



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.

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Senior Pastor:
Rev. Vicki Burtson

Associate Pastor:
Rev. Gary T. Smith

Office Administrator:
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Bev Berry

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Andrea Herzog

From your senior pastor's mind and heart...

Grace and peace to you, dear family and friends of Homer Congregational United Church of Christ.

I love this church. There, I said it!

I love our worship together. You have been open to different expressions of worship, including the creativity of 5th Sundays. We laugh and cry; we sit in silence and we sing; we watch our children grow in faith during the Children's Time; we include multiple voices in liturgy and song. Every now and again we have a day like yesterday...nine baptisms, two soloists, an array of voices in leadership and enough cake, coffee and punch to round out the celebration afterward. Surely God is in the midst of us.

I love how our children and youth are woven into the fabric of this church. In vivid colors, they are gathering for faith formation on Sunday morning as some of you offer thoughtful lessons and crafts. They light the candles in worship; they read scripture; they participate by bringing their own offering as we sing the doxology. Our older youth are helping to teach, and they get together twice a month for their own fun and spiritual growth. Every Tuesday – Thursday, the sounds of the Homer Nursery School bless our hallways.

I love hearing the discussions happening in our church. Mission folks and Outreach folks search for ways for us to BE the church in this community and around the planet. On Wednesdays, fifteen people are pondering the wisdom of mystics and how the lessons can be applied to our lives. On Sunday mornings, having listened to a podcast during the week, some adults are around the table talking about subjects like: God is not “a being”; rather, God is BEING. You offer your trust as you come to talk with me about your lives, good and bad, sometimes too heavy to carry alone.

I love how we share our gifts. Singers join the choir. Someone quietly polishes the offering plates and delivers the food to the Food Pantry next door. Each Sunday, we receive the bounty from your recipe books as we visit after worship. Lunch boxes get delivered to area businesses. The money gets counted and deposited and the bills get paid. Prayers are said and floors are vacuumed every day. People hear a friendly voice when they call during office hours. When a family is in the midst of grieving, they receive hospitality in the form of Kleenex, food and plenty of hugs. Things get fixed. Faith Formation rooms get a make-over.

I love this church. I love the people of this church. How about you? What do you love? I'll be glad to hear your thoughts.

Thanking God for the chance to be in ministry with you,

Pastor Vicki

From your associate pastor for Faith Formation...



Each week, a group of church members and I meet at Three Lil' Birds Cakery to have a discussion with the mystics! These include the mystics from various faith traditions in human history, as well as the mystic within each of us. Right now, we are reading *What the Mystics Know* by Richard Rohr, O.F.M. For me, the title of the first chapter really encapsulates it all: "The enlightenment you seek is already within you." Wow and Amen! "The enlightenment you seek is already within you." There is nothing that we, as children of God, do not already possess. Patience, wisdom, kindness, contentment, enlightenment, nirvana, salvation, heaven...whatever it is that you seek the most, you already have. The spiritual journey is simply about allowing ourselves to be emptied and opened so we become awake/aware of that reality. May we all come to know this divine essence within us. And may it shape how we engage with the world. May God's grace and peace be with you!

Pastor Gary (Please feel free to call me with questions or comments, 607-423-6456.)



Children's Faith Formation meets on Sundays from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. in our Jones Hall classrooms. We have three classrooms—Pre-K to 2nd grade, 3rd and 4th grades, and 5th to 8th grades. All are staffed with a teacher and aide. Classes for the first part of the year continue through December 9 when we have our Christmas Pageant. Please note, there will be no classes on Thanksgiving Weekend, but Nursery service is available. Parents who currently have children in the program, instead of sending a "Parent's Page" home each week with the children, I will be sending it via e-mail to ensure you get it. For parents with babies and toddlers, our Nursery will be available from 9 a.m. to noon every Sunday throughout the year. It is always staffed by a Child Care Coordinator and a volunteer. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or talk to Pastor Gary (607-423-6456).



Our Youth Group consists of eighteen AWESOME youth from our church and Preble Congregational. In October, Youth Group will meet on Sunday evenings on the 7th from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Homer Congregational, and then on the 21st for CROP Walk at 1 p.m. (starting at Grace Holy Spirit Church, 13 Court St.). Anyone in 6th to 12th grade is invited to participate in Youth Group (and we encourage you to bring a friend)! We'll have food, faith, and fun each time we gather. Don't miss out!



It's movie time!!! Senior Fellowship will meet October 9 from 2 to 4 p.m. where we will show the heartwarming film *Stand By Me*, which is the story of a group of friends growing up in a small woodsy Oregon town who go out on an adventure in search of a missing teenager's body. Wanting to be heroes in each other's and their hometown's eyes, the boys set out on an unforgettable two-day trek that turns into an odyssey of self-discovery. Our movie will include a delicious sweet treat and a brief discussion. Also, please mark your calendars for November 13! That is when David Beale from The Picture House will return and do some painting with the seniors. We hope you will join us!



TRUSTEE'S CORNER

Members of the Board of Trustees met for their usual monthly meeting on September 18th. The Trustees managed the usual committee reports and board activities, and are moving ahead on property issues, activities on the Green, and development of the 2019 budget. The budget remains slightly in the black. Continued support of our fundraising efforts is greatly appreciated and, as I write this, we are planning a Harvest Festival dinner in early November. Plans for a variety of church and Manse repairs are being made, including repair of the roof and chimney of Jones Hall and some of the stairs in Jones Hall. We are also working on further upgrades to our computer system. We are into the 2nd month of our schools being open. Jesus is with us and guides us all to help the church and our community flourish. Thanks for all of your support and enthusiasm. Contact me or any of the Trustees, if you have questions about our activities or needs.

God's Peace be with you!



Jim McKenna, Chair

From the DEACON BENCH

We would like to thank the congregation, Carol Costell Corbin and the Global Connectors Committee for your help in assembling school kits at the end of August. Our church was able to send **19 school kits Church World Service**. We also sent in the processing fees for them (\$103.00) from the Dorothy Jane Andrews Mission Fund. We trust that there are at least 19 students who will benefit from your generosity.

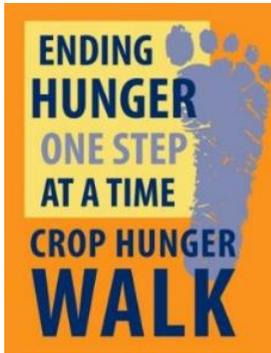


In September the Deacons donated \$500.00 to NY/Help Honduras; a mission of the NY Conference of the UCC (from the Dorothy Jane Andrews Mission Fund). Years ago HCC supported NY/Help Honduras with financial donations and members of our congregation participated in at least one mission trip to Honduras. The Global Connectors Mission Committee recently met and discussed several mission opportunities that might be of interest to our congregation. NY/Help Honduras was one of the opportunities that the committee recommended to the Deacons for our support. The NY Conference of the UCC has been working with the Toupan Indian community of La Laguna in the Yoro mountains of Honduras since 1989. NY/Help's current projects include:

- * A health clinic which serves over 2,000 patients a year from 12 communities and provides basic and emergency health care. The clinic is staffed by a full-time local nurse.
- * Scholarships for students so they can pursue education beyond 6th grade at the Centro Basico (middle school) or by correspondence courses by radio. Some students have gone on to secondary education in the nearby city of Yoro.
- * Planning, development and training programs for community leaders
- * Church folks from New York make trips to Honduras, both to teach and to learn in La Laguna. NY/Help provides opportunities for stimulating involvement with local people in the mountain villages of Honduras.

The Deacons are planning a Mission Lunch in the near future where we will learn more about the work of NY/Help and discover ways that our congregation might be involved in the projects.

Blessings, Bill Masterson for the Board of Deacons



“The CROP Hunger Walk is the ‘heart and soul’ of this community. Our walk demonstrates our community at its best.” (Aaron Nelson, Honorary Walk Chairperson, Chapel Hill, NC)

This year’s Cortland CROP Walk begins at 1 p.m. at Grace Holy Spirit Church, 13 Court Street in Cortland. We invite you to join our Youth Group and Faith Formation families as they walk, or make a donation to our team! Checks should be made out to “Church World Services” and indicate in the memo that it is for “CROP Hunger Walk.” Or you can donate online to our team at: www.crophungerwalk.org/Donate (choose donate to a team, then type in “Homer Congregational Church” to access our page).

Your participation impacts individuals and families in more than 35 countries. In many developing nations, people can walk up to six miles a day to get food and water. One in nine people worldwide lack access to clean water and a healthy diet. We walk to be in solidarity, bring awareness to these issues and raise the funds for permanent change. Don’t miss out!



Homer Nursery School Notes



Nursery school is off to a great start. We went to the community garden and picked our veggies we planted in the spring. We will use them to make vegetable soup. We also participated in the clean bucket program and filled two buckets to be donated to flood victims. We will also have a Halloween parade at the end of the month.

There are still a couple of openings available. If anyone is interested, please call Lisa Clark at 607-749-6753.



*Watch for the
Lunch Bucket Campaign
early in October.*

General Information to Note:

The Landmark Society of Homer will hold their fall celebration on **October 12 & 13**. On Friday evening, they will **Light Up the Green**, spotlighting the churches on our green.

On Sunday, October 28, we will have a **Lunch and Learn** presented by Craig & Michelle Brooks, owners of Coffee Mania. We look forward to learning about their unique style of business.

On Monday, October 29 the **Church Council** will meet. This body includes chairs, co-chairs & vice chairs of all officers, committees, boards and/or teams of our church. Rev. Barbara Wright is our Moderator, and she will convene the meeting.

Turn the page of your calendar to November:



*You'll be hearing more about
Saturday, November 3
something old/something new...*

Harvest Festival & Roast Pork Dinner!



Sunday, November 11 we celebrate **Stewardship Sunday**. The Deacons and Trustees are already working on a vision and plan for ministry in 2019. Join us in prayer as, together, we discern the future to which God calls us and the resources we will need to accomplish our shared ministry.

Who in the world is Quinn Caldwell?

If you do not know, you will find out in **November** and **December**.

Or you could just google his name now!

Worship in October

Doris Hoffman is the Deacon of the Month.
Lee Dennis is our Trustee Verifier.

Sunday, October 7

World Communion Sunday

Pastor Vicki will be on vacation. Pastor Gary will preach and preside at Communion.

Scripture: Genesis 2:18-23

Sermon: Becoming One

Special Offering "Neighbors in Need"

As we celebrate communion, we will be assisted by Deacons Evan Faulkenbury, Darci Gumaer, Doris Hoffmann and Terry Pedersen

Ushers & Greeters ~ Kathy & Jim McKenna, Carl & Connie Applegate

Nursery volunteer ~ Sue Urban

Coffee Hour ~ Carol Agate

Flowers – Dora Jones in honor of family

Sunday, October 14

Pastor Gary will be preaching at Henrietta (Rev. Dr. Kathleen Waters' current ministry)

Scripture: Mark 10:17-31

Sermon: It's (not) Impossible

Ushers & Greeters ~ Dora Jones, Becky Jones, Gail Van Patten, Deborah Pelowski

Nursery volunteer ~ Carol Costell Corbin

Coffee Hour ~

Flowers ~ Joanne Cincotta in honor of her father's birthday

Sunday, October 21

Celebrating Membership: Old and New!

Scripture: Psalm 34

Sermon: Why Should I Join the Church?

Ushers & Greeters ~ Bev & Steve Berry, Paula & Gary Harrington

Nursery volunteer ~ Anne Wingard

Coffee Hour ~ Deacons

Flowers ~ Dale Halstead & Shirley Hammond in memory of Jennie Halstead & Fred Hammond

Sunday, October 28

Scripture: Mark 10:46-52

Sermon: Throwing Off the Cloak Mask

Ushers & Greeters ~ Mary Barhite, Jan Jeffers, Ellen Paterson, Bry Meyka

Nursery volunteer ~ Mark or Tracy Bertram

Coffee Hour ~ The Harrington family

Flowers ~ Shirley Osterhoudt in memory of Edward Osterhoudt

Following the service, we will have a Lunch and Learn presented by Craig & Michelle Brooks, owners of Coffee Mania. We look forward to learning about their unique style of business.

Special Worship Series Continues:

Understanding the myriad ways of encountering the Holy has led us to design a special Thursday evening experience – one per month – that will offer something different than Sunday morning worship. There will be more silence. These services will last 30-45 minutes.

October 18

Rev. Gary Smith will lead Contemplative Worship at 7 p.m. using contemporary music and a monastic-style "Evening Prayer."

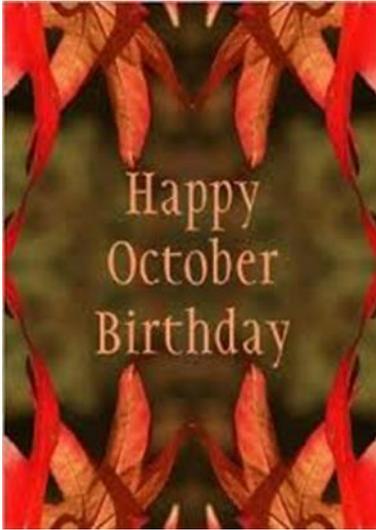
November 1

All Saints Service especially for families who have suffered the grief of miscarriage and/or loss of a child.
Pastor Vicki and Bonnie Smith will lead the service.

December 13

A Blue Christmas Service – acknowledging that the holiday may not be joy-filled for every person.

October Birthdays



- 1 Kathleen Alvord, Connie Applegate
- 2 Virginia Knobel
- 4 Franklin Hoffmann
- 5 Steven Cinquanti,
- 9 Tracy Durkee
- 10 Russell Oechsle
- 11 Donald VanSlyke
- 13 Nicholas Dentes
- 15 Jacob Durkee, Muriel Newcomb
- 17 Lynn Olcott
- 23 Olivia Harrington, Gary Harrington
- 24 Marc Settineri
- 28 Frances Armstrong

We're sorry if we missed your birthday. It's because it is not in our computer membership files.

From the Treasurer:

- Operating Revenues at 8/31/18 - \$149,276 61.3% of budget (budget overage due to use of capital reserve not originally budgeted)
- Operating Expenses at 8/31/18 - \$146,912, 60.3% of budget

Email Contacts:

Office: office@homercc.org

Senior Pastor: pastor@homercc.org

Associate Pastor: associatepastor@homercc.org

Financial Secretary: finsect@homercc.org

Treasurer: treasurer@homercc.org

Find us online!

HCC website - homercc.com

Digital calendar - homercc.com/calendar

Follow Homer Congregational Church on [Facebook!](#)

To receive our mid-week email, Weekday Words, please email the office: office@homercc.org

Are you interested in learning more about the United Church of Christ?

UCC 101 webinar series
offered this fall by UCCNY staff

UCCNY staff will be offering a weekly webinar series **Thursdays from 7:00-7:45** starting **October 11**. Connect via video on Zoom to experience the movie being played. The reality is that most of do not know enough about our beloved United Church of Christ. We might think we do, but there are always hidden histories and nuggets of God's truth that are waiting to break forth and offer "more truth and light" into our understanding. This webinar series is an attempt to provide those new to the UCC a picture with broad strokes of who we are, and yet allow those who have been members for more years than they can remember a sense of the tiny lines that make the UCC some of the great religious treasures in our communities that need to be talked about, as we seek to build "a just world for all." To join a webinar, use this link: <https://zoom.us/j/343894848>. If you have never used Zoom, let Anne now and she will send you a link to a tutorial. You'll be zooming in no time!

Join us for:

October 11	Beginning of the UCC	David Gaewski
October 18	More than Four Streams	Ryan Henderson
October 25	American Missionary Association	Ryan Henderson
November 1	Hidden Histories: Justice and Equality	Marjorie Purnine
November 8	Telling the Story of our Always Uniting Church: City of Refuge	Marsha Williams
November 15	Unfolding Stories: The Dakota Association	David Gaewski