



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:

Rachel Ditch

Sexton:

Gary Harrington

Church Administrator:

Sheila Shea

P.R.E.P. Event

(Providing Resources and Essentials to help Prepare School-aged children for School)

Many families in our community struggle at the start of a new school year to provide their children with the supplies and essentials needed to start school on the right foot. The average cost of a school supply list is \$25-\$60 per child.

This can be an extra burden for families that may already be struggling to make ends meet. Many schools and organizations already collect school supplies such as pencils, crayons, notebooks and backpacks to hand out to those in need. However, there are many other essential needs of children, such as shoes that fit, socks, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, tissues, and healthy snacks, to name a few. These all play an important role in keeping school children healthy and ready to learn. Meeting these care needs increases their chances for better academic performance and improved school attendance. These are critical factors that contribute to our children's chance for a successful future.



To show our concern and support of the children and families living in our area, Homer Congregational Church is organizing a **P.R.E.P.** event, August 27, on the Village Green. This will be a free offering for all families in our community. This event will offer not only **free ice cream, fun, and games**, but will also provide **free haircuts, sneakers, socks, underwear, and other essentials** to help families prepare their children for a successful school year. We are working with CAPCO, Bridges for Kids, the YMCA, and Catholic Charities to set up tables at this event in order to provide information about services that may be a valuable resource for families.

Donations are needed, in order to make this event a success. Please see the wish list below. Businesses who donate will be listed as a sponsor on all advertisements. Please join us in this outreach effort to help families with school-aged children. Thank you.

If you have questions, please contact Bonnie Smith at (607) 423-6457.

Sincerely,

Homer Congregational Church's Outreach Team

P.R.E.P. Event Donation Wish List

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| sneakers (all sizes) | underpants (boys & girls) | socks |
| detergent | tissues | soap |
| toothbrushes | toothpaste | shampoo |
| children's vitamins | antibacterial wipes | individually-wrapped, healthy snacks |



THE DEACON'S BENCH



It's funny how, in this journey of life, even though we may begin at different times and places, our paths cross with others so that we may share our love, compassion, observations, and hope. This is a design of God that I appreciate and cherish.

-Steve Maraboli

A NEW MISSION

The Homer Nursery School is now a mission of the Homer Congregational Church. This energetic pre-school program will be overseen by a committee of the Homer Congregational Church. Lisa Clark who was the Director and Sarah Bouwens who was a teacher at the Homer Nursery School under the Homer Children's Center will continue in those roles, but now as staff of the Homer Congregational Church. Years ago both Lisa and Sarah began their relationship with the Homer Nursery School as parents of attending children. Both teachers bring a strong commitment to encourage the children toward positive self-esteem, creativity, independence, and cooperation. Plans to update the two main floor classrooms where the Nursery School will be located have begun with a search for new flooring. The Memorial Committee has committed \$1500.00 to assist with the purchase of new flooring. Additional funding may be needed. If you would like to contribute, please contact any deacon or trustee. We look forward to providing a valuable service to our community and supporting some of our youngest people. Look for announcements for the fall 2016 and spring 2017 semesters for the Homer Nursery School in the Homer News and

Cortland Standard. Soon our church web site will also have information and sign-ups about the Nursery School.

WORSHIP

Mark your calendar **August 7th at 11:00** for wonderful Sunday Worship service beneath the Chautauqua Tent. The following **Sunday August 14th, at 9:30** we will celebrate communion in the HCC sanctuary.

PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Committee is working diligently on our church's profile and hope to have a completed profile sometime during middle of August. The profile once completed will be available for viewing. Please keep them in your prayers as they continue this important work. Updates of the Committees' progress are given during service on the last Sunday of each month.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Vacation Bible School/Chautauqua is August 1-7, 2016. There will be something for both children and adults. If you are interested in helping please contact Mark Bertram: markbertram@hotmail.com or 753-8452.

Our new Director of Christian Education, Rachel Ditch, with assistance from Pastor Kathleen, has put together an updated child safety program called "Reduce the Risk" for our church. Volunteers and staff directly involved with the children of our church, as well as any church member who wishes will go through this program learning safe procedures and will be background checked beginning in September.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Deacons and Pastor Kathleen continue to go through the Active Membership Roll, contacting members by phone. We have gone through about 1/3 of the membership roll. We are reconnecting with members and reconfirming membership in the Homer Congregational Church.

Wish List for the Homer Nursery School

As we take on the Homer Nursery School as our new mission there are a few items that would greatly enhance the nursery ministry. If you have any of these items and they are in excellent condition, please feel free to donate. If you would like to purchase one of these items and bring to church, please do. If you would like to donate some funds towards the purchase of these items, that is also welcome. For any questions, feel free to ask Karen Dudgeon or Lisa Clark (HNS director). Thank you.

Fisher Price garage with cars and people
 Fisher Price (Little People) House
 Fisher Price Fire Station
 Strollers for baby dolls
 Baby doll furniture (High Chair, Changing table)
 Toy plastic pots, pans and dishes



Hello, Homer Congregational!



I cannot begin to describe how thrilled I am to have joined the staff here at HCC. As I prepare to finish my ordination requirements, I am full swing into my position here as the Director of Christian Education. I've spent the past month organizing materials from the years-gone-by, and a few of you have been able to visit and assist me with this undertaking. I'm still seeking additional help in assessing items and organizing them, and I'd be glad to spend some time getting to know you while you come and help.

I've been working closely with various staff members and committee chairs to develop an updated comprehensive Reduce the Risk program. With Reduce the Risk, we seek to protect all members of the church, and particularly the most vulnerable – children and youth – from unsafe situations. As we begin moving back into the program year, anyone who intends to work with children and youth will be required to attend an updated training session. Those sessions will be announced once the training curriculum and Reduce the Risk policies have been approved and adopted by the Trustees and Deacons.

I'm eager to be planning for the academic and program year, and I have plenty of ideas to continue supporting our youth, our children, our adults, and our seniors! If you fall into one of those four categories, I would love to hear from you about your dreams and needs for our congregation. So be on the lookout for an email or phone call from me! My email is christianed@homercc.org, and my phone numbers are 607-749-2604 (office) and 607-221-0882 (cell).

I look forward to working alongside you as we grow together in faith.

Grace and Peace,
 Rachel Ditch



Wilcox Fun(d) 3K/5K Run at VBS and Chautauqua *Saturday, August 6*

Mark your calendars and join us for a family friendly walk/run on Saturday, August 6. Choose from a 3K or 5K-route fun run through the streets of Homer!

- 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.
- We will accept same-day registrations, but you must pre-register to be guaranteed a shirt.
- Proceeds benefit the Wilcox Fund of the Cortland County Council of Churches. The fund supports the work at the Interfaith Center and Campus Ministry at SUNY Cortland.

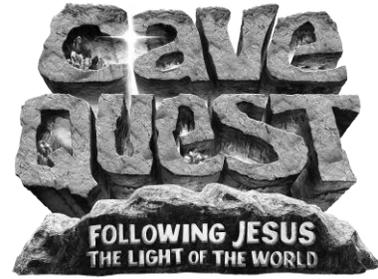
For more information and to sign-up, visit chautauqua5k.com.

*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.

VBS! VBS! VBS!

Attention all cave explorers! There is a light at the end of the tunnel! Come join us for a special VBS



this year that is partnered with the Methodist Church and in conjunction with Chautauqua. VBS will be the week of August 1-7. Monday-Wednesday will be 9AM-12PM; Thursday-Friday will be 5-7:30 PM, and Sunday service at 11:00 AM under the Chautauqua tent. We will experience how Jesus can shine a light in the darkest of places. Campers can sign up from pre-school to the end of 5th grade.

Campers? Pick up registration forms at the church office or on-line at the church website homercc.org

Volunteers? If you have completed the sixth grade, you are old enough to volunteer at VBS. Teens and adults are needed to make our program a success, so please contact Mark Bertram at 607-745-0177 to sign up today. There will be a meeting for all VBS volunteers on July 31 from 6-8pm.

Want to Make a Donation? We are always looking for donations to help the program. If you would like to buy a grocery store gift card, donate snack supplies, or give cash donations it would be greatly appreciated!



Snack & Chat

Karen Dudgeon and Jim McKenna continue to hold Snack & Chats on communion Sundays. Please bring your questions, concerns and joys. Contact Karen at 914-886-2239 or Jim at 607-345-986

Dear Homer Congregational Family;

With the Board of Deacons, I affirm the wonderful news that Belinda and Vicki are presenting to their church family in the following letter. The witness and celebration of marriage is an appropriate response to God's word. We hope you will all plan to be present for this special occasion. --Pastor Kathleen



To our Church family –

It is with a deep sense of joy that we encourage you to be present for worship on Sunday, October 9. On that day, following the sermon, we will exchange vows of marriage!

To be clear, you are our family of faith, and so it seemed right to ask that our vows be included in the context of worship that day. We have consulted with Pastor Kathleen and with the Deacons, who ultimately approved two weddings that weekend – one on Saturday and ours on Sunday.

To be crystal clear, we believe that any worship service should nurture everyone present. In these last few months, after the sermon we have participated in communion, in celebrating our graduates, in commissioning our Stephen Ministers, in blessing our pastoral search committee and our new DCE, and in bidding farewell to long-time staff members. On October 9, the sermon will focus on the ways that God's love transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary. Our vows will offer a witness to that transformation in our lives.

This is where we are on life's journey, and we know that we are welcome here! Your love and friendship has surrounded us as we have grown in faith and in love. Poet James Boswell wrote: *"We cannot tell the precise moment when friendship is formed. As in filling a vessel drop by drop, there is at last a drop which makes it run over; so in a series of kindnesses there is at last one which makes the heart run over."*

Our hearts truly overflow with thanksgiving for the gifts God has placed in our lives and for the chance to be a part of this congregation. We hope that you will join us – and the Deacons – in sharing our joy and in singing, "Alleluia!"

With love, *Belinda & Vicki*

Trustees Corner

The Board of Trustees met Tuesday, July 19 for the monthly board meeting and continued to make progress on a variety of church issues. The board has been working with the Board of Deacons on a number of issues and the new church mission of the Homer Nursery School. The following was covered:

- The last donation from the Homer Children's Center has come in and the Trustees are gathering the funds to provide new flooring for the Nursery School. The teachers will be added to the church staff and an official policy for "Reducing the Risk" training was approved.
- Rachel Ditch as come on board as the Director of Christian Education and Sheila Shea as the Church Administrator. Please welcome them both.
- The grounds around the Manse need some serious attention. We are looking to get a work crew over there soon. Volunteers are welcome.
- The Communications Committee has met and begun reviewing the church's technology and general communication needs, including exploration of offering this newsletter in an electronic form.
- Work on the front steps was postponed until after Holiday in Homer, because the window between the end of the school year and Holiday in Homer was too small to complete the work and be sure that the railings would be in place.
- Holiday in Homer was great. God provided wonderful weather and the church and vendors provided the rest. Special thanks to Paula Harrington for making the event such a success!

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

Holiday in Homer 2016



So much to be thankful for!!! What a wonderful day filled with sunshine, great music, amazing food, and most all the green was filled with so many people!!

First, thank you to all of our sponsors: Yaman Real Estate, CCC Construction, and Cortland Self Storage. Through their partnerships can we offer such great entertainment. Thanks to Clay and Don V. for hitting the pavement and selling adds for our brochure. Please thank those who purchased ads by showing support when you patronize their businesses!

Thank you to all of the volunteers that helped bring the show to life: Jim and Sharon Wyman, Clay Benedict, and Russ Pederson for helping paint the green. Also to Clay and his crew in charge of parking, as well as

Kevin Cappy for hooking up all electricity and just being so supportive of what needed to be done.

Thank you to Shirley Osterhoudt for organizing all volunteers for the kitchen and class reunion, along with all who helped prepare and serve!! Thank you to Barbara and Peter Wright and crew for cleanup of the kitchen and preparing all leftovers for sale. What a blessing that was to have it all ready on Sunday morning!

Thank you to Andrea and Bonnie for helping with vendor lunches and Belinda for leading the class reunion. Gary Harrington for of the time and secrets to making amazing BBQ !! The luncheon was very successful and we did better than last year!

Thank you to Ann Wingard for leading the ice cream tent and all the volunteers that scooped and made strawberry shortcake; it was a great success again. Darci for saved the day with a freezer.

Thank you to Doris and Pete Hofmann as well as Bev and Steve Berry for coming early and checking in all the vendors . The hospitality and warmth from all the volunteers in the Gazebo was a wonderful welcome to our beautiful green

Thank you to Jan Jeffers and Linda Pearson for a beautiful quilt show, along with all that helped set this up and take it down.

I would like to thank the youth that came and helped for two days straight: Olivia Harrington, Matt Pelowski, Ali and Rachel Osterhoudt, Julia, Jackson, Jed Brazo, and James McKenna. They worked incredibly hard, and it was HOT! Please thank them when you see them-- I truly do not know what we would do without them. On top of setting up, they helped serve, deliver and tear down the entire show. What *Amazing* young people we have. They also ran the dunk tank for the last hour. With our good sport Rachel Ditch (aka "Scuba Steve") as the dunkee, they raised \$100.00.

As soon as all numbers are finalized I will share with the congregation, it does look like it will be about the same as last year.

Holiday in Homer may be a "fundraiser" but it is truly a mission-- one that truly gives as well as it receives. To walk around and see so many faces and families enjoying just a perfect day... It is truly a great day for the entire community.

Mark your calendars for Holiday in Homer 2017 July 15th

Paula Harrington

WORSHIP
SCHEDULE
for August



Deacon Worship Leader:

Anne Wingard

Trustee Verifier

Jim McKenna

August 7 @ 11 am

Ushers & Greeters –
Liturgists – Sylvia Hammond
Acolytes – Abbey Elkins, Elijah Smith
Flowers –
Nursery – Kevin Cappy, Molly Ulrich
Coffee Hour – *No coffee hour, Chautauqua*

August 14 @ 9:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –
Liturgists – Peter Wright
Acolytes – Maddy Dermott, Justin Dermott
Flowers –
Nursery – Susan Benedict, Abby Elkins
Coffee Hour –

August 21 @ 9:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –
Liturgist – Rachel Ditch
Acolytes – Kyle Wright, Jack Bertram
Flowers –
Nursery – Sue Urban, Marissa Urban
Coffee Hour – Laurie Leach, Kathleen Dentes

August 28 @ 9:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –
Liturgists – Carl Applegate
Acolytes – Grace Wright, Abbey Elkins
Flowers –
Nursery – Ingrid Fox, Molly Ulrich
Coffee Hour – Shirley Osterhodt, Pat Signor

August Birthdays

2 Nikea Ulrich
3 Mason Morenus
8 Laurie Leach
9 John Helgren
11 Dylan Loomis
13 Jeanne Brohard
14 Nancy Root
15 Seth Dennis, Wesley Lansdowne
16 Brian Etz, Molly Gray, Terry Perkins
18 Kristen Bell
19 Lucille Ripley
24 Ellen Paterson
26 Jim McKenna
26 Eric Palm, Kyle Agate
29 John Reif
31 Jeni Oechsle, Jack Bertram

From the Treasurer:

Operating Revenues at 6/30/16 -
\$103,390, 47.7% of budget

Operating Expenses at 6/30/16 -
\$99,611, 46.0% of budget

Find us online!

HCC website - homercc.com
Follow Homer Congregational Church on facebook!
To receive our mid-week email, *Weekday Words*,
please email the office.

Office email: office@homercc.org
Pastor email: pastor@homercc.org
Financial Secretary email: finsect@homercc.org
Andrea Herzog email: treasurer@homercc.org
Rachel Ditch email: christianed@homercc.org