



On April 6, 2014, the members of Homer Congregational Church voted to become an Open and Affirming Church of the United Church of Christ. Open and Affirming (ONA) is the United Church of Christ's (UCC) designation for congregations, campus ministries, and other bodies in the UCC which make a public covenant of welcome into their full life and ministry to persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. Churches also commit to welcoming people of all descriptions.

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

Secretary:

Kathy McKenna

Tracy Bertram

Belinda Burtner

Joanne Cincotta

Darci Gumaer

Gary Harrington

Doris Hoffmann

Vicki Johnson

Bill Masterson

Anne Wingard

Church Staff

Interim Minister:

Rev. Dr. Kathleen Waters

Director of

Christian Education:

Rachel Ditch

Sexton:

Gary Harrington

Church Administrator:

Sheila Shea

Announcements

The **Pastor Search Committee** has completed the local church profile. A copy is available in the Church office for members of the congregation to read. Please stop by during office hours to view it.



CEM is planning **Rally Day** for Sunday, Sept. 11. Join us for a Pancake and Sausage Breakfast at 9:30 am to kick-off the Sunday School year, followed by worship back at 10:30 am. Registration for Sunday School will take place. Free will offering for breakfast. Sunday School classes will begin the following week, Sunday Sept. 18 at 9:30 am. At Rally Day, we will also be **registering children for nursery** care for the year. This is a new process for us, but we'd like to have more information for our staff and volunteers who look after the children – child's likes/dislikes, allergies, and emergency contact information.

Our child care coordinator, Carli Clementi, is returning to us this fall. CEM is putting together the **nursery coverage schedule of volunteers** to be in the nursery with Carli to ensure two adults are always present with our children. If you would be willing to volunteer for the nursery or as a substitute, please contact Rachel Ditch at christianed@homercc.org. With many volunteers, you may only do one or two Sundays a year! Young and old benefit from intergenerational interactions!

The Nursery School is still in need of gently used toys. Monetary contributions are always accepted, as well. Please contact Lisa Clark at (607) 749-6753.

Becky Jones and her mother, Dora Jones, are again signed up to do the annual **Alzheimer's Walk**. They are registered under 'Little York Walkers' and plan to walk on Saturday, October 1st at Long Branch Park in Syracuse. Additionally, Bonnie Smith and her sisters are planning to walk at this event as their own team. It is a fun event and they are looking for people to walk with them, or donate money to the Alzheimer's Association through Becky, Bonnie, or donate on your own. This is a very worthy cause and any support that you can give is appreciated. If you are interested in walking with Becky and Dora, or want to donate to this worthy cause, please let them know. Thank you for your emotional and financial support.

The **Senior Fellowship Club** will resume its meetings on Tuesday, September 13, in the Russell Fellowship Room. Our own Bill Hopkins will be the special guest. Mark your calendars and we'll see you there.

The Homer Avenue Methodist Church, located at 30 Homer Avenue in Cortland, is hosting the **Master's Touch Chorale** at 6:00 pm on September 11. This chorale is comprised of singers from various Christian denominations. There is no cost for the event, but a free will offering will be taken to help the group with expenses.

Would you like to **save postage and paper** by having this newsletter sent electronically? Please complete our newsletter survey, if you haven't already. An electronic version is available on our website: <http://homercc.com/resources>. If you need another paper copy, they are available in the Russell Fellowship Room. Please complete and return to the office by September 18. Thank you.

Thank You!

We had a great week at Cave Quest Vacation Bible School as we learned that Jesus is the light of the world! We had 48 children participate in VBS. Their week long mission was to raise money for the Heifer project. Through their hard work, some private donations, and money donated by the Chautauqua congregation we raised \$960 dollars! We are going to buy 3 goats, 3 pigs, and 2 sheep for families around the world! The children also did a great job of bringing in socks and underwear for the back to school P.R.E.P. program. Together with the First Methodist Church and Chautauqua, we had several volunteers and shared help. I would like to thank all of the crew leaders, station leaders, registration ladies, Pre-School teachers, cooks, decoration team, and helpers that made VBS possible. I would especially like to thank Sarah Bouwens/Pastor Rachel Morse from First Methodist and Pastor Kathleen/Secretary Sheila from Homer Congregation. A big thank you to Vicki Johnson from Chautauqua. I would like to thank our CEM director Rachel Ditch. Lastly I would like to thank all of the parents/guardians who brought their children to VBS and the Sunday Chautauqua service. We hope to see you all next year!! Mark Bertram



Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your continued support for our Homer Area Community Food Pantry. The money given is used to purchase various perishables and foods for each unit (?). Summertime requests are used on items for children's snacks. We appreciate all of the support the families of the Homer Congregational Church have given us over the years.

Sincerely, Barbara Grohardt and Volunteers of the Methodist Church Food Pantry

P.S.- If anyone knows of needy families, please have them call Tony Hughes at 749-7159. Thank you.



Dear Congregation,

Thank you for the wonderful opportunity to become a mission of your church. The nursery school has been a wonderful treasure to the Homer community for over 30 years and we are so very happy and appreciative to be able to continue the tradition. We feel very strongly that there is no greater treasure than our children and we love being able to give them the opportunity to grow and learn in a safe, nurturing environment well into the future. Thanks again, Lisa Clark & Sarah Bowens



To the First Religious Society in Homer,

Thank you for your gift of the Holiday in Homer Scholarship. I will put it to good use in college.

Also, I will continue to grow and develop my art as I am enrolled in a Music/Business degree. Thank you again for the support! Brent Newcomb



We have been blessed again with a very successful Holiday in Homer. Weather was beautiful, the Green full of vendors and crowds of people, and the band played on to everyone's enjoyment. We give special thanks to Paula Harrington, who did a spectacular job spearheading the Holiday in Homer again this year, with the help of Gary and Olivia. Of course, it takes the whole church pulling together to make it a success. So, thanks to everyone who had some small part in helping to make that day special. Blessings and thanks, Shirley Osterhoudt

THE DEACON'S BENCH



“The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don’t wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope.”
— Barack Obama

WORSHIP

Join us on September 4th at 9:30 for Communion. The following Sunday, **September 11th**, is **Rally Day**. We will celebrate the return of Sunday School with a Breakfast hosted by CEM at 9:00 and return to our regular Sunday service time at 10:30.

NEW MISSIONS

The Homer Nursery School can now be found on the Homer Congregational Church web site. Applications for this great pre-school program can be found at a link on the Homer Nursery School page. Please welcome the Homer Nursery School Director & Teacher Lisa Clark and Teacher Sarah Bouwens, the newest staff members of the Homer Congregational Church. Plans to update the two main floor classrooms where the Nursery School will be located, have begun with new carpeting. We look forward to supporting some of our youngest

citizens by providing a valuable community service. Announcements for the Homer Nursery School can soon be found in the Homer News, Cortland Standard, and The Homer Congregational Church Facebook Page.

PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Committee has prepared a draft of the Local Church Profile and made changes after receiving comments from Pastor Kathleen and Rev. Marsha Williams, our Associate Conference Minister with the New York Conference, United Church of Christ. The Local Church Profile, as submitted to the Conference, will be available for viewing in the church office. The committee met with Rev. Marsha Williams recently and have just begun working on determining a candidate profile review process. Please keep the committee in your prayers as they continue this important work. Updates of the Committee’s progress are given during service on the last Sunday of each month.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Deacons and Pastor Kathleen continue to go through the Active Membership Roll, contacting members by phone. In addition, the Deacons will be sending out letters reaching out to members who have not been heard from or seen in two years checking on their spiritual wellbeing. We are reconnecting with members and reconfirming membership in the Homer Congregational Church.

Pastor Search Committee

The Pastor Search Committee has been meeting weekly or biweekly through July and August. We are happy to announce that we have completed the Church Profile which is available for viewing in the Board room. The profile will be sent to the Conference, commented on, and published. It will then be able to be viewed by potential candidates to make a determination as to whether or not the church could be a good fit for them. Interested candidates will then submit profiles to the Conference. Conference offices will review candidates and forward those that meet guideline to the PSC to begin reviewing. We expect this review phase to begin in late October or November. In the mean time we will be working on refining our review process. The rubrics for the reviews are expected to be completed by the end of September.



As noted previously, if all goes as planned we hope have completed the entire selection process by spring of 2017. With the exception of the defining the review process, we have now completed Phase II of the eight phases outlined by the Conference and discussed in previous newsletters.

We thank the Congregation for your patience and support through this process.
Chuck Feiszli

The Trustees Corner

The Board of Trustees met on Tuesday evening, August 17 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 personnel issues and the Homer Nursery School mission. The following issues were covered:



- The personnel Committee had pleasant and productive interview conversations with the Homer Nursery School teachers and recommended their official hiring to the Board of Trustees. The Trustees voted to hire Lisa Clark and Sarah Bouwens as the Director and Teacher of the Homer Nursery School. Please join us in welcoming Lisa and Sarah to our church staff. Discussions about other needs for the Nursery School continue.
- New flooring will be installed in the rooms used by the Nursery School in the next couple of weeks. A team of people will be needed to move furniture in and out of the rooms around the installation.
- Work on the front steps continues on schedule.
- The board extends special thanks to Don and Jen Van Slyke and Eugene Wright for working on some of the landscaping needs around the Manse. More needs to be done and we are looking to get another work crew over there very soon. Please see Don or Kevin Cappy if you are able to help out.
- The church's Webpage continues to develop, with a new tab for the Homer Nursery School and an electronic event calendar coming soon. We also continue to accept responses to our questionnaire about electronic newsletter delivery. Thanks to those who have replied. Please get yours into the office, if you haven't yet responded; we need to hear from every one.

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



The Ministry of Listening

Think of a time when you really felt cared for. Chances are someone focused on what you had to say, was attentive to your needs, and listened to how you felt instead of telling you how you should feel or what you should do. Listening is one of the most powerful ministry tools at your disposal. It demonstrates that you care about the other person. In Stephen Ministry, a great deal of time is spent in teaching and practicing listening skills because of its importance as a caregiving tool. You too can become a more caring listener by understanding and applying these six listening concepts from Stephen Ministry training:

- 1. Listening is active.** It takes energy and commitment to listen really well. Focus your attention on what the other person has to say instead of thinking of what you'll say next. Look at him or her while you listen, and nod along from time to time so the person knows you are tuned in.
- 2. Listening takes patience.** Often you need to build trust before someone will open up to you. Constant, patient listening is a key.
- 3. Listening involves more than just words.** Pay attention not only to what is said, but to what is not said – or to what is said with a smile or a sigh. Pay attention to body language, too. Does it agree with or contradict a person's words?
- 4. Good listeners aren't completely silent.** They restate key thoughts or ideas to be sure they understood correctly or ask focused questions to encourage the person to reach a little deeper.
- 5. Listening happens over time.** One conversation might build upon an earlier one. As you listen over several conversations, are there any recurring themes or patterns in what the person has said? Are there any contradictions from what was said earlier? These are signs there may be more to explore underneath.
- 6. Listening is confidential.** A great way to build trust and to show the person you really care for him or her is to maintain confidentiality and not to share with others what was discussed in a private conversation.

Jesus was the model of a good listener. Much of his ministry was listening to people. By listening to what people had to say he demonstrated how much he really cared about them. Remember the stories of the woman at the well, Nicodemus, or the disciples on the road to Emmaus. All were times when Jesus showed his care and concern by first listening to people and then giving them what they needed. We all want the Homer Congregational Church to be a caring place where members and guests truly feel people care about who they are and how they feel. Just as our Stephen Ministers use good listening skills to communicate how much they care, so can you. Follow and practice these listening principles and make a concentrated effort toward becoming a better listener. Listening is a great gift we can give to one another, and a skill we can all use in order to make our church a more caring place.

For more information about Stephen Ministry please contact one of our Stephen Leaders:
Belinda Burtner: 607-756-2454 or Bill Masterson: 607-345-4874



To Homer Congregational Church:

Since 2013 individuals have been invited to contribute to a special offering that targets the ministries of the United Church of Christ in New York - the Covenant Share Offering. This offering invests in 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, and many more programs and services. You may give online at www.ucny.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 18. For more information contact one of your Conference delegates, Belinda Burtner, Vicki Johnson, or Peter Wright.

The following is an article by David R Gaewski Conference Minister New York Conference United Church of Christ.

Covenant Share 2016 Whether it is a Sacred Conversation on Race, the innovative educational opportunities of the New York School of Ministry, a twenty-first century model of collaboration with the Reformed Church in America, or the welcoming of congregations seeking to affiliate with the United Church of Christ, we in the New York Conference are making a difference, responding to the needs of our churches and society with a BOLD New Faith for Today. Our vision for the United Church of Christ in New York are local congregations and individuals equipped to engage faith issues of the day and communicate, as well as inspire, the prophetic voice of a radically inclusive Gospel. We accomplish this by intentionally providing spiritual nurture and intellectual challenge to our authorized ministers, lay leaders and youth. Your church supports these mission goals in two ways: giving to Our Church's Wider Mission and promoting Covenant Share – an opportunity for individuals to support our shared ministry. Please distribute the enclosed envelopes and utilize the liturgical materials enclosed on a Sunday of your choosing. With deep appreciation for your Christian witness,

Serving Christ together,

Interim Pastor

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.

*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.

2016 September Worship

Beginning on September 11 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 4 **9:30 AM**
16th Sunday after Pentecost

On this Labor Day weekend Sunday we will Celebrate Holy Communion along with the sacredness of work and the worker.

"Blessing of the Backpacks" will take place for our children as they return to their work year too.

In addition we will sing and explore the background of some of our favorite hymn. Have a favorite hymn you would like to sing? Pass it along to Pastor Kathleen or leave it in the "Hymn Request Basket" in Russell Fellowship Room.

Lectionary Scripture: Jeremiah 18:1-11;
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; Philemon 1-21;
Luke 14:25-33



Your works are
wonderful,
I know that
full well.
Psalm 139:14

Sunday, September 11 **10:30 AM**
17th Sunday after Pentecost (Rally Day!)

For many who have been away for the summer we welcome you back and hope you will join us for this special Sunday. During our Sunday worship gathering we will recognize the beginning of our Sunday School Classes with the commissioning of our Sunday School teachers.

Lectionary text: Exodus 32:7-14; Psalm 14;
1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10

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

Marjorie Purnine will be our guest preacher. She is the Associate Conference Ministry for Leadership. She provides staff support as well as search and call assistance to local church search committees based in Black River/St. Lawrence and Oneida Associations of the New York Conference. In addition she oversees the administration of the New York School of the New York Conference. She is the liaison between the New York School of Ministry and MESA (Ministerial Excellence, Support, and Authorization Ministry Team). Identification and development of leadership training opportunities for laity.

Scriptural focus will be Matthew 20:1-16
Sermon: "People of Another Way"

Covenant Share Offering will be promoted.

Lectionary Scriptures: Jeremiah 8:18-9:1;
Psalm 79:1-9; 1 Timothy 2:1-7;
Luke 16:1-13

Sunday, September 25 **10:30 AM**
19th Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Scriptures: Jeremiah 32:1-3a; 6-15; Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16; 1 Timothy 6:6-19;
Luke 16:19-31

Pastor Search Committee Update

WORSHIP
SCHEDULE
for September

Deacon Worship Leader:

Joanne Cincotta

Trustee Verifier

Kevin Cappy



September Birthdays

September 4 @ 9:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –
Liturgists – Gary Harrington
Acolytes – Sophia Wright, Kyle Wright
Flowers –
Nursery – Cindy Stout
Coffee Hour – The Edlund Family,
Betty MacNeil

September 11 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –
Liturgists – Kurt Schmidt
Acolytes – Caiomhe Dudgeon,
Ruairi Dudgeon
Flowers –
Nursery – Phil Zollweg
Coffee Hour –

September 18 @ 9:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –
Liturgist – Carol Agate
Acolytes – Jack Bertram, Gwen Cappy
Flowers –
Nursery – Ingrid Fox
Coffee Hour – Kevin and Joem Cappy

September 25 @ 9:30 am

Ushers & Greeters –
Liturgists – Rachel Ditch
Acolytes – Anelia Corbin, Justin Dermott
Flowers –
Nursery – Mark Bertram
Coffee Hour – Sherri Masterson

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

From the Treasurer:

- Operating Revenues at 7/31/16:
\$116,109, 53.6% of budget
- Operating Expenses at 7/31/16:
\$121,923, 56.3% 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