



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

- Jim McKenna
- Paula Harrington
- Chuck Feiszli
- Andrea Herzog
- Eugene Wright
- David Barnes
- Russ Pedersen

Board of Deacons

- Bonnie Haaland
- Kathy McKenna
- Tracy Bertram
- Belinda Burtson
- Joanne Cincotta
- Darci Gumaer
- Gary Harrington
- Doris Hoffmann
- Bill Masterson
- Anne Wingard
- Jim Ulrich
- Terry Pedersen

Church Staff

Pastor:
Rev. Vicki Burtson

Director of Christian Education:
Rev. Rachel Ditch

Sexton:
Gary Harrington

Church Administrator:
Sheila Shea

WOMEN'S CHOIR FORMING



We will have a Women's Choir for Sunday, June 18 – Father's Day. Rehearsals will be Wednesday June 7 & June 14 from 7-7:30 pm. Pastor Vicki is conducting and Andrea Herzog is accompanying. Come and join us!

SUMMER HOURS

Our summer hours will begin next month! **Beginning Sunday, July 2, worship services will begin at 9:30 am.** The regular worship time of 10:30 am will resume on Rally Day, Sunday, September 10.



CHILDREN'S DAY & ALL CHURCH PICNIC – JUNE 11



Join us for a special worship service with the children and youth of the church! They will lead our readings, share their musical talents, and share what they learned in Sunday School. It is also the time when we thank our Sunday School teachers and Nursery Volunteers and present Bibles to our youth entering third grade. Stay after worship for a picnic hosted by CEM – hot dogs, sides and dessert!



COMING IN JULY AND AUGUST...

• **Wednesday Afternoon Tea in the Garden**

You are invited to join Pastor Vicki and her co-hosts for tea (hot or iced), finger food and discussion. First tea will be Wednesday, July 5 beginning at 4, concluding just before 5. Watch the bulletins in June for more details.



• **Happy Hour**

You are invited to join Pastor Vicki and her Grilling Co-Hosts for beverages and grilled finger foods, along with discussion and concluding with prayer. Here's a chance to kick off the weekend with your HCC family! We will meet at 5 PM for some cold non-alcoholic beverages and some happy-hour-type finger foods (sliders? wings? NOT intended to be "dinner"). Dates:



- Friday, July 7 at 5 PM (done by 6)
- Friday, July 21 at 5 PM
- Friday, August 11 at 5 PM
- Friday, August 25 at 5 PM

Both of these opportunities are about building community and fostering relationships. The summer should be a gentle time when, hopefully, the schedule is a bit lighter. My hope is to encourage us to take some time on a Wednesday or a Friday to be together with our "siblings of faith" – to think, to pray, to laugh, and to get to know one another better.

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP MEETING—TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2017

Heralding the fast approaching spring with lovely lavender-colored decorations, (reminding us of the real lilacs soon to appear) the Senior Fellowship Club met on Tuesday, May 9th in the RFR. Many thanks to Gwen Hayne and Nita Baldwin for lending us their help in decorating. We immediately began our program by introducing our special guest, Mr. William Locke. Bill is no stranger to us and has entertained us previously on three occasions.



Bill is gifted with a great bass voice and a flair for showmanship, which he ably demonstrated to us. He took us down memory lane singing several old Broadway show tunes. Interspersed with his singing, he asked trivia questions to see if we could remember the name of the shows in which the songs originated. He also sang some unfamiliar older songs with lovely melodies and words, which we all enjoyed. Bill mentioned that they don't write songs like that anymore; we heartily agree. Bill's repertoire of songs is impressive. In between songs, he told amusing stories. He entertained us delightfully and ended his program with an impressive rendition of "Old Man River" from Jerome Kern's musical *Showboat*. Bill sang this great song pitched in its original low bass key. Many thanks to Bill for a wonderful, memorable presentation.

Refreshment time was next; today's mouth-watering offering was a delicious, delectable "dump" cake served with ice cream. The bakers today were Shirley Osterhoudt, Nita Baldwin, and yours truly. All thoughts of dieting and impending doctor appointments were forbidden to be discussed. Seniors, of course, never "pig out." We eat with enthusiasm, relish and gusto.

Since many of our members were born in the 1930's, they were asked at the end of the meeting if they remembered what historic event had occurred on the day before, May 8th. At first nobody spoke but when the year of this event was mentioned as happening in 1945, some recalled that it was V-E Day (Victory in Europe Day), when Nazi Germany unconditionally surrendered to the Allied Forces. A big celebration is still held in France each year. It was hard for all of us to believe that this momentous event took place seventy-two years ago.

Our next meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 13. Jaff Harris will be presenting one of his popular programs with slides about Homer. Mark your calendars and we'll see you there.

-Dottie Kelley

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

God's Love is Everywhere!



God's Love is Everywhere. God's love is in Homer, NY and Wichita Kansas. God's love is in the United States and Asia. God's love is in Christianity and Islam. Our world is enriched with beautiful diversity, diversity about which our God has said, "it is good" (Gen. 1:10). In our week, we will explore the rich diversity of our world. We will encounter God in places near and far and in different traditions. We will encounter God the Artist who created a diverse planet. We will encounter God in Person who told us stories of life. We will encounter God in Breath who calls to us!

Vacation Bible School will be held Monday, July 31st, to Friday, August 4th. We're trying something different this year, and we will gather together in the evenings from 5:30-7:30PM. A community meal will be shared each night, and there will be opportunities for engagement for people of all ages. Join us for cultural experiences as we explore the ways in which our God is creating in our world, learn how to be a part of what God is doing new each day!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY

Summer is nearly here, and our Sunday School Christian Education program is winding down. But don't worry, there's still plenty of opportunity to be involved in church this summer!

Homer Vacation Bible School is July 31st to August 4th from 5:30-7:30pm, and there will be something for everyone!

We are in full swing preparing for June 11th Children's Sunday. This is a Sunday for which worship will be crafted and lead by our wonderful children and youth. You won't want to miss this wonderful experience!

Easter has been a wonderful time to be reminded of the power of God's love and the meaning of resurrection. Our April 30th Faith in Action Sunday raised \$125 for the Back to School PREP Program, which is absolutely phenomenal! Youth planted marigolds (which are taking root and strengthening as they grow in pots in our Memorial Garden) to explore the ways that God gives us strength and helps us to grow. We need the right resources to grow big and strong, and our marigolds need sunlight, water, and dirt to grow from little seeds into beautiful flowers. We played a game to learn just how hard it is to be a shepherd of other people, and we give thanks for our God who is a guide and guardian to us, God's sheep. We are constantly reminded that even the smallest of us has power and can influence others; even when it is very challenging, we are all shepherds in our own way, and we all have sheep we can look after and guide.

We took time to remember our Mothers and the Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) that our moms have received from God. We now know that everyone in the congregation has been a parent to the children and youth of this church, and we are grateful for everyone who looks after and helps us. The end of May brought us to Acolyte training during Sunday School. We have so many wonderful youth who help to make our worship service amazing, and we are working to ensure that they are properly prepared for the very important roles that they play in the church.

Finally, in the name of resurrection, our Sunday School classroom is getting some minor face-lift work done. A new clock and colorful posters have been put up to brighten the space, and new curtains will be arriving soon!

I have had the unique opportunity these past several weeks to connect more closely with some of our HCC Youth, and I know that the work we do here makes an immense difference in the lives of our kids. Thank you for supporting this ministry! Please continue to keep our Christian Education Program in prayer as we wind down our program and switch into summer planning. We are very excited for the future, and your prayers help us to be the best we can for our church's children and youth.

Peace, Rachel

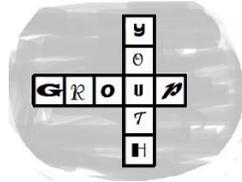
HOMER NURSERY SCHOOL MONTHLY UPDATE

Our year is almost at a close. We have our family picnic on June 1 at Durkee park and our end of year program on June 8, which brings another successful year of nursery school to a close. We are still accepting applications for the coming school year (September 2017- June 2018) but there is a wait list, as we have 24 students registered. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people who have helped us throughout the year: Pastor Vicki, Karen Dudgeon, Gary Harrington, Andrea Herzog, Beverly Berry, and Sheila Shea. Thank you very much. We couldn't have done it without you. Everyone please have a wonderful summer and we will begin again with our updates in the fall.

- Lisa Clark



YOUTH GROUP



If you are a youth in grades 4-12 at Homer Congregational, you are invited to join the Homer Congregational Youth group. Activities will indicate age requirements in order to ensure age appropriate activities. Friends are always welcome to join.

Don't Miss Out! Summer Book Club!

Hey HCC Children and Youth! Join Rachel for a Summer Book Club! Reading brings us to new places in our minds. What's better than to read with friends and have discussion? Having discussion over ice cream only enhances the wonderful experience!



The book clubs will be separated into three groups; one for youth who have completed grades 4&5, one for youth who have completed grades 6-8, and one for youth who have completed grades 9-12. Each group will be reading a different book (I made selections based upon content, number of chapters and pages, and reading level), and we will gather four times between July and August at Super Cream to talk about the books. Below is a chart with information about each group's book.

Parents, we need to know:

- Are your children interested in joining this book club and reading over the summer? Ice Cream will always be a part of the experience! Let Rachel know the number of children in your family who will be a part of this program (even if they can't come to all of the meetings!) and we will be able to order the books for you.
- What days and times work best for your family schedule?

Who: Youth completed grades 4-5	Who: Youth completed grades 6-8	Who: Youth completed grades 9-12
When: Dates and times TBD	When: Dates and times TBD	When: Dates and times TBD
Where: Super Cream	Where: Super Cream	Where: Super Cream
Book: <i>Call it Courage</i> by Armstrong Sperry.	Book: <i>Dead End in Norvelt</i> by Jack Gantos	Book: <i>The Hate U Give</i> by Angie Thomas

I'm really excited for this new adventure with your kids, and I can't wait to begin reading and talking with them! You can contact Rachel at 607.221.0882 or christianed@homercc.org with questions and information!



GOLF TOURNAMENT - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The 16th Annual Cortland County Council of Churches Golf Tournament will be held on Wednesday, July 26th, 2017 at Willowbrook Golf Course. The Captain and Crew tournament costs \$300 per foursome, and the tournament benefits the ministries of the Cortland County Council of Churches. The Honoree for this year's tournament is none other than the

Rev. Vicki Johnson Burtson, OUR PASTOR! Come join us and say thank you to Pastor Vicki for all she has done and continues to do in our community.



DEACON'S BENCH

During Holy week, several Deacons visited many of our homebound members to offer communion and a brief prayer. The deacons reported that everyone involved appreciated it very much and we look forward to repeating this in the future. I would like to thank Pastor Vicki publicly for the idea and her leadership on this. She provided the communion elements and the liturgy for each visit. I believe we are in good hands with Pastor Vicki's leadership and creativity.

We have much to be thankful for here at Homer Congregational Church; so many programs & activities along with so many talented and creative people. We are truly blessed.

-Bill Masterson, for the Deacons

FAQS ABOUT STEPHEN MINISTRY

What exactly is Stephen Ministry?

Stephen Ministry is a ministry of our congregation in which trained and supervised lay persons, called Stephen Ministers; provide one-to-one Christian care to individuals facing life challenges or difficulties.

Who is involved?

- **Stephen Leaders** are the people who oversee and direct our Stephen Ministry. They recruit, select, train, organize, and supervise our Stephen Ministers, identify people in need of care, and match them with a Stephen Minister. We have two Stephen Leaders: Belinda Burtner & Bill Masterson.
- **Stephen Ministers** are the caregivers. They will engage in 50 hours of training in Christian caregiving, including general topics such as listening, feelings, boundaries, assertiveness, and using Christian resources in caregiving. In addition, their training will cover specialized topics such as ministering to the divorced, hospitalized, bereaved, and aging.
- **Care receivers** are the recipients of Stephen Ministers' care. They are people from our church or community who are experiencing divorce, grief, loss of a job, loneliness, hospitalization, terminal illness, or any of a number of other life difficulties. Stephen Ministers usually meet with their care receivers once a week for about an hour for as long as the care receiver will benefit by the relationship.



What do Stephen Ministers do?

Stephen Ministers are caring Christian friends who listen, understand, accept, and pray for and with care receivers who are working through a crisis or a tough time.

Are Stephen Ministers Counselors?

Stephen Ministers are not counselors; they are trained lay caregivers. Their role is to listen and care-not to give advice or counsel. Stephen Ministers are also trained to recognize when a care receiver's need exceeds what they can provide. When that happens, they work with care receivers to help them receive the level of care they really need.

What does the Stephen Ministry logo represent?

The Stephen Ministry logo consists of a cross and circle together with a broken person and a whole person. The broken person behind the cross symbolizes the brokenness in our lives due to our sin and imperfections. The whole person stands in front of the cross because it is only through the cross of Jesus that we are made whole. The circle symbolizes both the wholeness we receive through Christ and God's unending love for us.

Our Stephen Leaders are Belinda Burtner [607-756-2454](tel:607-756-2454) & Bill Masterson [607-345-4874](tel:607-345-4874).



- **Carli Clementi** graduated from SUNY Cortland.
- **Marleah Dentes** is graduating from Homer High School. She will be going to Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY. She is majoring in communication.
- **Olivia Harrington** is graduating from Homer High School. She will be attending SUNY Oswego in the fall, studying Geochemistry. Her dream career is in the environmental sciences as a hydrologist.
- **Carly Shea Maggone**, granddaughter of James & Sharon Wainman, is graduating cum laude from St. Vincent College with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry.
- **Alyse Masterson** is graduating from Binghamton University with a Masters in Special Education. She has accepted a position at the Beverly J Martin Elementary School in Ithaca for the fall.
- **Kelly McKenna** graduated summa cum laude from SUNY Cortland with a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and a minor in Archeology. She plans on going to graduate school to study Underwater Archeology.
- **Allison Osterhoudt**, granddaughter of Shirley Osterhoudt, is graduating with honors from Homer High School. She has been accepted to St. John Fisher College in Rochester, where she will major in Sports Management.
- **Rachael Osterhoudt**, granddaughter of Shirley Osterhoudt, is graduating with honors from Homer High School. She has been accepted to St. John Fisher College in Rochester, where she will major in Actuary Science.
- **Luke Pedersen** is graduating from Stony Brook University in June with a Doctorate of Physical Therapy degree.
- **Matthew Pelowski** is graduating from Homer High School. He will be attending college at Binghamton University and majoring in Biology.
- **Richard Schmidt** is graduating with honors from Alfred University, with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering.
- **Logan Schmidt** graduated on April 28 from Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Benning, Georgia for the Army National Guard.
- **Alexis Settineri** graduated from Penn State with degrees in Nutrition and Spanish.
- **Delaney J. Smith** is graduating from Homer High School and OCM BOCES. She will be attending TC3 for Early Childhood Education.



Remember! **August 6 at 11am – Chautauqua worship under the tent!** Come and be fed as we worship together with our siblings in faith.

THE TRUSTEES CORNER

Members of the Board of Trustees met on Tuesday evening, May 16, for the monthly board meeting and continued to make progress on a variety of church issues. The board discussed progress on the church technology upgrade, Manse rejuvenation, and fundraising. The following are some of the issues covered:

- The upgrade of the computer technology continues. Wiring of the building and installation of wireless hotspots has been completed and we have secure internal and guest networks that cover the entire building. We have acquired a scanner to help with our account system and will get a secure file server soon. We may now embrace new technology to carry out our mission in new and better ways. Some of these upgrades are covered by our Capital Project Funds, but other components are not. If this project is of interest to you, we would welcome any donations to help make your technological vision a reality; talk with Jim McKenna, Pastor Vicki, or any of the Trustees or Communication Committee members.
- Most work on the Manse has been completed. Repairs to the porch are done, but work on the front railings needs to be done, as well as extensive landscape work. Watch for an opportunity to join a work crew to help with the landscaping. Basic church repair and maintenance also continues.
- We are watching the budget closely this year and will explore new fundraisers. The finances were a close balance this month. All ideas and volunteer efforts are welcome. Assistance with organizing the Route 90 sale, Holiday in Homer, and Magic on Main Street would be appreciated.
- Remember that our church webpage now has a donation button for anyone who wishes to give electronically, and electronic newsletters have been distributed and available on our webpage. If you elected to pick your hard copy up at church, please find your addressed copy in the Russell Fellowship Room.

I hope you are all enjoying the life of spring and looking forward to the enlightenment of Pentecost. The work of the boards allows the church to think and grow in new ways as the church vision unfolds, and you can help. Please consider being part of one of our committees and using your time and talents to help our church grow and prosper. As always, any of the Trustees are available if you have questions or want to bring up issues for the board to consider.

Peace be with you!

Jim McKenna, Chair



Bill Masterson and Jim McKenna hold Snack & Chats on communion Sundays. Please bring your questions, concerns and joys. Contact Bill at [607-345-4874](tel:607-345-4874) or Jim at [607-345-9863](tel:607-345-9863).

FROM
THE
PASTOR



This is what I know... this is what I believe...

As I write these words, I am in sunny Aptos, California! Belinda and I have been enjoying some time away, visiting with her 90+ year-old aunt and uncle. While here, we have visited with cousins, some of whom I have never met.

There have been moments of quiet, observing birds, flowers, a lemon tree and breath-taking seascapes. There have also been raucous moments of storytelling and joke telling and cheering on the San Francisco Giants. Tomorrow we hope to have lunch with James McKenna before taking a "red eye" back to Syracuse—just in time to go to the New York Conference (UCC) in Tarrytown, NY.

I know that we are very blessed to have the chance to get away for a whole week. Not everyone gets vacation, so we are aware of this marvelous gift of time. In some ways, I also understand that I have a responsibility to rest in ways that bring renewal. And so, in the midst of the family time, we have been intentional about soaking in the majesty of a grove of redwoods. We shared lunch on a bench next to the Pacific and let ourselves just marvel at God's artistry using sand, rocks and crashing waves. We have smelled the roses, touched the peeling bark of the eucalyptus trees, and listened to the persistent chirp of the towhee and the tapping of a tiny downy woodpecker.

Remember all those Psalms we read during Lent? In my soul, I have been writing a wordless psalm of praise to our God. I have been so aware of the myriad expressions of God's mind and moved to awe about the One who is behind such diversity in creation. There is room in God's world for the colors of poppies and lemons and avocados. There is room in God's world for the texture of sand, the bark of a redwood and the stem of the roses (ouch!). As has been proven around our dinner table this week, there is room in God's family for Republicans and Democrats, for baseball fans and musicians, for practicing Christians and Buddhists.

By the time you are reading these words, we will be back. My sunburn will have faded. My morning alarm will be set, again. I look forward to our return and to being with our family of faith as we turn our attention to graduations and summertime. There are plenty of pictures to remind us of this time of rest and plenty of ideas for worship and church-wide activities. So thank you, dear church. Thank you for this time away. Thank you, Rev. Ditch, for all that you did to "cover" for me. And most of all—thank God for a life full of joy while on vacation in California or at home in Homer, NY.

See you in church or around town,
Pastor Vicki



Pastor's
Office Hours

Pastor Vicki's office hours are Monday 10 am - 2 pm,
Tuesday 9 am -12 pm, Wednesday 9 am -12 pm *and* 3 pm -5 pm.

You may call for an appointment or drop in.

She will also be glad to meet at other times,

by appointment. Please feel free to contact her via email:

pastor@homercc.org or via her cell phone: [\(607\) 624-9940](tel:6076249940).

2017 June Worship

Sunday, June 4 PENTECOST You are encouraged to wear red!

This day marks the day we celebrate the coming of God's Spirit upon the church.

Lectionary: Acts 2:1-21, Psalm 104:24-34, I Corinthians 12:3b-13, John 20:19-23

Choir Sunday – Just before their summer off, the choir will offer extra special music.

Deacons Tracy Bertram, Bonnie, Haaland, Gary Harrington and Jim Ulrich will assist with communion.

Special Offering for the UCC: Strengthen the Church

This special mission offering largely supports youth ministries and full-time leaders for new churches in parts of the country where the UCC voice has not been heard.

Rev. Rachel Ditch will lead the Brewster House Communion at 2:00 PM.

Sunday, June 11 CHILDREN'S DAY

Our children and youth are writing the liturgy, and they will preach!

Biblical Text: Isaiah 11:1-9

Sermon: And A Child Shall Lead Them

We're having a picnic afterward, complete with decorate-your-own cupcakes!

Sunday, June 18 DADS & GRADS

As we celebrate Father's Day, a special Women's Choir will offer service music.

[ALL WOMEN are invited to rehearsals on Wednesdays June 7 & 14 at 7 PM.

Can't make it? Then, if you can read music, join us on Sunday, June 11 at 9:45 AM.]

During the service, we will also acknowledge those graduating from High School and College.

Lectionary Texts: Genesis 18:1-15, Romans 5:1-8, Matthew 9:35-10:8

Sunday, June 25 60TH BIRTHDAY OF THE UCC!

Happy Birthday to the UCC!

Lectionary Texts: Genesis 21:8-21, Romans 6:1b-11, Matthew 10:24-39

Beginning in July our worship time moves to 9:30 AM.



STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING – JUNE 4

Strengthen the Church (STC) is a special mission offering to reimagine 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. Our congregation will receive the STC offering on Pentecost Sunday, June 4, 2017. For more information, visit <http://www.ucc.org/stc>.

OUTREACH TEAM MINUTE

Back to School PREP event will be held on Saturday August 26th. Also, we would like to encourage people to begin buying sneakers to donate for the event. It was a big need last year and we didn't have enough to provide for all the kids that came to the event. The Outreach team meets at approximately 4:45 pm on the last Thursday of every month. ALL are welcome to join us!



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Deacon Worship Leaders:

Anne Wingard

Trustee Verifier

Russ Pedersen

June 4 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters – Bill & Sherri Masterson,
Jim & Kathy McKenna

Flowers –

Nursery – Sherri Masterson, Lori Schmidt

Coffee Hour – Phyllis Adams

June 11 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters – Bev Berry, Children of the
Congregation

Flowers –

Nursery – Darci Gumaer, Anne Wingard

Coffee Hour – CEM (Children's Day)

June 18 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters – Carrie & Darci Gumaer,
Paula & Gary Harrington

Flowers – Ingrid Fox

Nursery – Rachel Ditch, Cindy Stout

Coffee Hour – Trustees (Dads & Grads)

June 25 @ 10:30 am

Ushers & Greeters – Belinda Burtner

Flowers –

Nursery – Courtney Stafford, Jenelle Pedersen

Coffee Hour – Bev Berry, Anne Wingard



2 Rebecca Perkins

3 James Hopkins, Kenian Ulrich,
Evan Ulrich, Molly Ulrich,
Clay Benedict

4 Jim Durkee

5 Sheila Shea

10 Mark Bertram

11 Shari Raymond

13 James Boyce

14 Carleton Potter,

Kimberly Adams

15 Andrew Haaland,
Carolyn Morenus

17 Ashley Raymond

18 Tyler Masterson

19 Jimmy Durkee,

Harry Newcomb

29 Albert Durkee

From the Treasurer:

- Operating Revenues at 4/30/17 - \$99,200, 43.7% of budget;
- Operating Expenses at 4/30/17 - \$97,304, 42.8% of budget

Find us online!

HCC website - homercc.com

Digital calendar - homercc.com/calendar

Follow Homer Congregational Church on [Facebook!](https://www.facebook.com/homercc)

To receive our mid-week email, Weekday Words,

please email the office: office@homercc.org

Email Contacts:

Office: office@homercc.org

Pastor: pastor@homercc.org

Financial Secretary: finsect@homercc.org

Treasurer: treasurer@homercc.org

DCE: christianed@homercc.org