



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

*Vice-Chair:*

Paula Harrington

*Secretary:*

Becky Jones

Kevin Cappy

Chuck Feiszli

Andrea Herzog

Eugene Wright

2 vacancies

### **Board of Deacons**

*Chair:*

Karen Dudgeon

*Vice-Chair:*

Bonnie Haaland

Tracy Bertram

Belinda Burtner

Joanne Cincotta

Darci Gumaer

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

## *An Invitation to Commissioning*

On Sunday May 15, our congregation will commission our Stephen Ministers. Throughout history, when God has called people to special ministry, members of their community have commissioned them for the important new work they are taking on. Now we invite you to help carry on that biblical tradition by being a part of commissioning those who have responded to God's call to be part of our congregation's Stephen Ministry.



Our Stephen Ministers have already completed 50 hours of training to equip them for their task. On May 15<sup>th</sup> we will pray for them, and send them out to minister, asking for God's blessing and the Holy Spirit's wisdom and power. This commissioning service offers an opportunity to show our support for this ministry. Our Stephen Ministers will be depending on our support in the months ahead as they assume the duties of their ministry. How can we help?

First of all, we can pray for our Stephen Leaders, our Stephen Ministers, and their care receivers. This ministry calls for both time and effort. At times they may feel tired, discouraged, or convinced that they are not accomplishing anything. The assurance of our prayers and appreciation will help them keep moving forward. We can tell them how much their hard work means to us, tell others how much we value our Stephen Ministry, and focus attention on our Stephen Ministers to bless and affirm them in special ways -- as we do with our commissioning service.

We can become involved in this ministry in many ways. Some of us may recognize a call to use our special gifts in this ministry and may apply to be a Stephen Minister or Stephen Leader. Others may accept the care of a Stephen Minister. We can be ministers of referral, watching for people in need and suggesting a Stephen Minister's care. We all can give our enthusiastic support by keeping our Stephen Ministry before us and by praying for and affirming those who have answered God's call to serve in this way.

As we commission our newly trained Stephen Ministers let us thank God for all that they will bring to the Homer Congregational Church in providing care to others, and let us promise them our daily prayer and support as we send them out to minister among us.

If you believe that you would benefit from the care of one of our Stephen Ministers please call Pastor Kathleen, or one of our Stephen Leaders. If you know someone from our congregation who would benefit from the care of a Stephen Minister, ask that person for permission to have one of our Stephen Leaders contact them.

Our Stephen Leaders are:

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



To Homer Congregational Church:

On April 10 the congregation's Pastor Search Committee was commissioned for their task ahead. Below is a copy of those promises they made and our prayers/covenant offered. Please continue to keep them in your prayers.

Serving Christ together,

*Kathleen A. Waters*

Interim Pastor

**COMMISSIONING PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE:** Bev Berry, Tracy Bertram, Miles Dudgeon, Chuck Feiszli, Dorothy Hopkins, Kathy McKenna, Lori Schmidt, Jim Ulrich.

Search Committee Members Covenant:

We, who are serving on the Pastor Search Committee promise to perform faithfully the vital task of searching for a new pastor. We pledge, with God's guidance and your prayers, to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit in all we do, say, and decide.

We will endeavor:

- to establish a harmonious working relationship within our committee;
- to maintain consistent attendance at our Search Committee meetings;
- to be open and patient listeners to each other and to the congregation;
- to listen carefully to your hopes and dreams as we consult with you, the members, in the development of a description of our church community and the style of pastoral leadership we seek;
- to maintain strict confidentiality in all we read, say, and hear—protecting both the privacy of each other and of potential candidates;
- to review all information forms with open minds and hearts, treating all candidates fairly and justly;
- to seek decisions not made by majority rule, but by the coming together of minds, hearts, and souls in a consensus that will build a firm foundation for the effective future mission and ministry of this church.

Congregational Covenant:

**We recognize that the work of our Pastor Search Committee is a difficult assignment and will take much effort. We pledge, as a gathered community of faith, to be patient with you and to respect your need to be confidential in your task. We pray for you and offer our support and words of encouragement through this time. These things we promise in the hope and belief that you will be obedient to the guidance of the spirit as you seek a new pastor to minister with us. Amen.**

#### **Pastoral Care**

Pastor Kathleen's time in the office varies each week, but she is available to visit those with needs. Please feel free to contact her via email: [pastor@homercc.org](mailto:pastor@homercc.org) or via her cell phone: (315) 380-0744.

## The Deacons' Bench

**Many hands make light work.**- John Heywood, Dramatist (1497-1580).

On April 3, 2016 at a special meeting of the Homer Congregational Church the slate of HCC Pastoral Search members was approved and Andrea Hertzog was approved as Treasurer for the Homer Congregational Church.

### PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Committee was commissioned during service on April 3, 2016. Their first meeting is scheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup> with United Church of Christ Associate Conference Minister for Clergy and Authorized Ministry Concerns Rev. Dr. Marsha Williams. Please keep them in your prayers as they begin this important work on behalf of the church.

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Homer Congregational Church and First United Methodist Church are working together in connection with Chautauqua to produce a new and exciting format for Vacation Bible School. VBS will be August 1-7, 2016.

VBS will be

in the morning on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 9-12 pm. Then on Thursday and Friday VBS will be later in the day from 5-7pm which will include a lite meal. In addition to children activities, in the evening the program will incorporate an Adult Chautauqua track. There will be something for the whole family. Saturday will have a Family Fun Run and bounce house. The week culminates in a Sunday Community Worship under the tent at 11:00.

Carli Clementi has been hired as the Child Care Coordinator. The children have really taken to her.

Busy Bags now available for children during service. They are located at the front and back of the sanctuary in easy reach for the children. Just ask an usher if you need one.



### MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Pastor Kathleen and Deacons continue go through the Active Membership Roll, contacting members by phone. We are reconnecting with members and reconfirming membership in the Homer Congregational Church.

### PERSONNEL UPDATE

With input from the Deacons, Pastor Kathleen has updated the Church Secretary Job description. Both Deacons and Trustees have approved the job description. The Personnel Committee will review and post the Church Administrator Position.

### SNACK & CHAT

Karen Dudgeon and Jim McKenna continue to hold Snack & Chats on communion Sundays. Please bring your questions, concerns and joys. Hey, we want to hear from you!

**Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success .-** Henry Ford

### Are You Graduating?

If you know someone who is graduating from high school, trade school, or college, please let us know. We'd love to hear about their plans and share them in next month's newsletter.



The Deacons will honor all graduates in worship on June 19. Please contact Donna in the office by Sunday May 15 by phone: 749-2604 or by email: office@homercc.org.



## May 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, May 22<sup>nd</sup> – Help Bridges For Kids Program 12:30 to 2:30**

We will help Sara Earl make costumes for kids in the Bridges for Kids program who are walking in the June Dairy Parade.

#### **Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, May 29<sup>th</sup> Old Forge Trip**

We will stay at Niccolls Memorial in Old Forge....more details to come!

Sherri Masterson (345-4875)  
Youth Fellowship Coordinator

---

### The Memory Cafe

Third Tuesday of every month,  
10:30 am until noon

The Memory Cafe is located in the old Railroad Station on Central Avenue in Cortland. If you have a family member, or know someone who is caring for a loved one with memory loss, this is a place where you can go to enjoy social activities, get support and just relax. Snacks and coffee are available. For more information, contact Bill Hopkins at [william.hopkins@cortland.edu](mailto:william.hopkins@cortland.edu).



## The Trustees' Corner

The Board of Trustees gathered on Tuesday evening, April 19, for the monthly board meeting and, with Pastor Waters' spiritual guidance, continued to make progress on a variety of church issues. The board has been communicating with the Board of Deacons on a number of personnel issues. Financial summaries are now in the bulletin and newsletter to help us all track our resources. The following are highlights of the meeting:

- With the pending retirements of our Donna Piotti and Sherri Masterson, the Trustees and Deacons have been working to celebrate their service and to revise job descriptions and fill the Church Administrator and Director of Christian Education positions. We've also hired Carli Clementi as our Child Care Coordinator – welcome her when you see her.
- A Communications Committee was formed and will jointly manage information and technology with the Board of Deacons.
- Preparations for Holiday in Homer (July 16<sup>th</sup>) and an open church event with the Landmark Society (June 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>) are under way and we would appreciate any help you can provide. See Paula Harrington, Kevin Cappy, or any of the Trustees.
- Work on the front steps is being planned for June.
- We continue to streamline the policies of the Board and work closely with the Deacons to support our mission.

We continue to consider various fund raisers and opportunities for outreach; your ideas are welcome. Our building is a wonderful place that the board is keeping in good condition. Please report any problems to a Trustee or the Sexton. Karen Dudgeon and I are available for Snack and Chat after service on Communion Sundays, but also find me or any of the other Trustees any time, if you have questions or want to bring up issues for the board to consider.

Jim McKenna, Chair

# RETIREMENT

Transition seems to be central to our congregational life and another change at the Homer Congregational Church will take place in the months ahead. **Donna Piotti** and **Sherri Masterson** will retire at the end of May, Donna as our Church Secretary and Sherri as our Youth Fellowship Coordinator.

Donna began her service in January of 2007 and during this time she has faithfully supported the congregation through the changing of staff; ever shifting calendar; and being the pleasant voice answering our phone. Throughout this time she has been the steady anchor.

Sherri has been serving our youth since September of 2001. For the last fifteen years our youth have been blessed by a steady and supportive leader. She has worked with our youth on countless mission endeavors; provided meaningful fellowship activities; and ensured opportunities for spiritual growth.

In the days ahead please keep Sherri and Donna in your prayer and wish them Godspeed in the next chapter of their lives. We will honor them with a special celebration on May 22.

Knowing of Sherri's upcoming retirement, the two Boards have adjusted the Director of Christian Education position description to be inclusive of our youth and it is hoped that a new Director of Christian Education will be hired this summer.

The Personnel Committee and Boards have updated the Church Secretary position description and are receiving resumes to fill this administrative position as soon as possible. An advertisement for the position is below and a complete job description is on our web site.

For more information please contact any members of the Personnel Committee: Jim McKenna, Paula Harrington, Karen Dudgeon, and Kathleen Waters.

*The Homer Congregational Church, 28 South Main Street, Homer NY 13077, seeks a Church Administrator.*

*Responsibilities include: provide communication and administrative support to an active congregation; interface with numerous groups using the facilities; provide office support to the pastor. Normal duties are performed in the church facility but some duties may require local travel. This is a part-time position, hourly wage based on experience. Average 12 hours per week.*

*Qualifications: Extensive knowledge of Microsoft Office and the ability to learn and use current computer applications; competent in the use of social media; aptitude to efficiently use office resources; ability to multitask and prioritize responsibilities; have excellent organizational and communication skills; handle sensitive information in a confidential manner; valid driver's license; comfortable with working in a Christian environment and willing to learn the governance of the United Church of Christ.*

*Send résumé to [resumes@homercc.org](mailto:resumes@homercc.org) by May 10, 2016. Job description available on our web site at [www.homercc.com](http://www.homercc.com).*

## UCC Strengthen the Church

During May, our church participates in the UCC mission "Strengthen the Church." Strengthen The Church (STC) is a special mission offering to re-imagine and build the future of the UCC. Shared at the conference and national levels, STC largely supports youth ministries and full-time leaders for new churches in parts of the country where the UCC voice has not been heard.



As God calls our congregations to be the "church" in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. STC funds will also be used to award grants to help congregations communicate the "God is still speaking," message. Most congregations will receive the STC offering on Pentecost Sunday, May 15, 2016.



## Senior Fellowship Club

**Next meeting  
May 10 at 2:00**

It was a lovely spring-like day when the Senior Fellowship Club held its meeting on April 12th. We were delighted to see some of our group back from Florida. We began with the reading of a prayer written by a 15-year-old student from Minnesota who received an A+ for his entry entitled "A New Lord's Prayer". It made us all sit up and take notice as he lamented all the happenings taking place in his school every day. We discussed a few historical events which had taken place on April 12th, such as the bombing of Fort Sumter precipitating the Civil War in 1861 and the death of FDR on April 12th in 1945 before the end of World War II. We also shared some jokes contributed by Jaff Harris and Gwen Hayne.

Our always eagerly anticipated refreshment time was next, and we all thoroughly enjoyed the "delectable" cookies provided by the Schuhles (Jake is the baker according to Betsy). Along with the cookies, we had ice cream with a choice of strawberry or chocolate topping --absolutely scrumptious. A million thanks to the Schuhles and to Gwen Hayne, Nita Baldwin, Pat Signor and Shirley Osterhoudt for their help in the kitchen and with clean-up.

Yours truly was in charge of the program and presented a review of our National Parks, their history, the establishment of The National Park Service, and how our parks are endangered today. This summer in August marks the 100th anniversary of our National Park Service and this centennial is drawing much attention. They are our most precious, natural, cultural and historic landmarks. These national treasures were hard won. There was much debate about whether the natural resources of these lands should be managed for economic gain or preserved for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people. How lucky we were to have far-sighted people who opted for preservation. Notable among them was Teddy Roosevelt.

One hundred years ago in 1916, President Woodrow Wilson and Congress created The National Park Service (NPS), a single agency empowered to manage the parks and oversee their

expansion. In 1933 FDR signed an order making the NPS responsible for all federally owned parks, monuments, military sites, historical sites and buildings etc. thereby substantially increasing the areas under the supervision of the National Park Service. Every successive U.S. president has added even more units of responsibility to the NPS, and today we have 59 national parks plus the additional units bringing the total to 408 areas over which the NPS has oversight.

Current threats to our National Parks include adjacent development and its impact on water quality, air pollution, and wildlife, foreign invader species, climate change and transportation difficulties. With more than 280 million visitors each year, it is clear that vegetation, animals and the environment do suffer due to the effect of human presence within their habitats. The most significant issue, however, is a 500 million dollar shortfall in the National Park Service's operating budget. The National Parks Conservation Association and its members are trying to inspire a grassroots response to defend our parks and preserve our nation's greatest legacy. They are working hard to convince a reluctant Congress that all parks must be adequately funded.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 10th in the RFR. Jan Jeffers will be our special guest and will present a program about Homer in the 1800's. Mark your calendars and we'll see you there.

Dottie Kelley



Cortland Regional Medical Center (CRMC) is looking for volunteers to join the Spiritual Care Program. Volunteers will receive upfront and ongoing training. CRMC is looking for people who are able to be respectful of, and comfortable working with, people of diverse cultures, traditions and backgrounds. Being able to provide compassionate listening, maintain confidentiality, be part of a team, and offer acceptance without judgement are the most valued qualities. Please contact Chaplain Kate O'Neal at CRMC 607-428-5068 [koneal@cortlandregional.org](mailto:koneal@cortlandregional.org) to learn more.

## May 2016 Worship

Miss a Sunday and want to review the bulletin? You can find weekly bulletins on our website: <http://www.homercc.com/resources/>. We believe that children of all ages have a place in worship and in the life of the church. Children's bulletins and "Busy Bags" are available.

**Sunday, May 1** **10:30 am**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter - Holy Communion**



THE EARTH HAS  
 YIELDED ITS  
 INCREASE;  
 GOD, OUR GOD,  
 HAS BLESSED US.  
 PSALM 67:6

The Reverend **Rick Cowles**, former pastor of Homer Congregational Church will be joining Pastor Kathleen in leading our worship this Sunday. After completing his work at HCC Rick served as an associate conference minister here in the New York Conference, and most recently as interim conference minister in the Maine Conference. Plan to be with us to welcome Rick back.

Sermon title will be "Begging the Question."  
 Lectionary Scripture: Psalm 67; Acts 16:9-15;  
 John 14:23-29

**Sunday, May 8** **10:30 am**  
**7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter**  
**Ascension Sunday and Mother's Day**

Ascension Sunday marks the day on which Jesus went to the Mount of Olives with his disciples and ascended to heaven before their eyes. The ascension is a witness and guarantee of our own bodily resurrection, as well as an invitation for us to set our hearts and minds "on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1-2).

Lectionary Scripture: Acts 9:1-6; Psalm 30;  
 Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19

**Sunday, May 15** **10:30 am**  
**Pentecost Sunday**  
**Stephen Ministers' Commissioning**

According to the story of Pentecost, many nationalities were represented in the crowd that listened to the disciples preach the good news that day, but they all heard the message in their own language. Pentecost is a time to hear the message in our "own language" and to consider what participation in God's Shalom means for us. Join us and wear red!!!



Lectionary Scripture: Acts 2:1-21; Romans 8:14-17; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; John 14:8-17

**Sunday, May 22** **10:30 am**  
**Trinity Sunday**

On this Sunday we will reflect on the character and mission of God and celebrate and give thanks for the service of Sherri Masterson and Donna Piotti.

Lectionary Scriptures: Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31; Psalm 8; Romans 5:1-5; John 16:12-15

**Sunday, May 29** **10:30 am**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

During our worship on this Sunday we will embrace the four areas we are endeavoring to grow as a community: caring for each other; growing in our faith; participating in outreach; maximizing our resources.





# WORSHIP SCHEDULE

for May

**Deacon Worship Leader:**

Darci Gumaer and Tracy Bertram

**May 1 @ 10:30 am**

Ushers & Greeters –  
 Liturgist – Jean Cadwallader  
 Acolytes – Kyle Wright, Jack Bertram  
 Flowers – Becky Jones  
 Nursery – Sheila Shea & Phil Zollweg, Grace Wright  
 Coffee Hour – Dora Jones, Becky Jones

**May 8 @ 10:30 am**

Ushers & Greeters –  
 Liturgist – the Dudgeon family  
 Acolytes – Maddie Dermott, Justin Dermott  
 Flowers –  
 Nursery – Susan Benedict, Abby Elkins  
 Coffee Hour – the Deacons

**May 15 @ 10:30 am**

Ushers & Greeters –  
 Liturgist – the Ulrich family  
 Acolytes – Caoimhe Dudgeon, Sophia Wright  
 Flowers –  
 Nursery – the Dudgeons, Jenelle Pedersen  
 Coffee Hour – Bev and Gordon Johnson

**May 22 @ 10:30 am**

Ushers & Greeters –  
 Liturgist –  
 Acolytes – Abby Elkins, Elijah Smith  
 Flowers –  
 Nursery – Sherri Masterson, John Gumaer  
 Coffee Hour – Pat Buchholz

**May 29 @ 10:30 am**

Ushers & Greeters –  
 Liturgist – Jim McKenna  
 Acolytes – Heather O'Hara, Grace Wright  
 Flowers –  
 Nursery – Carol Costell Corbin, Abby Elkins  
 Coffee Hour – Dottie Green, Gwen Hayne



## May Birthdays

- 1 Logan Schmidt
- 2 Belinda Burtner,  
Shannon (Wainman) West
- 3 Phillip Rumsey
- 4 Nancy Richards
- 6 Alfonse "Furby" Gumaer
- 7 Bill Masterson
- 11 John Gumaer, Carol DeShane
- 16 Esther Twentyman, Lori Schmidt,  
Leslie Wright
- 18 Elizabeth Etz, Maria Urban
- 20 Sylvia Hammond, Emily Lawrence
- 22 Bill Hopkins
- 23 Andrew Leach
- 24 Luke Bertram, Alexander Bertram
- 26 Mary Reif
- 29 Matthew Pelowski,  
Arthur Allen, Elizabeth Allen
- 31 Bennett Kraus

---

**From the Treasurer:**

Operating Income to 3-31-16: \$51,244,  
24% of budget  
 Operating Expenses to 3-31-16: \$47,106,  
22% of budget

---



*A big thank you from the senior high Sunday school class for all of the support we received for the Coffee House Benefit!!! Together with the Homer Methodist Food Pantry, we were able to help feed local families in need through your generosity!!*