

Connecting UCC and Disciples Congregations in Western New York

*Nishan & Maria Bakalian are our **UCC and DoC missionaries in Lebanon**, working with our partner church there, the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches. Their work is made possible through our gifts to Global Ministries. Nishan is a pastor, teacher, and sometimes saxophone player. Maria is a college administrator and organizer whose favorite scripture is Psalm 46:10.*

Sorrow upon Sorrow

by Nishan Bakalian, August 6, 2020

“It’s an earthquake!” As the ground rolled under our feet at **Haigazian University** [an Armenian church-related, liberal arts college in Beirut], we stirred with uncertainty as to how long it would last. Seconds later, when an explosion blew out windows all around, we realized that the first was not an earthquake at all, but that we had entered a new, sad chapter in the current history of Lebanon. Sorrow has been heaped upon sorrow.

The huge inferno at the Port of Beirut that devastated, in varying degrees, nearly half of the capital city brought Lebanon yet lower into the mire and yet farther from any hope of recovery from its travail of the past months.

A mismanaged and crashing economy, unsuccessful and feeble attempts to combat corruption, stresses of hosting a refugee population numbering nearly half of the country’s resident citizens [mostly from neighboring Syria’s 10-year civil war], reduction of electrical supply to three or four hours a day, the diversion of crucial resources to combat the coronavirus—all of these were more than most

could bear. Now this, and people ask, “What’s next? What more could possibly happen?”

Glass is everywhere. Haigazian’s buildings were all affected heavily. The churches and schools of the **Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches (UAECNE)** sustained great damage.

The sliding glass doors that form the entire front of the **Near East School of Theology** [seminary] came crashing down. Thousands were injured, and the death toll is rapidly approaching 200. Homes and businesses were shattered. One side of our apartment, located in the UAECNE headquarters, had all its doors and windows blown inward. An elevated roadway near the blast site has been closed and is in danger of collapse.

Yet the greatest casualty of this event on a breezy August 4th evening was the spirit of the people. It has been crushed, demoralizing a population wishing for a better tomorrow for their children, hoping to stem the tide of emigration for job opportunities. **Is it “crushed but not broken” (2 Corinthians 4:8)?** That remains to be seen. Our work in the meantime is to pray, serve, listen, encourage, and trust God fiercely through all of this. Join us in prayer!

Donations to support the work of Nishan & Maria Bakalian have no percentage taken out for administrative costs. Checks made out to “Global Ministries” and designated for the Bakalians may be sent to:

*Global Ministries Resource Development
PO Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206
Or use your credit card by calling: 317.713.2555.*

**Prayer Lists: September - November
2020
WNYACIC**

Rev. Teresa (Terrie) Hord Owens, General Minister and President
New Light Christian Church, Buffalo.
Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence
Plymouth Crossroads

September Prayer List

St. Stephen's UCC, East Amherst.
Ned Holderby, Pastor
St. Matthew's UCC, Hamburg.
Rev. Lynn Morgan, Pastor
St. Paul's UCC (Shawnee), N. Tonawanda.
Rev. Ronald Lord, Pastor; Bonnie Kane,
Rebecca Pittler, Christian Education
Grove Street Christian Church, Tonawanda.
Rev. Hope Harle-Mould, Pastor
Western Area Support Staff; Michelle Kemp
Budget & Finance Committee
Commission on Ministry - Disciples of Christ
In the Vineyard Editorial Board;
Shannon King, Editor

October Prayer List

St. Peter's UCC, N. Tonawanda.
Rev. Dr. Jonathan Lawrence,
Supply Pastor
Zion UCC, Tonawanda.
Rev. Elizabeth Duffy, Pastor,
Susan Clark, Christian Education
Community Christian Church, Rochester.
Rev. Steven Price, Pastor
Conference Regional Support Staff;
Rev. Shernell Edney Stilley,
Rev. Gary Ferner
Non-Parish Clergy
Western Area Youth

November Prayer List

First Congregational UCC, Angola.
Rev. David Donner, Transitional Pastor
Salem UCC, Tonawanda.
Rev. Jeremy Lopez, Pastor,
Dyanne Ingram, Christian Education,
Alice McDermott, Pastor Emerita
Faith UCC, Williamsville.
Tina Bacon, Pastor
General Office, Christian Church (DoC)
Indianapolis, Indiana.

from Rev. Lynn Morgan, treasurer, WNYACIC

Western Area Treasurer's Report

I would like to thank all the churches who have faithfully continued to support the mission of the Western Area through the months in which our churches have been coping with the challenges of the pandemic. The interruption of our normal routine, coupled with the usual slow-down of the summer, combine to put stress on the Area budget. The Area Council has authorized the use of savings which we held in a small rainy-day fund, but Area continues to rely on the regular giving of our member churches to fund the wider ministries of the WNYACIC.

I would like to thank those churches that have paid their 2020 Covenantal Shares, either in full or by regular installments. To date, 20 churches have paid some portion of their Covenantal Shares for this year. Since my last report, the following churches have contributed to their 2020 Covenantal Share: Amherst Community Church, Church of the Nativity, Ebenezer UCC, Epiphany UCC, Lockport UCC, St. Paul's UCC – Shawnee, St. Stephens-Bethlehem, and Zion UCC. Thank you all.

In September, each church will receive a letter that will report their giving to date for 2020 as well as each church's Covenantal Share for 2021 (based on reported membership in the 2020 Yearbook). Please make sure the folks doing budget preparation for 2021 are aware that Covenantal Share will be \$8 per member next year. The Per Capita support to the NY Conference UCC will continue at \$2 per member. We ask churches who combine payments for Per Capita and Covenantal Share in one check to indicate the amount for each category.

We know that God is faithful in all circumstances and that God's people are also faithful to the mission and ministry of the Gospel even in these challenging times. We have been blessed so that we might be a blessing to others.

From Jeff Mason, Finance/Endowment Committee

ENDOWMENT REPORT

You might recall from the last issue of *In the Vineyard* that our Endowment accounts took a significant hit in March, due to the onset of the pandemic. The total value on March 31, 2020 was \$376,001.09 (\$23,535.61 in the American Funds, \$24,923.13 in the United Church Funds General, and \$327,542.35 in the United Church Funds Endowment).

Our June 30, 2020 statements showed a partial recovery back to pre-pandemic levels, as follows: \$26,794.66 in the American Funds, \$26,177.69 in the United Church Funds General, and \$372,400.23 in the United Church Funds Endowment. The June 30 total of \$425,372.58 was an increase of \$49,371.49 over the March 31 total.

We are hopeful this trend will continue throughout the third quarter. The September 30 total value is used every year to determine the amount to be withdrawn and disbursed the following January. If our accounts fail to show continued improvement on the September 30, 2020 statements, this will have a negative impact on our January 2021 disbursements to Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center, Plymouth Crossroads, and the Department of Community Ministries.

From Sue Allen, RN, Good Shepherd Community of Faith Self-Care Workshops Sponsored by Good Shepherd Community of Faith

Become empowered to better serve yourself, your family, friends and neighbors in the event of an emergency. Join Dana Estrada, director of Border Community SERVICE of Niagara University, as she focuses on the four key strategic points of U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s “Ready America” program: 1. Get a Kit, 2. Make a Plan, 3. Be Informed and 4. Get Involved. Go to gscf.org to learn how to connect via Zoom and join our monthly Self-Care Workshop, sponsored by Good Shepherd Community of Faith, Wellness Ministry, Tuesday, September 22, 2020, 6:30-8pm. All are welcome to this time of learning, time of sharing, time of fellowship.

GENTLE CHAIR ARTHRITIS EXERCISE WITH CHERYL,
SPONSORED BY GOOD SHEPHERD COMMUNITY OF FAITH AT
HEACOCK PARK (CORNER OF SOUTHSIDE PARKWAY
AND MCKINLEY, BUFFALO 14220) THURSDAYS. 6:00-
7:00PM, AUGUST & SEPTEMBER (WEATHER PERMITTING)
Face coverings MUST be worn by all participants to
and from each class. A minimum distance of 6 feet

must be maintained by all participants

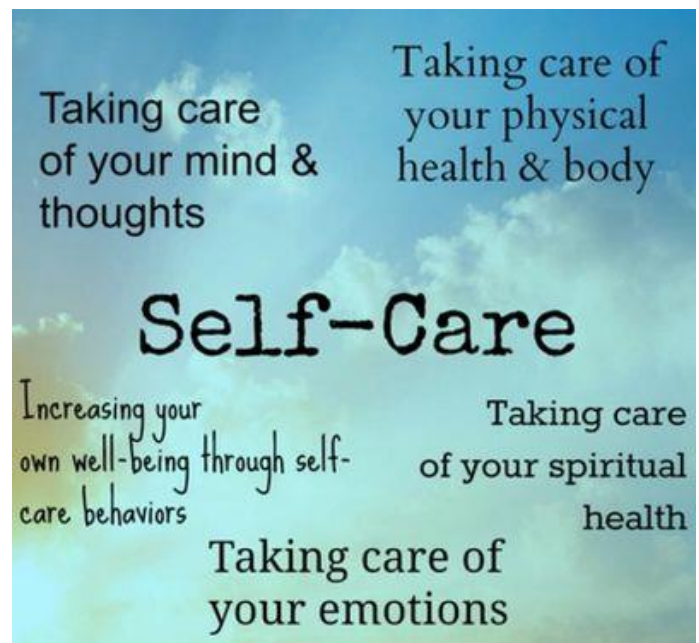
IF YOU FEEL UNWELL PLEASE STAY HOME.

Bring your own equipment. Chairs, water bottles,
etc. will not be provided and should not be shared
amongst participants.

QUESTIONS?? CONTACT SUE: 716-697-1657;

BSUEA@YAHOO.COM

Don’t let the season of ADVENT get lost in the Covid
Pandemic. Join our Zoom Self-Care Workshop,
sponsored by Good Shepherd Community of Faith
on Tuesday, November 24th, 2020, 6:30-8pm. Go to
gscf.org to learn about this time of learning, a time
of sharing, a time of fellowship. All are welcome.



From Brett Hammond, Moderator

WNYACIC ANNOUNCEMENT

After having provided many, many years of dedicated service, Kathy Najuch has retired as Area Secretary. I have been on the board for at least 10 years, and Kathy was here before me!

She has been a huge help to me, especially since becoming Moderator a few years ago. Her devotion and institutional history have been of tremendous benefit.

I am sure many of you will join me in wishing her a lengthy and wonderful journey into this next chapter in her and her family's life.

With this staff change, we have additional news to share as well.

We have hired a new Area Secretary, in Michelle Kemp. Michelle is a member and secretary at St. Matthew's UCC in Hamburg.

To facilitate this staff change, we have also relocated the Area office to St. Matthew's. Their address and phone are: **5289 McKinley Parkway, Hamburg NY 14075, 716-649-1532**. We've also created a new email address. HOWEVER, we will forward emails from the original address to the new address for the foreseeable future.

The new address

is: wny.area@gmail.com. Michelle will be in the office Monday – Friday from 9:00 – 12:00 for St. Matthew's and 12:00-2:00 for the Area. Though, some days may require her to leave for trips to the bank or post office and other such duties.

As I'm sure everyone recognizes the width and breadth of knowledge in the position that Kathy had, I entrust everyone to provide an equal amount of grace and patience as Michelle builds her own history with us.

Please feel free to reach out to both ladies.

The following is Michelle's self-introduction:

I have enjoyed church ministry in an administrative role for 17 years when I joined the Orchard Park United Methodist Church as a part-time secretary. In the last eight years, I have also shared my workdays with St. Matthew's UCC in the same role. Now I am looking forward to being your administrative support in the Western Area as well as continuing my secretarial position at St. Matthew's.

I have been an active member of St. Matthew's for over 25 years and participated in Christian education as well as missions. Special people in a special place.

I am a parent of two grown children: one who lives nearby with her husband, and my son who ventured out to Florida, preferring the heat over the cold. I enjoy spending time with my children; my daughter and I love to cook together trying new recipes, and my son likes to drive me around in his sports car. I also enjoy anything to do with nature: hiking, snowshoeing, and kayaking. I am so thankful for my many blessings and consider my work, my calling. God has a good plan for me and I'm glad it now includes you.



Payne Avenue Christian Church Update

Payne Avenue Christian Church is open for services on Sundays at 10:00am following all pandemic requirements, but it is also available for recorded services on Facebook - The New Payne Avenue Christian Church. All activities and fundraisers have been cancelled or postponed for the rest of 2020.

From Karen Zmich, Manager, United Church Manor News from United Church Manor

As banquet facilities are currently unable to provide services for large events, we regretfully report that our annual Theme Basket Luncheon will not be held this November. The good news, however, is the Manor still provides affordable housing to very-low income seniors and mobility-impaired individuals and our residents have been blessed with good health through the pandemic. Currently, our waiting list is quite short. A wait for an apartment can be as short as six months, depending upon an applicant's eligibility. In general, seniors aged 62 or older and individuals with a mobility impairment aged 18 or older qualify to live at the Manor if their incomes are less than \$27,200 annually. Annual income for a couple or two people living together cannot exceed \$31,050. Individual rents are calculated at 30% of income and income may be reduced for a percentage of out-of-pocket medical expenses. Additional information as well as floor plans and pictures can be found on our website (www.ucmanor.org).

Thank you for your continued prayers and support. We look forward to seeing all of our supporters, hopefully, next November 6, 2021!



From Rev. Gary Ferner

Churches in Transition

Epiphany UCC, Clarence Center
Trinity UCC, Gowanda
Pilgrim Memorial/First Congregational UCC, Jamestown
Lockport UCC
St. James UCC, Hamburg
New Covenant UCC, Buffalo

On June 28th Rev. Hope Harle-Mould was called as part-time Interim Pastor at Grove Street Christian Church (DOC), Tonawanda, NY.

Arcade UCC-Ride for Roswell

Arcade UCC Fights Cancer is the name of this group headed by Jamey Craft that met at the Arcade Park to do a 3-mile Ride for Roswell on Saturday, August 1st. The team raised \$3525 for cancer research for Roswell and then rode their bikes for this important cause. Riders included: Jamey and Bill Craft, Cherry Carl, Jim and Sheila Vrenna, Ginger Comstock, Jeff Mason, Jay and Kathy May, Pastor Josh Bower, Payton and Jake Romance, Shannon, Brody and Bryson King. Dona Roll provided support, counted laps and documented the event! Thank you to all who organized, participated and donated!





From Rev. Gary Burdick

Joy at Camp

My greatest joy of the summer was to experience Dunkirk Virtual Family Camp Two. Normally my family and I would have been at Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center in person as we have been for the past 45 years. It was a joy to see people on Zoom during the week that the camp was scheduled. My daughter and Pastor Krista Ulrich as Co-directors of the camp did a great job of getting several people involved with the leadership of the Zoom version of Camp. Over 75% of our regular 177 campers participated in at least one of the Morning Classes, Vesper Services, Sing-a-longs, or Talent Show. Some campers were involved in almost every event. It is a blessing that during the pandemic we were able to have at least some of "The Dunkirk Experience."

Always grateful for Dunkirk,
Gary Burdick

From Sandy Martineck- Church Council Member
**Kenmore United Church of Christ Welcomes
 New Minister**

The congregation of Kenmore United Church of Christ is pleased to welcome their new part-time minister, Rev. Dawn Marie Meier. An Installation will be planned for later this year.



From Kathy Reandeau

Plymouth Crossroads Bluesfest Cancelled

Due to COVID-19 Restrictions

After many months of careful thought and planning, the Plymouth Crossroads Bluesfest Committee members have determined the fate of the Bluesfest, which was originally scheduled for June and moved to October 18. Due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements and restrictions for the number of people in a venue, and our concerns for the bands, staff and attendees, we have decided to **CANCEL** this year's event. We do appreciate your ongoing support for our youth over the past eight years at this fun event and hope to be able to continue in the future. Please continue to uphold Plymouth Crossroads in your prayers and help sustain its crucial mission supporting homeless youth in Western New York.

From Rev. amos acree, retired

Northeast Regional Assembly, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) "A Verifiable Faith in a Virtual Assembly"

Thursday, Sept. 17, 7pm:
 Youth Leaders and Youth conversation with Disciples Peace Fellowship. Resources available at www.northeasternccdoc.com/youthministry.html

Thursday, Sept. 17, 8 pm:
 Zoom - "For All the Saints," one hour.
 All Saints celebration presented by the Christian Church Foundation staff. Tribute will be paid to pastors who have died since the last Regional Assembly. Specifically those who died related to the Covid 19 pandemic. Also a moment will be taken to name all the saints who have entered the Church Triumphant.

Friday, Sept. 18, 4 pm:
 Zoom - "Time of Fellowship and Congregational Sharing," one hour.
 Sharing from congregations, partners and some fellowship. Bring your drink and be ready to make friends.

Friday, Sept. 18, 8 pm:

Zoom - "Worship"

Service of preaching and praise. Preacher is the Rev. Dr. Juan Rodriguez, former "Timothy" of the NE Region, and retired Regional Minister of Florida. Congregational choirs that reflect the beauty of our Region will offer songs and praise.

Saturday, Sept. 19, 9am:

Zoom - "Business Meeting," one hour.

State of the Region reports, elections, resources, Commissions on Ministry reports, Williamsville Grant Ministry. Open for questions, using "chat" feature of "Zoom."

Saturday, Sept. 19, 4 pm:

"Closing Celebration," one hour.

General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) the Rev. Terri Hord Owens, address. General Ministries Partners will speak. Final Act - Holy Communion. Have your bread and cup available to join in this Service of Communion.



From Ginger Comstock, NY/HELP



In spite of COVID-19, the work of NY/HELP Honduras is still on-going. We don't know when we will next be able to visit in person, but support for our projects continues. The first room of the new middle school has now been completed. We are looking for donations to help finish the next four rooms of this new school. The women's sewing group is making progress and the women, and one man, enrolled in the classes are doing well. The first two classes have graduated. We are proud of the work they are doing. They have never had any experience in selling what they produce and we are hoping to find someone who can help them with setting up a business model to help with this. We are hoping the vocational school in nearby Yoro may be able to help with this.

Our latest newsletter was sent out, via email, in late June or early July. If you didn't get it and would like it, send your email to gkcomstock@gmail.com and a copy will be sent to you.

Donations to NY/HELP Honduras are always gratefully accepted. If you want your donation to go towards one of our specific projects (Sewing, new middle school, school supplies – The Judy Project) please put that in the memo section of your check. Checks can be made out to NY/HELP Honduras and sent to: NY/HELP c/o Arcade United Church of Christ, ATTN: Ginger Comstock, PO Box 95, Arcade, NY 14009.

From Cathy Rieley-Goddard, Co-Pastor Riverside Salem UCC/DoC

Our Faith, Our Vote

As you know, we have an election coming in November. There is much talk about how we can best vote during this season of living through the pandemic. It is important to know you have options.

Absentee ballots are available to everyone in New York State this year, due to the pandemic. You need to request one by mail ([using this link](#)) or you can visit the Board of Elections (134 W. Eagle St., Buffalo for Erie County) in person to pick one up. You can even complete the ballot while you are there if you choose.

Early Voting in person is available this year. The early voting period runs from Saturday, October 24, 2020 to Sunday, November 1, 2020, but dates and hours may vary based on where you live. The locations for early voting will be listed on the Board of Elections website: <https://www.elections.ny.gov/>

In person on November 3 at your regular polling place. Of course, you have the option to go to your polling place in person on election day to cast your ballot. The old-fashioned way is still an option for everyone.

You may not realize that voters have a Bill of Rights, but we do.

As a registered voter you have the RIGHT TO:

VOTE: The right to vote includes voting for candidates and questions on the ballot.

HAVE YOUR VOTE COUNT: Vote on a voting system that is in working condition and that will allow votes to be accurately counted.

SECRECY IN VOTING: Secrecy in voting will be preserved for all elections.

FREEDOM IN VOTING: Cast your vote free from coercion or intimidation by poll workers or any other person.

PERMANENT REGISTRATION: Once registered to vote, you will continue to remain qualified to vote from an address within your county or city.

ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS: Non-discriminatory equal access to the election system. This pertains to all

voters and includes the elderly, disabled, alternative language minorities, military and overseas citizens as required by federal and state laws.

ASSISTANCE IN VOTING: You may ask for help in voting because of a disability or an inability to read or write.

INSTRUCTION IN VOTING: You can view a sample ballot in your polling place prior to voting. You may also request help in how to properly mark a ballot and how to operate the machine.

ABSENTEE VOTING: If you will be out of your county of residence on election day or are unable to go to your polling place due to illness or physical disability, you may cast an absentee ballot.

AFFIDAVIT VOTING: Whenever your name does not appear in the poll book, you will be offered an affidavit ballot.

Voting is an act of faith. We express our values with our votes. Whether you are concerned about climate justice, the future of education, opening our borders to those escaping war, feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, your vote makes a difference. Make a plan today for casting your ballot. Your vote is your voice!



Master's Chicken BBQ



Saturday, September 12
12:00-5:00 pm (until sold out)
St. Matthew's United Church of Christ*

benefits Dunkirk
Camp & Conference Center
www.dunkirkcc.com



Drive Thru, Take Out Only



Includes 1/2 Chicken
salt potatoes
coleslaw
roll and butter
\$10.00 per dinner (cash only)

*5289 McKinley Parkway, Hamburg, NY 14075
www.stmattsucc.org

FALL SOUP/CHILI & PIE SALE
First Congregational UCC of Angola
132 N. Main Street, Angola, 14006
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7th, 12-5pm
DRIVE THRU
Pre-Sale call 716-549-2115
Quarts \$8.00
Pies \$8.00-\$10.00



First Congregational UCC of Angola CHICKEN BARBEQUE

Includes 1/2 chicken, buttered spuds, baked beans,
roll & brownie

Saturday, September 19, 2020

12:00pm - 5pm/until sold out

\$11.00
Drive Thru/Take-out

First Congregational UCC
132 N. Main St., Angola, 14006

Pre-sale Tickets call 716-549-2115

Prepared by Toni & Tony



**First Congregational UCC of
Angola Cancels Fall Bazaar
(Scheduled for October 24th)**

See you next year!

**In place of the Fall Bazaar,
First Congregational UCC of
Angola will be hosting “Timeless
Treasures” flea market/rummage
sale on September 12th,**

10am-4pm

Under the tents –

132 N. Main St., Angola 14006

**Masks and social distancing
required.**

**Please note the change for the
WNYACIC office:
Michelle Kemp
5289 McKinley Parkway, Hamburg
14075**

****Please pass this information to
your Treasurer now so they send
Covenantal Share checks to
correct location. Thank you.**

716-649-1532

E-mail - wny.area@gmail.com

“Lois’ Little Essays” Available Now!

During the Pandemic pause, Vineyard's Editorial Board member Lois Vidaver took the opportunity to compile a book of 30 essays. Titled, "Lois' Little Essays", they are each about 600 words and span the topics of "life as we know it." It is available at Amazon.com under the title.

Support Needed for our Outdoor Ministry

The Dunkirk 2020 Fund Drive Committee and Dunkirk Board need the support of all Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center friends for their 2020 Fund Drive. In a recent mailing, it was underscored that the camping program needed to be cancelled because of the Pandemic. With the income from campers about 75% of DCC's total revenue, the cancellation has resulted in a shortfall of about \$68,000 in its General Budget.

The pool is essential for all camping programs to take place. Therefore, completion of the resurfacing of the pool and work on the kiddie pool is necessary and needs to be completed for the 2021 camping season. Major projects such as erosion abatement, replacement of cabin piers and tree maintenance are also being considered.

The total goal for the 2020 Fund Drive is \$180,000. Thus far, the Committee has received more than \$75,000. “(It) is a lot of money but we can meet this goal if all of us who love Dunkirk give generously. Join us in keeping our beloved camp going strong by supporting the 2020 Fund Drive,” states the letter sent by Committee members Larry Cornwall, John Kiewit and Rev. Gary Burdick.

Donation possibilities: Mail check to Dunkirk Conference Center, 3602 East Lake Road, Dunkirk, NY 14048 or donate online at www.dunkirk.com or email exec.director@dunkirkcc.com



From Rev. amos acree (retired); member, Anti-racist team, Northeastern Region, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

What's (not) Going on Here?

Even though the atmosphere in our nation is radically conflicted these days, its roots go back to before the beginning of our nation. And although many strides have been taken to change some of this situation, we are still nowhere near finding appropriate solutions. As a white person, born/raised in the segregated deep south, I became aware of racist stands by many of the folk around me, including some in my family. I even remember a conversation I had with my father about it as a youngster. I also grew up in a Disciple church, being taught to "love my neighbor, welcome the stranger, share your resources with those without," among others. I have lived all my adult life in the north, and although it was not segregated as obviously in the south, it is present, even now. Many recent events involving people of color being wrongly shot or killed have happened in the north, as in the south.

In light of the recent protests, some with violence against innocent property and housing owners, it is time for the church and its members to get serious about "following Jesus," not just saying "we believe in Jesus" once a week or so. We need to be an "anti-racist" in action, not just in words, as a recent book by Ibram X. Kendi describes. We also need to remember that Jesus said to welcome those different from us (remember the "Good Samaritan")? And we need to remember that the way of Jesus is non-violent.

So how can we do this? One major problem is that "white supremacy" has infected many of us, mostly unconsciously. "White privilege" is generally denied, because we think it means that if we are not rich/famous, we don't have any "privilege." But the color of your skin, (not to mention your gender), does affect how others treat you. One of the most common ways racism becomes a "fact" is due to the supposed difference in crime rates in places where whites live versus where people of color live. Yet it is an established fact that overall, crime rates are worse in neighborhoods with a majority of white people, not people of color. Over history, whites have committed far more violence against people of

color than the opposite. Just remember the slave trade, not to mention slavery itself. The problem happens because prejudicial policies like racial profiling or sentencing guidelines are followed, generally at the hands of white leadership. And white silence also leads these leaders to think it is ok to go ahead with these policies without much cost to them.

So where is your community of faith in the current state of affairs? Have you had any conversations or mission initiatives to counter these policies? Or with members of your family or community or people at work? What have you thought about "Black Lives Matter?" Are you one of us who dismiss it, thinking "all lives matter!" Well, yes, we would hope that "all lives matter," but for most of our national history, this is true only about white folk. As Leonard Pitts of the Buffalo News recently suggested, "one wonders how long it will be before we come to the realization that America, as African-Americans realize, that the US has long been a racist society, since before its beginning, to the present."

So, people of faith. Where do we stand in these conflicted times? There is NO justification for shooting a person of color in the back, or someone innocently in their own home, or any of the numerous situations that have been occurring in our history. When will we truly "follow Jesus," reaching out to, as well as welcoming the stranger, the different, the immigrant, the poor? Only then will "All lives" truly matter, not just white ones. May it be so with us.



Church & Ministry Meetings –

2nd Monday of each month
9:30 am to 2:00 pm

When back to in-person meetings, they will be at Ebenezer UCC, 630 Main St., West Seneca, 14224. Members & guests are notified directly of any changes.

In the Vineyard is published quarterly by the Western New York Area Churches in Covenant (WNYACIC).

Editorial Board

amos acree Alfred C. Plant
Rev. Hope Harle-Mould
Editorial Assistant - Lois Vidaver
Editor - Shannon King

Distribution (Please note the change)–

Michelle Kemp

5289 McKinley Parkway, Hamburg 14075

****Please pass this information to your Treasurer now so they send Covenantal Share checks to correct location. Thank you.**

716-649-1532

E-mail - wny.area@gmail.com

Visit the WNYACIC website:

<https://wnyuccdoc.wixsite.com/wnyacic>

Send newsletter items to:

inthevineyardeditor@gmail.com

In the Vineyard, published four times a year, invites you to send us your comments and opinions, expressions of faith and announcements of events. We welcome information regarding the health and welfare of our clergy and others in the Western Area. Please write us when you know of a birth or celebration, a serious illness or a death in our church family – please include your name and telephone number.

Please have submissions for the upcoming Winter issue in by November 17, 2020.

