



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

*Sexton:*  
Gary Harrington

*Church Administrator:*  
Sheila Shea



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

Grace and peace to you, dear family and friends of Homer Congregational United Church of Christ. My writing this month may be more aptly named "This is what I did not know, but this is what I believe!"

When writing my July article in mid-June, I didn't know how things would change in just a month. I did not know that my colleague, Rev. Rachel Ditch would resign from her position as our Director of Christian Education. I did not know that our Christian Education folks would decide to take a year off from VBS. While I did not know these things, here are some things that I believe:

I believe that in both cases, these decisions were good decisions.

It is often said that in ministry, there is no such thing as "part time". So juggling two part-time positions was no easy task; indeed, Rachel loves our kids, and clearly wanted to give 100% to both of her positions. She made a decision that allows her to be true to her original call, which was to campus ministry. We love her as much as she loves us, and so we will pray for her as she moves forward to listen for God's call.

I believe that, at those times when we stand at a fork in the road, there is no one completely "right" or completely "wrong" choice – there is only the choice we make. God allows us to choose, and then comes along as we live into the choices we make. Part of making choices is taking responsibility for outcomes. The folks on our Christian Education team were purposeful about making some difficult decisions that allowed the best possible outcomes. By now, you know that we are taking a year off from VBS. It was a good decision. Even better are the array of possibilities that CEM is considering for our Christian education and faith formation in the fall. Elsewhere you will find some exciting news about Rally Day(s) and our menu of options for growing in faith.

Finally, and to be very clear, I believe with every particle of my being that God IS with us. Psalm 139 reminds us that God is beside us and behind us and before us and even within us. Ancient people followed God who presented as a pillar of fire at night and a forward moving cloud during the day. We proceed forward watching for God's presence revealed – leading us to a land of promise. We are not in the wilderness as much as we are at the edge of the map. Together we will move into the future that God offers – to Rachel, to our kids, to Homer Congregational United Church of Christ. God's wisdom is within you. There is a rainbow of possibilities ahead. Together, let's see what God has in store.

All will be well!  
*Pastor Vicki*

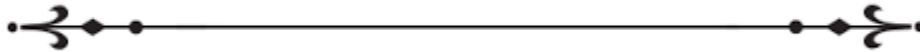


### P.R.E.P. EVENT

Homer Congregational Church is coordinating and hosting the Back to School P.R.E.P. Event (Providing Resources and Essentials in Preparation for school) on August 26 from 1 – 3 pm, on the Homer Green. The PREP event is designed to help families as they prepare their children for school. Free haircuts, sneakers, underwear and socks, toothbrushes and other hygiene items will be available. To ensure fair distribution of items, school-age children must be present with an adult. Free ice cream and children's games will also be available.

### 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 |



### THANK YOU, PAULA HARRINGTON!

It was a pleasure to work with you on July 15th! All the prep you do for the Big Day makes it fun to be a helping hand. You take care of all of your volunteers, all the vendors, all of the kids, all of the cooks, the bubble blowers, the music lovers, the alumni, and even the man with the snakes! Thank you for HOLIDAY IN HOMER.

Grateful for all the Harringtons,  
Belinda Burtson



### A WORD OF THANKS

Homer Congregational Church,  
Dave and I appreciated expressions of concern and sympathy when my brother, John C. Dunkle, died on July 1.  
- Anne Barnes.

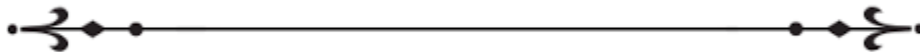


### Offering Envelopes



### 2018 ENVELOPES

It's not too early to plan! As people become busy with summer travel, etc, fall will be here quickly. If you would like offering envelopes for 2018, please contact Bev Berry at [finsect@homercc.org](mailto:finsect@homercc.org), so that she may order accordingly.



### FOOD PANTRY WISH LIST

The Homer United Methodist Church Food Pantry has updated their wish list. Please see the list below for high-demand items. There are bins located in the Russell Fellowship Hall for donations. Thank you!



- Manwich
- canned meats (no tuna)
- cereal - hot or cold
- spaghetti
- jelly
- pudding
- canned fruits

## ***ALL CHURCH PICNIC***

Saturday, September 9

from 3 – 7 PM

**at Little York Park**

*part of Rally Weekend*

- Here is a chance to gather the entire Church family for an afternoon picnic.
- Join in the intergenerational relay games.
- Delight in the colors of big bubbles that float by – or that you create!
- Paint a stone with an inviting message from HCC. Your stone will be hidden somewhere in Homer for someone else to discover.
- Bring a dish to share. Meat & beverages provided by CEM.
- Bring a lawn chair. Bring a cup.
- Pull your chair around the campfire.
- Sing an old song... or a new one.
- Thank God for Homer Congregational Church.
- Come when you can. Leave when you must.

**Without “u” (or you), there is just something missing.**

*...and then on Sunday of Rally Weekend:*

9:30 AM

*If you are age 3 to grade 4:*

- Join Pastor Vicki for some fun & faith singing as we open Sunday School.
- Our Christian Nurture Team will have stories to hear, a craft to take home, and lots of fun as you learn about the “superheroes” of the Bible.

*If you are grades 5 - 12:*

- Join Pastor Vicki for some fun & faith singing as we open Sunday School.
- Help us choose
  - what topics you want to tackle this year
  - what you want to do to help people in our community
  - what fun stuff we should do
  - and anything else you want to add to our experience
- We expect that you’ll be meeting at different times and different places... but on September 10, we *really* need to see your face at 9:30 AM at church!

*If you are out of High School:*

- Join Pastor Vicki for some fun & faith singing as we open Sunday School today.
- And then you have options...because Christian education is NOT just for kids!
  - **The Well** has been going on for over 15 years. Join with other older adults for discussion, scripture and prayers.
  - *New this fall...Book Discussions* – Join Rev. Barb Wright in reading and discussing contemporary authors including Diana Butler Bass, Walter Brueggeman, Dietrick Bonhoffer, Anne Lamott, Barbara Brown Taylor and Nadia Boltz-Weber – to name a few. Opt in when the book looks interesting. The group will decide how often to meet, but Sunday mornings will work best.
  - TBA, but not on Sunday morning... Bible Study led by Rev. Vicki Burtson Watch for more information.

10:30 AM – We are ALL back for worship worthy of our *Rally Weekend!*

## THE TRUSTEES CORNER

Members of the Board of Trustees met on Tuesday evening, July 18<sup>th</sup> for the monthly board meeting and continued to make progress on a variety of church issues. The board discussed progress on the budget, church repairs, Manse landscaping, and Holiday in Homer. The following are some of the issues covered:



- We continue to upgrade our technology by improving the computer systems.
- Joe Settineri, and Logan Schmidt did a great job on the landscaping at the Manse and in the Memorial Garden. Be sure to take a look at both.
- Basic church repair and maintenance also continue. The board voted to replace the handicapped access door to Jones hall and is looking into repairs of the steps in Jones Hall.
- Holiday in Homer was a great success – Thanks Paula, Gary, and everyone who helped! Magic on Main Street are coming up. See a Trustee or Pastor Vicki if you would like to help.
- Remember to check out our [church website](#) and [Facebook page](#). Electronic newsletters have been distributed and are available on our [website](#). If you elected to pick your hard copy up at church, please find your addressed copy in the Russell Fellowship room.

The summer has been stormy, but God blessed us with nice day (a little wet) for Holiday in Homer. God continues to be with us and to guide us all to help the church flourish. The work of the boards allows the church to think and grow in new ways as the church vision unfolds. 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. The Board of Trustees is a little shorthanded and we could really use a scribe who would simple take the minutes at the monthly meetings. Please see me or Pastor Vicki, if you are interested. 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

## DEACON'S BENCH



The Deacons met on Tuesday, July 11, the first time since the resignation of Rachel Ditch as our DCE. As we look back, we give thanks for

Rachel's work here at HCC and pray for her as she awaits God's call. As we look ahead we anticipate God's call for our church as it relates to Christian Education and Christian Nurture. Plans are under way for a "Rally Weekend" (Sept. 9 & 10) as we kick off the start of another church school year. We also anticipate a book study and Bible study beginning this fall.

The Deacons decided to have an "Information Table" at Holiday in Homer with information about our church and about our Stephen Ministry. Visitors to the Quilt Show were greeted as they entered the sanctuary from the Green and offered bottled water, as well as information about the quilt show, and our church. Children were offered a Stephen Ministry helium balloon. The time I spent at the info table was very enjoyable. We received lots of positive feedback: people admired our sanctuary, loved our "Be the Church" t-shirts, "wished" that they had a Stephen Ministry in their church and really liked the picture of everyone who attended the church "work" day (all wearing their Be the Church T-shirts). I hope everyone had a positive experience at Holiday in Homer and I would like to offer a special note of thanks to Paula & Gary for all of their great work to make it happen again this year!

Peace,  
Bill Masterson for the Board of Deacons



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).





## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Note: If you see "(open)" below, please contact the church office if you are available to volunteer!  
[office@homercc.org](mailto:office@homercc.org) or (607) 749-2604.

### **Deacon Worship Leader**

Jim Ulrich

### **Trustee Verifier**

Jim McKenna

### **August 6 @ 11:00 am**

(Chautauqua – no 9:30 am service)

### **August 13 @ 9:30 am**

Ushers & Greeters – The Ulrich Family  
Flowers – (open)  
Nursery – Anne Wingard, Cindy Stout  
Coffee Hour – Carol Costell-Corbin

### **August 20 @ 9:30 am**

Ushers & Greeters – Shirley Osterhoudt,  
Sharon Wainman, Janice Bacon, Bonnie Haaland  
Flowers – (open)  
Nursery – Sherri Masterson, (open)  
Coffee Hour – (open)

### **August 27 @ 9:30 am**

Ushers & Greeters –  
Flowers – (open)  
Nursery – Ingrid Fox, Jenelle Pedersen  
Coffee Hour – Shirley Osterhoudt, 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 6/30/17 - \$131,985, 58.1% of budget;
- Operating Expenses at 6/30/17 - \$131,062, 57.7% of budget

### **Email Contacts:**

Office: [office@homercc.org](mailto:office@homercc.org)  
Pastor: [pastor@homercc.org](mailto:pastor@homercc.org)  
Financial Secretary: [finsect@homercc.org](mailto:finsect@homercc.org)  
Treasurer: [treasurer@homercc.org](mailto:treasurer@homercc.org)  
DCE: [christianed@homercc.org](mailto:christianed@homercc.org)

### **Find us online!**

HCC website - [homercc.com](http://homercc.com)  
Digital calendar - [homercc.com/calendar](http://homercc.com/calendar)  
Follow Homer Congregational Church on [Facebook!](#)  
To receive our mid-week email, Weekday Words,  
please email the office: [office@homercc.org](mailto:office@homercc.org)