



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:*

Jim McKenna

*Co-Chair:*

Paula Harrington

*Secretary:*

Kevin Cappy

Chuck Feiszli

Andrea Herzog

Becky Jones

Eugene Wright

2 vacancies

### **Board of Deacons**

Tracy Bertram

Belinda Burtner

Joanne Cincotta

Karen Dudgeon

Darci Gumaer

Bonnie Haaland

Gary Harrington

Doris Hoffmann

Vicki Johnson

Bill Masterson

Kathy McKenna

Anne Wingard

### **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

# February Worship and Welcome to Lent

## Sunday, February 7 at 10:30 am Transfiguration Sunday



Transfiguration Sunday is the last Sunday after the Epiphany (January 6) and celebrates the mountaintop experience of Peter, James, and John as they glimpse the mystery of Jesus' glorious relationship with God.

Scripture: Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99;  
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:1; Luke 9:28-36

## Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper February 9 at 5:30 pm



### SHROVE TUESDAY

Join us on Tuesday, February 9, at 5:30 pm, for Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. Pancakes, sausages, doughnuts, fruit cocktail and more will be served. And wear your sneakers for the highly competitive pancake races! (Pancake racers from age 2 to 100 are welcome!) Did you know that the expression "shrove" comes from the word "to confess?"

Pancakes are associated with this word because they used up rich foods before fasting during the season of Lent. Come let us feast together as we prepare for the season of Lent!!!



## Lent begins

## Ash Wednesday February 10 at 7:00 pm



We begin the Lenten season with an Ash Wednesday service. Ashes have a long tradition in biblical and church traditions and during our gathering ashes will be available.

Scriptures: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17;  
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:1-10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21.

## Wednesday Evening Lenten Services at 6:00 pm



LENTEN  
SERVICE  
SCHEDULE

For hundreds of years, Christians have set aside Lent as a special time for prayer, reflection and a deepening of their spiritual life. Join us during this Lenten Season for a brief gathering in the sanctuary each **Wednesday evening from 6:00 – 6:30** (February 17, 24, March 2, 9, 16) for quiet reflection, simple music and Holy Communion. Together we can deepen our community, renew our faith and strengthen our hope. All are welcome.



## *Transition Team Update*

With joy and anticipation, the Transition Team presented their “findings” to the congregation on January 17. Copies of their report, both the main report and appendixes, can be picked up at

church. If you would like a report mailed to you please let the church office know and a set can be sent to you.

As indicated in the report, the Transition Team identified the following four congregational pursuits. Details of these pursuits can be found in the Team’s report:

- *We are seeking to be a community caring for each other.*
- *We are seeking to be a community growing in our faith.*
- *We are seeking to be a community participating in outreach.*
- *We are seeking to be a community maximizing our resources.*

Next the Transition Team and the Church Council will be soliciting input on developing an Action Plan to move these pursuits forward. The next meeting of the Church Council will take place on **February 23** and they hope to appoint four, short term, Work Groups.

These Work Groups will review the Congregational Mission Statement as well as information gathered by the Transition Team and, in consultation with appropriate Boards, Committees, and individuals, make specific and realistic goals for the developing the accomplishment of these endeavors. Each group will have a convener, note taker, and Transition Team member.

The Work Group will be responsible for reporting to the Church Council their measurable goals along with a timetable to complete those goals. Some goals may be scheduled to be completed immediately, some within the next year, some within the next three years (after new pastor starts) and although some goals may be identified, the Work Group may determine that no action can be taken at this time.

It is hoped that each Work Group can accomplish its task by the end of March so that clear measurable goals can be delineated as the Pastor Search Committee begins their search. It is easy to become overwhelmed by the challenge ahead but our calling is to be faithful to God’s guidance, whether the actions are large or small.

Anthropologist Loren Eiseley tells a story about an elderly man who observed a young man on the beach at dawn. Littered by the retreating tide, the beach contained thousands of starfish. One by one, the young man stooped down and threw them back into the sea. Going to the young man, the senior gentleman asked why he was pitching the starfish back to their natural home. “If left exposed,” the young man said, “the sun would kill them.” “But the beach extends for miles with thousands of starfish,” the older man protested. “Do you think you’ll make a difference?” Looking at the starfish in his hand, the young man exclaimed, “To this one, it makes a difference.” (Loren Eiseley, *The Unexpected Universe* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1969), 67ff.

And finally, as indicated in this newsletter, the Church Council is moving forward with gathering names to present to the congregation for the election of a pastoral search committee. It is hoped that many would give input to this selection process.



## *Mission Moment*

The Cortland County Council of Churches is one of the organizations supported by the Homer Congregational Church. On February 21, Rev. Vicki Johnson will offer a Mission Moment about

the Council's ministry. She will also be available during coffee hour to answer questions. This should be a great opportunity to hear about the "return" we receive for our financial investment in the Council of Churches. This will be the first of several "mission moments" to help us understand that, through our support, we are very much in ministry beyond our own walls.

## Stephen Ministry Update

On Saturday, January 16, Stephen Ministry training began for eight lay people from our congregation. This training for caring ministry was developed by Stephen Ministries of St. Louis, Missouri. Using it, congregations all over the world have implemented lasting programs of lay caring ministry.

Over the next few months our Stephen Minister trainees will receive extensive training in Christian caring skills. Some of the areas they will cover during the training include listening effectively, dealing with feelings, confidentiality, using the resources of Christianity, being assertive, and a number of topics dealing with specific life crises. Throughout, the training will emphasize the theology of caring for the whole person.

Following the training these men and women will be commissioned as Stephen Ministers to carry out ministries of caring within our congregation and community with people experiencing such life problems as grief, depression, hospitalization, loneliness, and other life crises. Working under the guidance and supervision of Pastor Kathleen, the Stephen Ministers will extend the capacity of our congregation to care.

The people who are attending this training and committing to two years as Stephen Ministers are Leslie Wright, Sylvia Hammond, Lynn Olcott, Belinda Burtner, Barbara Wright, Sherri Masterson, Peter Wright and Bill Masterson. Please keep these people in your thoughts and prayers over the next several weeks as they receive this training.

If you have any questions about Stephen Ministry training and caregiving, please feel free to contact one of our Stephen Leaders:

- Belinda Burtner (607) 756-2454
- Bill Masterson (607) 345-4874



## The Trustees' Corner

Hi Everyone,

Another year is over, and a great year is about to begin. I have completed my time with you and Jim McKenna and Chuck Feiszli are joining the board. Officers have been picked and voted on. Jim McKenna is the new Chair of Trustees. Paula Harrington is still the Co Chair. Kevin Cappy is the new Secretary and Andrea will remain our Treasurer.

There are two spots that need to be filled. If you are interested, contact any of the Trustees or call Bill Masterson of the Nominating Committee. You have a great group of people working for you, please communicate with them. Thanks again for eight great years on the board and everyone's kind words.

Love and Thanks,  
Donald VanSlyke



## Senior Fellowship Club

**Next meeting  
February 9 at 2:00**

The Senior Fellowship Club will resume its regular schedule of meetings on Tuesday, February 9th at 2:00 pm in the RFR. Jaff Harris will present a talk entitled "Growing Up In Homer". Jaff previously presented the talk to the Historical Society, where it was very well received. We'll also be celebrating Valentine's Day albeit a few days early. Mark your calendars and we'll see you then.

Dottie



*If there is a severe weather forecast which would make traveling hazardous, HCC services and events may be canceled and rescheduled for another date.*

*A decision to cancel will normally be communicated no later than 3 hours before the scheduled time. Notice will be sent through a congregational email and the church's outgoing phone message. Also, people can call Kathleen at 315-380-0744 to confirm a cancellation plan.*



This year's Souper Bowl of Caring will be on Sunday, February 7, 2016. Youth Fellowship will be collecting either a can of soup to benefit The Methodist Church Food Pantry and/or \$1 bills to be given to the YWCA's Aid to Victims of Violence program. Soup pots will be located in the sanctuary to collect your donations.



To Homer Congregational Church:

The Annual Meetings of both the Religious Society and the Congregation were held on January 24 and we heard of the many ways God's ministry and mission was carried out in 2015. During our gathering many individual were elected to serve as officers, board and committee members. I invite all of us to keep in our prayers these individuals, especially our new church moderator, Barbara Wright. See the list below:

*Katherine A. Waters*

Interim Pastor

## Officers, Boards, Committees

(\*) indicates second term

### Officers

Moderator:	Barbara Wright (2019)
Church Clerk:	Jan Jeffers (2019)
Financial Secretary:	Beverly Berry (2019)
Treasurer (First Religious Society):	Andrea Herzog-O'Hara
Treasurer (Homer Cong Church):	vacant
Historian:	vacant
Auditor:	Nancy Richards (2017)
Stewardship Chair:	Cindy Stout (2019)
Endowment Fund Auditor:	Andrea Herzog-O'Hara (2017)

### Board of Trustees

<u>Term ending 2019</u>	<u>Term ending 2018</u>	<u>Term ending 2017</u>
Paula Harrington	Eugene Wright (*)	Andrea Herzog-O'Hara
Charles Feiszli	James McKenna	Kevin Cappy
vacant	vacant	Becky Jones (*)

### Board of Deacons

<u>Term ending 2019</u>	<u>Term ending 2018</u>	<u>Term ending 2017</u>
Kathleen McKenna (*)	Gary Harrington	Karen Dudgeon (*)
Anne Wingard	Bonnie Haaland	Joanne Cincotta
Doris Hoffmann	Vicki Johnson (*)	Bill Masterson
Darci Gumaer (*)	Belinda Burtner (*)	Tracy Bertram

### Endowment Committee

<u>Term ending 2019</u>	<u>Term ending 2018</u>	<u>Term ending 2017</u>
Becky Jones	David Barnes	Les Wainman (*)
Lee Benson	Anna McConnell	Carl Applegate

**Memorial Committee**  
(Deacon - D; Trustees - T)

Term ending 2019  
Jan Jeffers (\*)  
Bonnie Haaland (D)

Term ending 2018  
Janice Bacon (\*)  
Beverly Johnson (\*)

Term ending 2017  
Kurt Schmidt (\*)  
Kevin Cappy (T)

**Christian Education Ministry Committee**

Term ending 2019  
Ingrid Fox (\*)  
Elke Wright  
Laurie Leach

Term ending 2018  
Tracy Bertram  
Carol Costel Corbin  
vacant

Term ending 2017  
Karen Dudgeon (\*)  
Gwendolyn Hayne (\*)  
Jenelle Pedersen

**Worship and Music Committee**

Term ending 2019  
Chuck Feiszli (\*)  
Pat Buchholz (\*)

Term ending 2018  
Sylvia Hammond (\*)  
Jim Ulrich (\*)

Term ending 2017  
Ingrid Fox (\*)  
Pat Signor (\*)

**Stewardship Committee**

Term ending 2019  
Gary Harrington (\*)  
vacant

Term ending 2018  
Cindy Stout  
Kurt Schmidt

Term ending 2017  
Bill Masterson (\*)  
Susan Benedict

**Delegates** (all one year terms)

Susquehanna Association: Belinda Burtner, Jan Jeffers, 2 vacancies  
New York Conference: Belinda Burtner, Peter Wright, Rev. Vicki Johnson  
Cortland County Council of Churches: Miles and Karen Dudgeon

**Pastoral Relations Committee**  
(At large - AL; Deacon - D; Pastor's choice -PC)

James McKenna (AL)  
Cindy Stout (AL)

Belinda Burtner (D)  
William Hopkins (PC)

**Nominating Committee**

Term ending 2019  
Lori Schmidt  
Sherri Masterson

Term ending 2018  
Tracy Bertram (\*)  
Patricia Buchholz (\*)

Term ending 2017  
Bill Masterson (\*)  
Russell Pedersen



**February 2016**  
**Mission Activities and Fun Events**  
**for 7th thru 12th graders**

If you are in the 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> 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, February 7th - Souper Bowl**

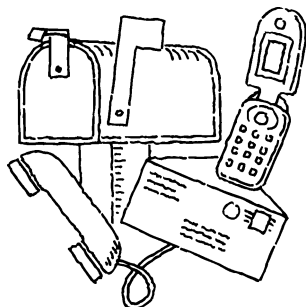
We will meet in the church kitchen at 8:30 am to make subs. We will also be collecting dollar bills and canned goods to support Aid to Victims of Violence and the Homer Methodist Food Pantry.

**Sunday, February 28th - Games Tournament**

You know what that means....Chocolate Prizes!! Come have fun while competing or just watching others playing ping pong, Foosball and air hockey. We will meet from 12:30 to 2:00 in Jones Hall. Pizza will be provided. *Tell your friends!!!*

Sherri Masterson (345-4875)  
 Youth Fellowship Coordinator

Church Directory Update Coming



We are updating our Church Contact Directory for 2016. If you have new contact information, please let the office know. If you would like to list your email address and/or cell phone number, also please contact the office.

Recap of January 2016  
 Deacons' meeting:

- Working with the Trustees, the Deacons voted to cover the final 2015 short-fall of \$1,982. We ended 2015 with the budget balanced.
- We approved the contract for the Interim Pastor. Karen Dudgeon signed it on our behalf. Deep appreciation was expressed to Pastor Kathleen for the good work she has accomplished since joining us last February.
- Discussed and approved the 2016 budget.
- Finalized our presentation for Annual Meeting.
- Discussed preparations for Lent. A special Lenten study is being planned - timing and format to be decided.
- Our Stephen Ministry trainers reported that the first class will begin on January 16, with 8 people being trained.
- Working with the current membership list, the Deacons are beginning the process of contacting members who we have not seen in a long time.



Christian Education Ministry is once again collecting cans and bottles. They can be deposited in the bin in the kitchen or dropped off directly at Quick Stop (Rt. 281 Cortland; across from SUNY Cortland West Campus Apartments). At Quick Stop, the deposit can be added to our account, "Homer Congregational Church Youth."

## Pastoral Search Committee to Form

We are making progress!!!

Now that the Transition Team has completed the first phase of study, the Church Council is preparing to name a Search Committee to continue the process of finding our next pastor. We need your help! Your input will be greatly appreciated.

The Search Committee will:

1. Utilize the information gathered from the Transition Team's mission study to create a church profile that describes who we are, where we want to be, and what sort of pastoral leadership we are seeking.
2. Meet with Rev. Marsha Williams, our Associate Conference Minister, and in consultation with her...
3. ...Receive and read the ministerial profiles of pastoral candidates.
4. Interview promising-looking candidates.
5. Keep those profiles completely confidential until a candidate or candidates are chosen to present to the congregation for the final decision.

The Search Committee will consist of seven to nine people who represent the demographics of our congregation. You must be willing and able to meet regularly and work for consensus. This is vitally important work, and although the task may seem daunting, the rewards are great.

If you would like to volunteer yourself or recommend someone else (church members only) to serve on the Search Committee, please complete and return the following form to the church office, Barbara Wright, moderator, or Kathleen Waters, interim pastor by **February 15**. Thank you.

-Barbara Wright, Moderator ([revbarbwright@gmail.com](mailto:revbarbwright@gmail.com) or 607-423-0400)

**Homer Congregational Church Search Committee Nominations**  
**Please consider the following person(s) to serve on the Search Committee**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information including email address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information including email address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information including email address** \_\_\_\_\_

# WORSHIP

## SCHEDULE

### for February

#### Deacon Worship Leader:

Joanne Cincotta

#### Trustee Verifier:

#### February 7 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –  
Acolytes – John Gumaer, Elijah Smith  
Flowers –  
Nursery – Cindy Stout, Heather O'Hara  
Coffee Hour –

#### February 14 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –  
Acolytes – Kyle Wright, Jack Bertram  
Flowers –  
Nursery – Susan Benedict, Grace Wright  
Coffee Hour – Leslie and Gene Wright

#### February 21 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –  
Acolytes – Heather O'Hara, Grace Wright  
Flowers –  
Nursery – the Dudgeons, Jenelle Pedersen  
Coffee Hour – Kathy McKenna

#### February 28 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –  
Acolytes – Maddie Dermott, Justin Dermott  
Flowers –  
Nursery – Sue Urban, Marissa Urban  
Coffee Hour – Nita Baldwin & Gwen Hayne



## February Birthdays

2 Lloyd Gmoser  
3 Gordon Johnson,  
Matthew Dentes  
4 Gwen Cappy  
8 Jane Morenus  
11 Susan Urban,  
Dorothy Hopkins  
13 Heather Miller  
15 Jaffrey Harris, Jacob Morenus  
16 Cassandra Mead  
17 Christine Watkins  
19 Anne Barnes, Grace Dewey  
20 Susan Weatherby  
21 Christina Cincotta  
24 Betty MacNeill  
26 Dale Halstead  
27 Alexis Settineri  
28 Rebecca Jones



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Dottie