



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

Chair:

Don VanSlyke

Vice Chair:

Paula Harrington

Secretary:

Carrie Gumaer

David Barnes

Kevin Cappy

Andrea Herzog-O'Hara

Eugene Wright

2 vacancies

Board of Deacons

Chair:

Karen Dudgeon

Belinda Burtner

Joanne Cincotta

Chuck Feiszli

Darci Gumaer

Bonnie Haaland (*interim*)

Gary Harrington

Vicki Johnson

Bill Masterson

Kathy McKenna

Bonnie Smith

1 vacancy

Church Staff

Interim Minister:

Rev. Dr. Kathleen Waters

Director of

Christian Education:
vacancy

Youth Fellowship

Coordinator:

Sherri Masterson

Sexton:

Gary Harrington

Church Secretary:

Donna Piotti

Financial Secretary:

Jan Jeffers



Sunday, September 13, 2015

**9:15 AM Rally Day Breakfast
for children, youth, and all members of the
congregation**

Sunday School "Kick Off"

**10:30 Worship Service
Commissioning Leadership Team**

2015 Covenant Share Offering – New York Conference, United Church of Christ

Since 2013, individuals have been invited to contribute to a special annual offering that targets the ministries of the United Church of Christ in New York. These include such things as the assistance provided to congregations in pastoral transition, the New York School of Ministry, State Youth Event, Church Revitalization Events, Authorized Ministry Retreats, Justice Advocacy such as Black Lives Matter, and many more programs and services.

The goal for the 2015 Covenant Share Offering is \$353,000 which amounts to approximately \$10/member of the UCC New York Conference. There is a recognition that some are able to contribute more and others less. You may give online at www.uccny.org or pass along your gift to HCC and designate your check or cash to "UCC Covenant Share." A focus on Covenant Share will take place on September 13. For more information contact one of your Conference delegates, Belinda Burtner or Vicki Johnson.





Dear Homer Congregational Family,

During a recent gathering of the Boards of Trustees and Deacons we discussed how these boards can best govern with integrity, compassion and transparency. They recognized that it is challenging to provide faithful leadership, especially during times of transition, but seek to honor their commitment to the entire congregation. In an effort to improve communication, representatives will be available to respond to any questions or concerns the last Sunday of the month following the worship service (*Snack and Chat*).

I have found an article entitled, "Seeking to be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians during Times of Disagreement" to be a valuable tool for all Boards and Committees to use in their work together. The ten guidelines are listed below:

Listen before we answer. John 7:51 and Proverbs 18:13

1. Treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Christ.
2. Learn about various positions on the topic of disagreement.
3. State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding, in an effort to be sure we understand each other.

Speak the truth in love. Ephesians 4:15

4. Share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements in a spirit of love and respect in keeping with Jesus' teachings.
5. Focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people's motives, intelligence or integrity.
6. Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may more fully understand our concerns.

Maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace - Ephesians 4:3

7. Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree.
8. Seek to stay in community with each other though the discussion may be vigorous and full of tension.
9. Follow these additional guidelines when we meet in decision-making bodies: urge persons of various points of view to speak and promise to listen to these positions seriously; seek conclusions informed by our points of agreement; be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority and respect their rights of conscience; abide by the decision of the majority, and if we disagree with it and wish to change it, work for that change in ways which are consistent with these guidelines.
10. Include our disagreement in our prayers, not praying for the triumph of our viewpoints, but seeking God's grace to listen attentively, to speak clearly, and to remain open to the vision God holds for us all.

Members of your Boards are men and women who want to honor God and faithfully fulfill their duties. I invite you to join them in prayer and in practicing these guidelines so that our differences can become occasions for grace, growth and understanding.

Katherine A. Waters

Interim Pastor



The Trustees' Corner

Hi Everyone,

The Trustees are working on a lot this month. As your new treasure Andrea Hertzog-O'Hara is going through the church's finances, and we hope she will have a full handle on things by the time you read this letter. She will hopefully also have full reports in your hands by this time. If you have not received a copy and would like one, please ask a Trustee and they will get you one.

We hopefully will also have a final quote from Tom Kile, for the replacement of the front steps. When the Trustees get that final number we will **bring you wordage to vote on.**

Kevin Cappy has started to clean the manse, but could use your help to get the work done. Please give him a call and ask how you could help.

Finally I would like to bring up the subject of church communication. I apologize if it seems the Board of Trustees does not communicate to its members everything it does. I would also like to say that anything the Board of Trustees does is in the best interest of the church and its members. We are not trying to hide anything. What I'm going to ask from you is to also communicate with us by asking questions. Don't get angry because you heard something you don't like or agree with. Come to your Trustees and Deacons so you can receive the information you are seeking. Getting angry about something you might have heard without asking us questions, can only spread poison throughout the church.

Thanks!!!!
Don VanSlyke, Chair

A word from the First Religious Society Secretary, Carrie Gumaer

On Sunday, July 26, a meeting was held of the First Religious Society in the Town of Homer. During this meeting the resignation of Jean Cadwallader, Treasurer, was accepted and Andrea Herzog O'Hara was elected to complete the Treasurer's remaining term. A brief review of the current financial state was given by Andrea and Kevin Cappy gave a preliminary overview of the Steps project.



September 2015 Mission Activities and Fun Events for 7th thru 12th graders

If you are in the 7th – 12th grade, you're invited to join the Homer Congregational Church Youth Group! We *usually* meet the first and third Sundays of each month. Friends are not only welcome, but *encouraged to join in the fun!* The events are always listed in the monthly newsletter and weekly church bulletins. By attending regularly and helping with at least one fundraiser, you're invited to go on the end-of-the-year trip.

Sunday, September 13th – Rally Day!

Enjoy having breakfast with the congregation in the Russell Fellowship Room on Rally Day to kick off the new Sunday school year. Sign up for Youth Group where we will have another year full of fun events and mission activities!! *Tell your friends they are always welcome to join us!!*

Sunday, September 27th – Mini Golf (Rain or Shine!)

We will meet at the Cortland Mini Golf at 12:30 and play a game of mini golf and then walk over to the A&W for Root Beer Floats. We will make the call if it looks like rain to go to the indoor course. *Tell your friends!!!*

Save the Date: Spaghetti Dinner/Auction is November 7th.

Sherri Masterson (345-4875)
Youth Fellowship Coordinator

Transition Team Update

The Transition Team continues to move us forward in exploring “who the Homer Congregational Church is; where God intends the congregation go; and who is our neighbor?” Their efforts are a part of a larger plan to prepare the congregation for the election of a Search Committee and ultimately, the election of the next pastor.



A *Congregational Assessment* will be conducted during September and October. The first phase of this assessment will take place on **September 20** as members and friends of HCC participate in a national survey, *The US Congregational Life Survey*. *The U.S. Congregational Life Survey* is the largest and most representative profile of worshipers and their congregations ever developed in the United States. Individuals who are unable to complete the survey on September 20 may do so on September 27 following the worship service. Results of this survey will be interpreted and discussed during various small groups during the month of November.

A second phase of this assessment will take place during the month of October as we celebrate our rich heritage and those characteristics that make us unique. We will tell the congregation’s story using a Historical Time to highlight significant events in the life of the congregation and community. Included in this will be the Member Recognition Sunday, October 25.

A *Community Assessment* will be conducted to review the effectiveness of HCC’s outreach to our community. A demographic report obtained through MissionInsite will be used. MissionInsite uses information from the 2010 US Census and numerous other sources to provide current and five year projections and ten year forecast of populations and a description of households in a particular area.

Team members: Clay Benedict, Tracy Bertram, Belinda Burtner, Gary Harrington, Bill Hopkins, Laurie Leach, Bonnie Smith, Kathleen Waters, Molly Ulrich, and Kenian Ulrich

As we move forward, the results of both the Congregational and Community Assessment will be posted on our web site at www.Homercc.com.

"Snack & Chat"

Members of the Boards of Deacons and Trustees will be available in the Russell Fellowship Room following the worship service on August 30th for a time of “Snack and Chat.” Plan now to grab some refreshments and join them. They plan to be available the last Sunday of each month to increase communication among the congregation. All are welcome.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Homer Congregational Church, (United Church of Christ) is seeking an Interim Director of Christian Education. It is expected that the position will last one to two years with the IDCE eligible to apply for the permanent position. Responsibilities include: direct the Church School, promote and publicize Christian Education events; coordinate Vacation Bible School and other programs/events. This is a part-time position (~ 20 hours per week) with presence required on Sunday mornings. The balance of work time may be fulfilled on a flexible basis in consultation with the Pastor.

Qualifications: A commitment to fostering the faith of our children and youth; proven experience in children and youth education; ability to multitask and prioritize tasks and willing to promote the Opening and Affirming policy of the church.

Send résumé to Resumes@homercc.org

Recapping General Synod ...

by Rachel Ditch

General Synod 30 (GS30 for short) was one of the most informative and inspirational experiences of my ministry formation thus far. Content currently circulating in the main-stream (and not so main-stream) media about the church has it all but dead and nearly buried; congregations are older and dying out, finances are no longer secure, the church is irrelevant. Rest assured, Homer Congregational Church, that the church is anything but dead and buried, and it is anything but irrelevant.

I have prepared a full picture of General Synod as I feel it is important for the church to see not only what is happening at the national level but also how that action impacts them, the local church. Copies of this presentation are in the literature rack by the Memorial Garden Door.

2015 September Worship

Beginning on September 13 our worship service returns to the 10:30 time preceded by educational opportunities for all ages. 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, September 6 **9:30 AM**
15th Sunday after Pentecost

In addition to celebrating Holy Communion we will celebrate the sacredness of work and the worker.

The lectionary text from James teaches that partiality based on economic or social status is contrary to Christ's teachings. God has enabled the poor to be rich in faith, but the rich have often exercised their power to oppress people and keep them poor. Christians must take direct action to relieve the needs of the poor — "faith without works is dead."

Lectionary text: Prov. 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23;
Psalm 125; James 2:1-10, 11-13, 14-17,
Mark 7:24-37

Sunday, September 13 **10:30 AM**
16th Sunday after Pentecost

During our Sunday gathering we will recognize the beginning of our Sunday School Classes (Rally Day). The gospel text asks the question, "But who do you say that I am?" This question has challenged people throughout the ages. Any confusion we feel in finding an answer is not new. Jesus' first followers also found it hard to answer the question.

Lectionary Scripture: Proverbs 1:20-33,
Psalm 19; James 3:1-12; Mark 8:27-38

Sunday, September 20 **10:30 AM**
17th Sunday after Pentecost

This Sunday's gospel passage is one of those that make us feel warm and fuzzy as we think of the imagery of Jesus asking us to welcome him as we would welcome a child. But what was the place of a child in the world and time of Jesus? Why did he use a child to reveal the teaching? "How do we welcome, honor and learn from children in the midst of our congregations? Questions to ponder.

In addition, time will be allowed during the worship service to complete *the US Congregational Life* survey.

Lectionary Scripture: Proverbs 31:10-31;
Psalm 1; James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a; Mark 9:30-37

Sunday, September 27 **10:30 AM**
18th Sunday after Pentecost

In the gospel passage Jesus is clearly talking about how his followers need to change. We will explore what we need to change so we can follow the call of Jesus to "be at peace with one another?" What are the stumbling blocks to being welcomed into our congregation?

Lectionary Scripture: Esther 7:1-6, 9-10;
9:20-22; Psalm 124; James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-5

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

for September

Deacon Worship Leader:

Joanne Cincotta

Trustee Verifier:

Paula Harrington

September 6 @ 9:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –

Lector –

Flowers –

Nursery – Kevin Cappy, Abby Elkins

Coffee Hour – the Edlunds, Betty MacNeil

September 13 @ 10:30 am - Rally Day!

Ushers & Greeters –

Acolytes –

Lector –

Flowers –

Nursery – the Bertrams, Logan Schmidt

Coffee Hour – Gloria and Don Lawson

September 20 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –

Acolytes –

Lector –

Flowers –

Nursery – Janice Bacon, Molly Ulrich

Coffee Hour – Kevin and Joem Cappy

September 27 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –

Acolytes –

Lector –

Flowers –

Nursery – Terry Pedersen, Jenelle Pedersen

Coffee Hour – Bonnie Smith



Please remember our friends at the Methodist Church Food Pantry. The community need continues and we can help. Thank you.



September Birthdays

- 2 Joanne Cincotta
- 9 Marleah Dentes
- 10 Lee Benson
- 13 Beth Knapp, Matthew Banazek
- 14 Luke Morenus
- 15 Heather Benedict
- 16 David Rood
- 19 Shannon Tinkham
- 20 Harley DeShane
- 22 Rob Rumsey
- 23 Scott Lawrence
- 24 Luke Pedersen, Kurt Schmidt
- 26 Les Wainman
- 28 Jan Jeffers


A Special
THANK YOU


Don and Gloria Lawson want to thank the congregation for their love and support after the passing of our beloved daughter, Donna. Your cards and phone calls have profound meaning at a time like this. Also, a special thanks to Rev. Kathleen for her support and counsel.

With love,

Don and Gloria

Wanted: Bridge players!

Our Tuesday bridge group needs some more players. We play for about two hours on Tuesdays. We have three couples and several single players, but when folks are away, or have appointments (which we all seem to have more of), we can't always get two tables. Our group is very friendly and quite informal, so if you've not played in years, or never learned but would like to, come join us. We have a lot of fun!



Jan Jeffers & Dottie Kelley