and to our church!

Pray that once again weather will be wonderful.

See you on the 18th!!

Paula



Dear Homer Congregational Family,

Over the first weekend of June I participated in the New York Conference's Annual Meeting which was held at the Silver Bay Conference Center on Lake George, New York. I was joined by your delegates, Vicki Johnson and Belinda Burtner; along with, Minister in Discernment, Rachel Ditch.

The weekend was in a glorious setting and filled with uplifting worship and reports of God's work around our Conference. It also included a challenge to confront the ongoing reality of racism in our nation, our state and our churches. In my sermon this past Sunday (6/21) I quoted from our Conference Minister, the Reverend David Gaewski's State of the Conference address. This address was prophetic in light of the horrific killings that took place at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina on June 17. The following is an excerpt from his message and a challenge to us all. The entire message can be read on the Conference's website. www.uccny.org/news.

For those who have never been to our office, the signage of "United Church of Christ" and now additional the banner "Black Lives Matter" is easily visible to the thousands of cars that drive by each day. [Referring to a visitor's criticism of the banner] In her rant, the young woman informed the staff that her husband was a law enforcement officer. How dare we criticize one who puts his life on the line to protect our community? How dare we not have a sign that simply read "All Lives Matter"? Of course she is right. All lives matter.

- *In 1998 when Matthew Sheppard was brutally beaten, tortured and left to die in Laramie, Wyoming, gay lives matter.*
- *In 1942 when then President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the deportation and incarceration of Japanese Americans, Asian lives matter.*
- *In the 1930's when Jew's were marched into gas chambers in Nazi-controlled Germany, Jewish lives matter.*
- *When Palestinians are herded like cattle and forced off the land they live on, Palestinian lives matter.*
- *When NYPD police officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos were senselessly shot and killed, Law Enforcement lives matter.*
- *When thousands upon thousands of women today suffer silently with domestic violence, women's lives matter.*

When the troubled lives of Malissa Williams and Timothy Russell ended in a car chase during which Cleveland police shot 132 bullets in to their vehicle... And when 12 year old Tamir Rice holding a toy gun, sitting on a park swing is shot to death two seconds after police arrive upon a report that a black man, who was probably a juvenile was pointing a gun at people... And when in the past four years, not including deaths in 2015, unarmed mostly young black men are killed by police such as: . . . [43 names were mentioned with candles lit] . . . This is when Black Lives Matter. Yes All Lives Matter. And Yes, we have a crisis in our society that calls us to proclaim Black Lives Matter.

My prayer and hope is that we will be a part of living out the inclusive love of God.

Sincerely in Christ,

Stephenson A. Waters

Interim Pastor



A Children's Moment

By Lori Schmidt

There once was a lady with three little children. She was asked to start a new job working with children, just for a little while, until they could hire another grownup to do it for longer. She didn't think she could do it. She didn't think she would know how. She was scared! So she prayed about it. And God said she should try it, just for a little while. So she said, "Yes! I will do it. But I'm going to need help." So she talked to wise people, read a lot of books, and prayed to God even more. And many people surrounded this lady with love and support, and gave their time and love and talents to the children, too. But most importantly, the children were full of energy, and questions, and joy, and faith and challenged this lady to stretch her wings and grow along with them. The lady ended up learning ten times more than she could ever have hoped to teach them about being part of God's family and sharing the love of Jesus in the world.

And now, "just a little while" has turned into fifteen years. The lady's children are all grown up. God is calling her to stretch her wings and grow in different ways now. But she will always be thankful to the grownups who allowed her to love and teach the children, and she will carry the lessons of the children in her heart forever.



Special Thanks to all who participated in our Adult Choir this year. By sharing your gifts and your dedication you have enriched our worship of God.

Jim Shultes, Organist; Joe Ford,

Director of Music; Members: Jeanne Brohard, Pat Buchholz, Belinda Burtner, Chuck Feiszli, Ingrid Fox, Bonnie Haaland, Sylvia Hammond, Andrea Herzog-O'Hara, Peter Jeffers, Stephen Jones, Dottie Kelley, Marilyn Miller, Elaine Olsen, Jim Ulrich.

Mt. Everest Coming to VBS August 3-7

We are very excited to announce that Mt. Everest Vacation Bible School will



be held the week of August 3-7 from 9am-12pm at the Homer Congregational Church. Each day the children will learn an important bible verse, help make (and eat) a tasty snack, participate in outdoor games, sing/dance, and much more. Children ages 4-5 (or have not gone through a year of kindergarten) will have lots of fun in the Pre-School camp. Ages 6-12 (or have not completed 6th grade) will be grouped in crews to tour the various exciting stations. If you are a 6th grade graduate or adult, and would like to volunteer, we would love to have you on board.

Please contact Mark Bertram (director) at 607-753-8452 or contact the church at 607-749-2604 if you wish to volunteer or have any questions. Be on the lookout for registration forms that can be picked up at the church or emailed directly to you. We are looking to climb the highest peak of fun and learn some valuable lessons about God. Hope to see you there!



to our new Sexton

The Trustees are delighted to announce that **Gary Harrington** has been hired to serve as HCC's new Sexton. Gary and his family have been members of the Homer Congregation for many years and the Trustees hope a seamless transition from the service of Russ Pedersen to Gary will take place. In the interview process Gary was asked why he felt called to apply for this job, he said he wanted to provide the building with the care it deserves in order to continue our ministry in the community. **WELCOME GARY!!!!**

Discussion of financial dire straits

from the Board of Trustees and Church Moderator

The Homer Congregational Church, our church, in intimate association with the First Religious Society in the Town of Homer, has a long history of serving God with Worship, Education, and Mission. We are a generous congregation that has and continues to support that work, and each other. However, we are also a victim of the general decline in church attendance and we have not yet recovered from some of the changes that have occurred in the church. As a result, our pledges have struggled to keep up with our basic expenses. We are blessed with a rich Endowment Fund and we all recognize the need to nurture those funds so that they will be able to provide the church with the most future value. We have recently looked closer at some of the ways our church works, including the purpose and uses of the Endowment Fund and recognized that using a portion of the Endowment Fund to support a Capital Project Fund is appropriate.

However, other uses are unclear and opinions on spending range from “no other uses” to “let’s fund lots of mission projects”. We have a responsibility to continue to God’s work, which means that we must provide for worship, maintain the ability to educate our children, and conduct missions. In order to thrive and grow we must also have the facilities and activities to attract new members. This reality gives us cause to re-examine our assets and assess if it will be necessary to consider using some of the Endowment Fund to survive. It does not seem to be wise to close our doors while a fund clearly intended to support the church remained. It is true that each time we remove money from the Endowment Fund, it reduces its overall value and retards its growth rate, but does not eliminate the fund, which will continue to grow at a rate determined by its value.

Our church leadership is spending time discerning when and under what circumstances we would consider turning to the Endowment Fund. They consider our proportion of pledges and expenses and at times prioritize the payment of bills and services. If we do not pay our bills, basic facilities will be lost. Those may be building and facility support, our ability to carry out mission

work, or the loss of critical staff needed to provide for worship and education. Loss of any or all of these things will remove our ability to attract and retain new members, which is truly the only real solution to our financial difficulties. If pledged income does not meet expenses, and appeals for additional donations are not sufficient, and creative new ways of raising money do not yield enough to close the gap, what options are we left with?

As we continue to consider these conditions and weigh various solutions, it is hoped that being proactive can prevent more difficult decisions in our future. We believe that God wishes us to continue functioning as his church, our church. We also believe that he expects us to listen to him and to make the decisions that will make best use of the blessings he has bestowed upon us to keep the church open and make it a vibrant reflection of his wishes for us and our community.

Bell Choir News

When you read this, our group of handbell ringers will have returned from the Area II Young Ringers Conference in Scranton PA. We were not able to attend this Festival/Conference in 2013 for a number of reasons, but this year five young ringers, two chaperones and myself will attend. The young ringers are Nate, Evan and Molly Ulrich, Noah Kilmer and Emily Daniels. Julie Kilmer and Jim Ulrich were the chaperones and Jim and I will play along with the youth. We'll have more to share in the next issue of the newsletter. We will hopefully be able to share some of the music we learned for this event with our congregation and the Homer Methodist Church.

Jan Jeffers, Director



The Lunch Bucket Campaign Against Hunger collected \$303.65 for the Homer Methodist Food Pantry. I appreciate Vicki Johnson's and Rachel Ditch's help with collection, counting, and verifying.

Clay Benedict



The Trustees' Corner

The Trustees are calling a meeting of the First Religious Society on July 26 after coffee hour. We will be discussing our options for the steps to the Sanctuary. Kevin Cappy is working on the drawing now. He will be submitting them soon to a local contractor for evaluation and cost of the project. We will then discuss and vote on how to access the funds that have already been raised for this project.

The next issue we will discuss will be the church's finances. Amy Winters has been hired as our new bookkeeper and she will be working closely with Jean Cadwallader to bring the church's books up to date. They will provide the First Religious Society with the correct numbers so we can properly discuss where the church's budget stands and vote where the money will come from to cover any shortfalls for the fiscal year 2015.

Kevin Cappy will be calling our Hammer + Eggs group together soon to start cleaning out the Manse. If anyone is interested in helping, contact Kevin.

Russell Pedersen's last day as our Sexton was June 26. The Trustees have hired our own Gary Harrington to replace him. Please give them both best wishes and thanks.

Don VanSlyke,
Acting Chair

A Call for a Special Church Meeting

There will be a meeting of the First Religious Society in the Town of Homer, New York on **July 26th, 2015** to discuss the Church front steps and our financial situation and needs. Other articles in this newsletter introduce this discussion. Any motion to change the By-laws will be published for review in advance of the meeting.

from the Finance Office ...

Mid-year Financial Statement are now available. Ask Bev Berry or Jan Jeffers if you would like a copy of yours.



Schedule

July 6th at 6:30pm at Starr Rd
Cortland United Methodist 2
July 13th at 6:30pm at Cortlandville 2
vs Cortland United Methodist 1
July 20th 6:30pm at Cortlandville 2
vs Grace Christian Fellowship IV
July 27th No Games Scheduled
Aug 3rd TBA Make up Games
Aug 10th at 6:30pm Playoffs TBA
Aug 17th at 6:30pm Playoffs TBA
Aug 24th at 6:30pm Championship Game TBA



Wilcox Fun(d) 3K/5K Run at Chautauqua

Chautauqua will be a little different this year! There will be a full day of family-friendly events on Saturday, August 8. Join us that morning for a 3K or 5K fun run – runners, walkers, and kids welcome!

- We will start and end on The Green.
- Check-in begins at 8:30 am; run begins at 9:30 am.
- \$20 Registration. Discounts for group/family registrations of 4 or more.
- All participants get a T-shirt. Must register by July 23 to be guaranteed a shirt.
- Child care available during the run.
- Proceeds benefit the Wilcox Fund of the Cortland County Council of Churches.

For more information and to sign-up, visit chautauqua5k.com.

Carol Costell Corbin,
Chautauqua Planning Committee



**Senior
Fellowship
Club**
Next meeting
September 15 at 2:00

'JUNE WAS 'BUSTIN' OUT ALL OVER' in the RFR on Tuesday, June 9th when the Senior Fellowship Club held its last meeting before its summer break in July and August. No weddings, current brides, grooms or grads were present, but we compensated for that lack by having colorful red JUNE roses (albeit artificial ones) and a special luscious mouth-watering strawberry concoction for our dessert. Our local home-grown strawberries do appear in JUNE but not quite so early, so we had to use whatever berries were available. Although we are seniors, we are amazingly adaptable and enjoyed our strawberry dessert with gusto. Thanks to Pat Signor and Doris Walker for their help in making the dessert.

We all knew that just three days before our meeting, the 70th anniversary of D-Day had been commemorated with several services all around our nation. Many of us did not know, however, that at the World War II Memorial in Washington, D. C. a plaque or inscription had been installed just a few years ago honoring the words that FDR prayed with our nation on June 6, 1944. Some of you may remember FDR'S prayer, which was read to our nation by radio address when 156,000 American, British, and Canadian forces landed on five beaches along a 50-mile stretch of the heavily fortified coast of France's Normandy region. At our meeting, we heard some of this extraordinary prayer whose words have now been immortalized on the World War II Memorial. The prayer now becomes a permanent reminder of the sacrifice of not just those who fought in World War II but also of the men and women who fight for us today and lay down their lives for the cause of liberty.

Our special guest was Kathy McKenna who delighted us all with her explanation of how she grows gourds and makes amazing items from them. She harvests them but then they have to just sit for a long time and dry out before she can work with them. She makes birdhouses, vases of all sizes and shapes, snowmen, jack o'lanterns (snowmen and jack o'lanterns had lights in them). The gourd-type jack o'lanterns do not get rotten like pumpkin types

do. There were piggy banks for children and other items shaped like animals. She had a table displaying many items which we could look at and ask questions about.

Kathy paints designs on her gourds using an acrylic-type paint. She also embellishes her gourds from things she finds in nature...different grasses, sticks, grapevines, etc. We were all most impressed by her creativity and ingenuity and can't imagine how she finds time for anything else with her dedication to this hobby. Her presentation was excellent and informative, and Kathy graciously answered lots of questions. She also had a little plant with a gourd for each of us to take home. We could not believe it when she said each plant might yield 10 gourds. Several of Kathy's items are on display for sale at Cinch in Cortland. Many thanks, Kathy, for your most enjoyable discussion and sharing your hobby with us

We hope that all of you have a great summer... restful, recreational, and restorative. Our meetings will resume on the second Tuesday in September. See you then.

Dottie and Jaff

Result of the Special Meeting
May 31, 2015

The following change to the By-laws of the First Religious Society in the Town of Homer was approved at a Special Meeting of the Society on May 31, 2015. This language is a revision of the original proposal presented to the Society at the 2015 Annual Meeting.

A Building Fund shall be established by the Board of Trustees for the sole purpose of carrying out *major capital projects*. An amount of ½% of the Permanent Fund shall be deposited annually into the Building Fund if the following two conditions are met: first, the Permanent Fund average value (previous five quarters) as of February 1st must exceed \$2,000,000 and second, the Building Fund value is less than \$100,000. Major Capital Projects are defined as, new construction, expansion, renovation, repair or replacement project of facilities with a life expectancy of ten years or longer, where the total cost must exceed \$10,000; or purchase of major equipment costing at least \$10,000 with a life expectancy of at least ten years.

July Worship

Plan to be with us throughout the summer as each Sunday will offer special music, unique testimonies, and a variety of messages to challenge us to be devoted followers of Jesus. Miss a Sunday and want to review the bulletin? You can find weekly bulletins at our website: <http://www.homercc.com/resources/>. Share with a friend.

Sunday, July 5 **9:30 AM**

6th Sunday after Pentecost

Holy Communion will be celebrated.

During the month of July we will learn what it means to be a leader. The readings from the Hebrew scripture focus on David and his adventures as king of Israel. The gospel of Mark reminds us of how much we can accomplish when empowered by God, but it is not uncommon to experience frustration and failure. In Mark 6 we learn that after Jesus experiences rejection in his ministry, he leaves his disciples open to the same as he sends them out without him.

The **Rev. Nancy Rehkugler** will be our guest preacher. Nancy is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church where she served several congregations in Central New York. She retired from full time ministry in 2008 after serving the Fayetteville UMC, which is where she met Pastor Kathleen on the local Clergy Association. Nancy lives in Cortland with her husband Gerry. Nancy enjoys family gatherings, cooking, tennis, reading, and most any kind of writing, which most recently has involved lyrics to songs and anthems.

Lectionary Scripture: 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10; Psalm 48; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13
Sermon title: Rejection

Sunday, July 12 **9:30 AM**

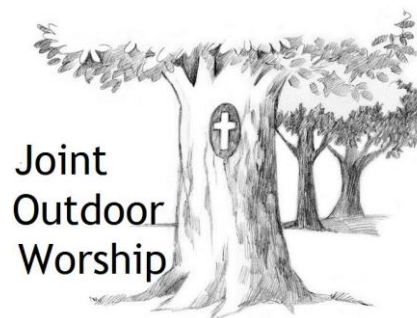
7th Sunday after Pentecost

Question: Which worship and spiritual practices bring you comfort and calm, and which stretch you beyond your comfort zone? Join us this Sunday as we explore answers.

Lectionary Scripture: 2 Sam. 6:1-5, 12b-19; Psalm 24; Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:14-29

Sunday, July 19 **9:30 AM**

8th Sunday after Pentecost



Plan to be with us this Sunday as the **Homer United Methodist Church** joins us in a worship experience on the Green. Our focus will be "Sharing in the abundance of God's gifts." Consider bring fruits and vegetables from your garden to donate to the Food Pantry or share with others. Following our time of worship we will gather under the tent for food and fellowship. A joint "pick up" choir will be led by Joe Ford. Let him know if you wish to participate.

Lectionary Scripture: 2 Samuel 7:1-14a; Psalm 89:20-37; Eph. 2:11-22; Mark 6:30-56

Sunday, July 26 **9:30 AM**

9th Sunday after Pentecost

Continuing last week's theme, we will explore how God's abundant presence sustains us and provides more than we need – food, faith, grace, salvation. We are called to respond to God's activity among us, ordering our lives in ways that proclaim and extend God's abundant gifts to others.

Lectionary Scripture: 2 Samuel 11:1-15; Psalm 14; Ephesians 3:14-21; John 6:1-21
Scripture focus: John 6:1-21

WORSHIP
SCHEDULE
for July

Deacon Worship Leader:

Darci Gumaer

Trustee Verifier:

July 5 @ 9:30 am with Communion

Ushers & Greeters –
Special Music –
Flowers – Carl Applegate
Nursery – Cindy Stout, Molly Ulrich
Coffee Hour – Clay Benedict, Elaine Olson

July 12 @ 9:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –
Special Music – Steve Jones
Flowers – Joanne Cincotta
Nursery – Kevin Cappy, Logan Schmidt
Coffee Hour – Belinda Burtner, Bonnie Haaland

July 19 @ 9:30 am on the Green

Ushers & Greeters –
Special Music – "Pick Up" Choir w/Methodists
Flowers –
Nursery – Carol Costell Corbin, Abby Elkins
Coffee Hour – Ingrid Fox, Janice Bacon

July 26 @ 9:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –
Special Music – Steve Jones
Flowers –
Nursery – Kathleen Dentes, Marleah Dentes
Coffee Hour – Sylvia Hammond, Dottie Kelley



Sign Up for Music!

During our summer worship services, we are inspired by a wide variety of vocal and instrumental

music. We invite YOU to sign up to offer music on a summer Sunday! See Joe Ford or call the office or use the sign-up sheet in the music closet.



July Birthdays

- 2 Alexander Bell
- 4 Jane Ann Fisher
- 5 Carol Agate
- 7 Elizabeth Rumsey,
Delaney Smith
- 8 Bradley Adams
- 11 Amanda Oechsle
- 15 Jenelle Pedersen
- 16 Betsy Root, Suzanne Riley
- 17 Miles Dudgeon
- 18 Brody Urban
- 19 Beverly Johnson
- 21 Russell Perkins
- 22 Phyllis Wainman
- 26 Sharon Wainman
- 31 Alex Feiszli



The Twentieth Annual Public Reading of the United States Declaration of Independence will take

place in the church sanctuary on Saturday, July 4, at 10:00 am. After a recounting of the events that led up to its adoption in 1776, those in attendance will be invited to read a short portion of the Declaration. Following this, the bells of the buildings surrounding the Homer Green will be rung. There is no charge for this event, and all, particularly children, are welcome. For more information, please call Bud or Chip Jermy at 749-4365, or send an e-mail message to cwj1@cornell.edu.