



Connecting UCC and Disciples Congregations in Western New York

WNYACIC Moderator Snapshot

Hello WNYACIC,

I was asked to write an article to tell you about my role in the WNYACIC.

First, for the boring part, here is my job description as outlined by the Constitution and Bylaws.

The Moderator:

- a) shall have general supervision of the work of the Association in cooperation with the Association Council and in consultation with the Regional Conference Minister,
- b) shall preside at all meetings of the Association and the Association Council,
- c) may attend meetings of all committees of the Association with voice but no vote, serve as liaison between the Association and the Conference,
- d) shall appoint special committees as needed or as requested by the Association Council or the Association.

But if you know me, you know I'm never one to do something half-heartedly. I enjoy working with other churches and pastors to further the ministry of the Church (and specifically our denominations) in WNY. This means that in addition to my above job description, I also want to encourage greater ministry cooperation between our local churches. The reality is that ministry, especially in these last two years, isn't easy. Pastors and churches need to support one another and aid each other in ways

that they can. And the more we work in cooperation, the more ministry we can do in WNY. Take the Western Area Youth for example – churches that have only a couple of youth can't plan mission trips and retreats on their own, but with WAY they have these options (and youth from larger youth groups love working with youth from other churches). Or think about ministry to refugees; alone, churches can only do so much, but when we work in cooperation with each other, we can truly help people.

Working with the council, we're always trying to find ways to enable ministry cooperation. We have an upcoming "Let's Talk Race" Lenten workshop we're putting together with the Center for Racial Justice. And we recently did a survey that was available to every church/pastor so that we can find out how to better serve our churches. Plus, we're always open to new ideas that are in favor of supporting local ministry.

That's a snapshot of what I do as your moderator. I also serve a church that is growing each year and I'm raising two very active kiddos. My time is always limited, since I have a lot on my plate, but if we can work together to spread the Kingdom of God – I'm all in.

In Christ's abundant love,

Elizabeth Duffy



Prayerlists – December 2021-February 2022

December Prayer List

- UCC Congregational, Arcade:
 - Josh Bower, Pastor
 - Deb Wood, Christian Education
 - Rev. Robert Dievendorf, Pastor Emeritus
- Immanuel UCC, Orangeville:
 - Rev. Elizabeth Meacham, Pastor
- St. Paul’s UCC, Attica:
 - Rev. Lauran Heidenreich, Pastor
 - Marie Lowe, Faith Community Nurse
 - Rev. Charles Williman, Pastor Emeritus
- Salem UCC, Bennington:
 - Rosann Lowder, Pastor
- Payne Avenue Christian Church, North Tonawanda:
 - Rev. Robert Fleming, Pastor
- Church and Ministry Committee
- Western Area Youth (WAY):
 - Krista Ulrich
- NY Conference UCC:
 - Rev. David Gaewski, Conference Minister

January Prayer List

- Good Shepherd Community of Faith, Buffalo:
 - Rev. Tanya Spencer, Pastor
 - Sue Allen, RN, Parish Nurse
- Grace UCC, Buffalo:
 - Rev. Larry Jackson, Pastor
- Kenilworth UCC, Town of Tonawanda:
 - Rev. Lori Keller Burns, Pastor
- Grace United Church, Wellsville:
 - Supply pastors
- Center for Christian Growth of WNY
- Food For All
- East Aurora Christian Church:
 - Rev. Jan Mahle

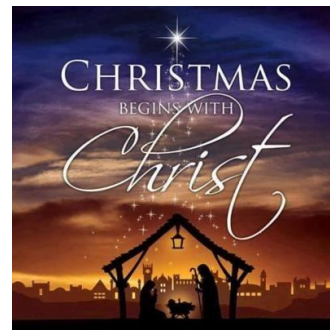
February Prayer List

- Amherst Community Church, Snyder:
 - Rev. Lisa Drysdale, Pastor
 - Debora Cullen, Christian Education
- New Covenant UCC, Buffalo:
 - Rev. Rachelle Sat’chell Robinson, Pastor
- Union Road Community UCC, Cheektowaga:
 - Supply pastors
- Kenmore UCC, Kenmore:
 - Rev. Dawn Marie Meier, Pastor
- Cleveland Heights Christian Church, Cheektowaga:
 - Rev. Jennifer Heckmann, Pastor
 - Laura Mazurkiewicz, Christian Education
 - Rev. Kenneth Neal, Pastor Emeritus
- Lay Ministers/NYSOM
- United Church Manor
 - Karen Zmich, Manager
- United Church of Christ, National Office
 - Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, General Minister and President
- Riverside Salem UCC, Grand Island:
 - Environmental Task Force
- Lockport UCC:
 - Samaritan Pastoral Counseling Scholarships

from Rev. Gary Ferner, Associate Conference Minister

Churches in Transition

- St. James UCC, Hamburg
- Pilgrim Memorial UCC/
First Congregational UCC, Jamestown
- Covenant UCC, Gasport
- Trinity UCC, Gowanda
- Friedens UCC, North Tonawanda



from Rev. Lynn Morgan, treasurer, WNYACIC
Western Area Treasurer's Report

Thanks to all the churches who have faithfully supported the work of the Area through Covenantal Share giving. To date, 28 churches have paid some or all of their Covenantal Share. Current Covenantal Share income is 53% of the budgeted amount for 2021. Many churches pay their Covenantal Share at the end of the year, but we are running a little behind in donations compared to last year at this time. (For those planning to make payments at the end of the year, be advised, I will keep our 2021 books open in early January to accommodate late payments that come in after the end of the year. If you are making a payment in January for 2021, please let me know so it is properly credited.)

The proposed budget for 2022 (which will be acted on at the Annual Meeting) totals \$65,905.89, which reflects a 5% increase in general spending, and projects a small budget surplus to be applied to the Budget Contingency Fund ('rainy day' fund). Endowment income was up, so we will see an increase of 11% in total funding for Dunkirk Conference Center, Plymouth Crossroads, Western Area Youth, Senior Wishes and other ministries funded through the Department of Community Mission.

As we strive to re-establish the worship and program lives of our congregations in this nearly post-pandemic environment, we are sorting through things that will remain and things that will change. Thanks to all who remain faithful in giving to support the ministry and mission of the Western Area.

from Jeff Mason, Finance Committee
ENDOWMENT NEWS

Our Endowment accounts did well for most of the third quarter, but the uncertainty in Washington, D.C., over the federal debt limit and other budget matters in the last half of September caused some of our holdings to take a hit, which was represented in the September 30 statements.

As of September 30, 2021, we had \$35,487.07 in the American Funds (up from \$35,629.34 in June); \$31,560.43 in the United Church Funds Account 010 (up from \$30,376.23 in June); and \$427,701.80 in the United Church Funds Account 009 (down from \$432,735.48 in June).

The total value of our Endowment on September 30 was \$494,749.30, which was a decrease of \$3,991.75 from the June 30 total.

Save the Date!

New York Conference Annual Meeting, June 9-12, 2022

UCCNY 2022 Annual Meeting will take place at the Silver Bay Retreat Center, Silver Bay, NY. There will be a pre-Annual Meeting Learning Institute beginning on June 9 and ending on June 10. Annual Meeting will begin in the afternoon of June 10 and will finish at noon on June 12. We pray COVID-19 will not prevent us from having this in person Annual Meeting. More information will be forthcoming.

Dunkirk Camp & Conference Center News



Halloween Happening 2021

The Halloween party was a total success this year! The rain held off long enough for the nearly 600 Trick or Treaters who came and filled their bags with goodies, visited the Haunted House, took to the dance floor at Mother's and went to the Dining Hall for a Costume Contest and some yummy food.



Fall Work Weekend

This was our first year to have a Fall Work Weekend and we'd like to give a big Thank You to those who attended. "Many hands make light work" and were able to get the pool cover on, the picnic tables put away, cabins closed up for the winter and much more. THANK YOU SO MUCH!



2022 marks the 100th Anniversary of the Dunkirk Camp & Conference Center

Follow our Facebook page and Website www.dunkirkcc.com

for information on upcoming events!

2022 Dunkirk Camp Schedule

- Women's Weekend - June 3-5
- Senior High & Pilgrim Camps - June 26- July 2
- Junior High Camp - July 3-9
- Family Camp 1 - July 10-16
- Outdoor Adventure Camp - July 17-23
- Family Camp 2 - July 24-30
- Pioneer and Theater Camps - July 31-Aug. 6
- Soccer/Swim Camp - Aug. 7-13

Call or visit 716-366-1900, www.dunkirkcc.com for more information.



Support for Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center

Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center provides rich Christian camping experiences for kids and adults. Go to www.dunkirkcc.com for information about our programs.

We ask that you consider supporting our ministry in these challenging times. **Financial donations, estate bequests and attendance at our programs are greatly appreciated!** For those of you who use Amazon, consider making Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center your Amazon Smile recipient. Dunkirk will then receive a small donation from Amazon.

Here's how to shop AmazonSmile:

1. Visit smile.amazon.com.
2. Sign in with your Amazon.com credentials.
3. Choose a charitable organization to receive donations or search for the charity of your choice.
4. Select Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center.



11th ANNUAL FRIDAY FREE LUNCH PROGRAM

FEBRUARY 18-APRIL 8
11:30 am- UNTIL GONE
DRIVE-THRU ONLY

FAITH U.C.C
1300 MAPLE RD. WILLIAMSVILLE
14221/CORNER OF HOPKINS RD.



Upcoming Events at Ebenezer UCC

Ebenezer United Church of Christ at 630 Main Street in West Seneca, 14224, has the following events scheduled this Fall/Winter. Watch for additional information on their Facebook page or call 716-674-4566:

Sunday, December 19, 5 PM:

Living Nativity – Two performances, 6 PM and 6:30 PM, light refreshments served in Fellowship Hall

Friday, December 24:

5 PM, Christmas Eve Family Service
9 PM Communion and Candle Light Service

from Rev. Gary Ferner, Associate Conference Minister

Search and Call News

To all Profile Administrators, Conference Staff Validators, Ministers, References, and Other Users of the UCC Ministerial Profiles Portal,

As announced in a [United Church News article](#) in May and as shared in our previous communication, the United Church of Christ profiles system will be moving to a new platform by the end of 2021, as the current platform will no longer be providing support after December 31st.

MESA (UCC Ministerial Excellence Support and Authorization Team) has been working with Suran Systems, which has included regular check-ins and opportunities to provide feedback. The progress on the new system has been steady and on schedule. We are pleased to assure all users that there will be no interrupted service as the new system prepares to launch.

Once again, the change to the Ministerial Profiles Portal does not include any content revision to the Ministerial Profile. However, the new layout will be organized in a more user-friendly manner.

MESA is now able to share more details on the new system, including training times for users:

The official cutover date for the new system will be **Monday, December 6th**. All information will need to be saved by 4pm ET on Friday, December 3rd.

- As part of this cutover, the current profile system will experience an outage beginning late on **Friday, December 3rd and continuing through Sunday, December 5th**.

- While users may manually save information as they wish, all information will also be migrated over automatically as part of the new system's launch.
- The current schedule for Ministers, Validators, and References will be on the following dates and times; look for registration for these trainings to follow in a subsequent email:
 - Minister Training: December 7 and 14, 4:00 – 5:00pm ET
 - Validator Training: December 8 and 15, 4:00 – 5:00pm ET
 - Reference Training: December 9 and 16, 4:00 – 5:00pm ET
- For those who cannot make these trainings, video tutorials will be made available at ucc.org for ongoing use.



**Payne Avenue Christian Church
1459 Payne Ave. North Tonawanda 14120
is Having a Drive-Through Chiavetta's
Chicken Dinner
from Noon to 4pm
on Saturday, December 4th
Tickets are \$12
Dinners will include ½ chicken, roll and
butter, macaroni salad and coleslaw!
For tickets or more information, please call
Debra at 716-990-3942
or the church office at
716-260-1217.**



from Rev. Gary Ferner, Associate Conference Minister

Reflections

Like a lot of you, I love music. I love all kinds of music: classical, folk, rock, all kinds of metal music, sacred music....You probably have your own list of favorite types of music, and even if music doesn't play a large role in your life, you probably have a sense of what you like and what you don't like.

Regardless of the kind of music we love, there are some basic concepts that make music music: rhythm, meter, melody, harmony, dissonance, resolution just to name a few. We might have a friendly argument about what exactly constitutes music, but to mangle a common phrase: music is generally in the eyes of the beholder!

I was driving home from Buffalo yesterday, after a full day of meetings, and I was listening to music. For whatever reason, I began to listen to the inside of the music, where there were silent places. It was fascinating to me to listen for the pauses, the rests, and the spaces in between the notes, chords, melody and harmony.

That got me thinking about how our spiritual lives can be a lot like a song.

A quiet song might be punctuated with some crescendos, a boisterous song might be punctuated with a well-timed rest or pause.

But no matter the type of song your spiritual life might be, it will need some silence in between the other stuff, otherwise it becomes chaos, or cacophony.

We might not think about our spiritual lives very much; many of us leave that up to whatever we do at church. But I would like to suggest that by thinking about our spiritual lives as a song, we can think about the role silence plays in between the notes, how necessary silence might be in order for our song to make sense.

Admittedly, there isn't a lot of silence in the kind of music I listen to, and that got me thinking about whether I leave enough silence in my spiritual life. There seems to be a parallel there for me. Perhaps for you, too.

I'll be thinking about finding ways to incorporate more silence into my spiritual life song, and, after reading this, maybe you will too!

Blessings,

Gary



**ST. PETER'S U.C.C. PRESENTS
FREE CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

St. Peter's United Church of Christ, 1475 Orchard Park Road in West Seneca 14224, will present a free Christmas concert on Sunday, December 19 at 7:00 PM in the church sanctuary. The concert will highlight St. Peter's musical group "Strike The Rock" under the direction of Mark Kasprzak, along with featured musicians. All are welcome to attend and enjoy an evening of uplifting spiritual music. There is no admission to this concert, but a free-will donation will be requested. Further information may be obtained by contacting the church office at 716-674-1233 or visiting the church's website at www.st-petersucc.org.

**Charles Dickens Presents A
Christmas Carol -
A Solo Performance Starring Mike
Randall**



**Presented by St. John's UCC
Saturday, December 18, 6pm
733 Central Ave., Dunkirk, NY 14048
Tickets - \$15, Please purchase by Dec. 14
Call 716-366-0710 or email
stjohnsucc3@netsync.net**



**Prayers From the Youth of
Good Shepherd Community
of Faith**

**Written by... Lily
Good Shepherd Community of Faith**

We Thank the Lord for giving us the
Earth, Family, Friends and life.....Amen

We Thank the Lord for Good Shepherd
Community Church and pray for the sick
in hospitals....Amen

We Thank the Lord for the SPCA and
animals on this earth.....Amen

We pray for people who are sick and
injured to get better, we pray for the
homeless, and orphans to find a home,
and to make money by working hard
.....Amen

**Written by... Mya
Good Shepherd Community of Faith**

I pray God that all the animals get new
homes and do not have to be in
cages.....Amen

I pray that COVID -19 will end and a cure
is found.....Amen



BREAKFAST WITH SANTA
Saturday, December 11
9 am- 11:30 am
Epiphany UCC
9365 Clarence Center Rd.
Clarence Center, NY 14032
Treat your family to breakfast:
Pancakes, sausage, juice
And visit with Santa!
Cost: \$8 Adults
\$5 Children 2-10
(Under 2 – Free)

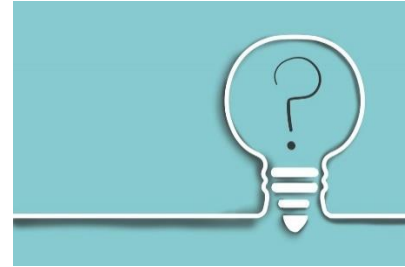
Call the church office 716-741-1441
To sign up or for more information!

Kenmore-Tonawanda Churches’
Blue Christmas Service
At Church of the Nativity UCC

The holiday season can be difficult for those who have experienced a loss, illness or hardship. The Ken-Ton Clergy Association has chosen Monday, December 13th to hold a Special Blue Christmas Service to acknowledge the sadness some people may feel during the holiday season.

The service, on December 13th at 7:00 p.m., will emphasize the presence of God, who comes as light into the midst of darkness, bringing comfort and hope. It will be held at Church of the Nativity United Church of Christ, 1530 Colvin Boulevard, one block north of Sheridan Drive in the Town of Tonawanda, 14223. Telephone: (716) 875 3365. Access to the recorded service will be available after, at www.nativityucc.org.

The church is fully accessible. Parking is in the rear. Masks are required. All are welcome.



In the Vineyard asks the following question:

"If you could invite a Biblical character to a worship service at your church, who would it be and why?"

From Betty J. Lamb

Esther!! Would like to hear her tell her experience and rationale for her decisions and her feelings being a woman in the society/environment she lived! But first I imagine I would have to deal with her culture shock reactions!!!

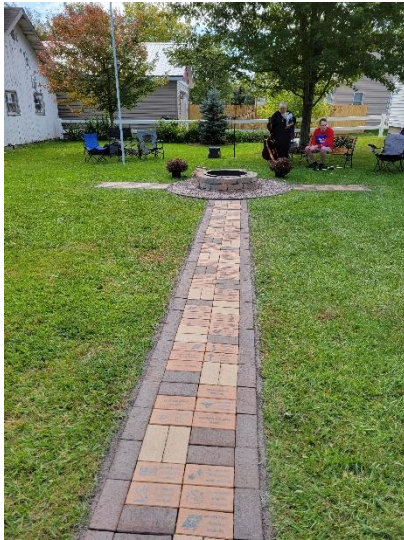
From Rev. Lori Burns, Kenilworth UCC

I think Kenilworth UCC should invite the Ethiopian eunuch so that he knows nothing will prevent him from worship! And we should also invite Mary Magdalene as she has been so maligned by the church ... just to deeply apologize, help her to feel welcome and invite her to teach and preach.

From Lois Vidaver, Kenilworth UCC

Lois, of course! Her name only appears once in the Bible, but she is lifted up in The Second Letter of Paul as the grandmother of Paul's disciple, Timothy ("my beloved child"). "I am reminded of your sincere faith," says Paul, "a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you." We would have many grandmotherly tales to share....

Pembroke Community Church Dedicates Fire Pit and Walkway



The walkway and firepit dedicated in memory and honor of family and friends of Pembroke Community Church.



Mike Egloff, Rev. Gary Burdick, Rev. Linda Harle-Mould, and Rev. Hope Harle-Mould sit around the new firepit to lead the singing.

Pembroke Community Church UCC/DOC recently dedicated a fire pit and walkway in memory and honor of family and friends. The fire pit is in memory of Ric and June Maurer, long-time members of the church and youth advisors in the 70's and 80's. The Maurers were a camping family and for many years held a fall hayride and campfire

on their property. Their children Patti and Dan Bartz, Eric Maurer and Marianne Scutt and Tracy Richardson were able to attend. The walkway is in honor of many former ministers as well as family members along with memory bricks of the same.

The dedication was held on October 2, with current minister Rev. Linda Harle-Mould conducting the service. Linda's family - her husband Rev. Hope Harle-Mould, daughter, son-in-law and grandson, also attended. Other former ministers in attendance were Rev. Gary Burdick, Rev. Marge Neal and her husband Rev. Dr. Ken Neal, Rev. Bob Fleming and wife Sue and Rev. Barbara Hulsing, husband Russ and their five granddaughters. After the service, refreshments were served, a fire was lit and there was singing around the campfire. Mike Egloff, current member and head of the project committee, Rev. Gary Burdick and Pastor Linda played guitars and led the singing.

All are welcome to stop by and see this beautiful display of love and memories.



Grove Street Christian Church Spaghetti Dinner and Basket Raffle

Saturday, December 11, 2021

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Tickets \$10

**Includes spaghetti and meatballs, roll,
salad, and a choice of dessert.**

Eat in or take home.

85 Grove St, Tonawanda, NY 14150

For additional information or questions, please contact
Matt Weinert (716-713-6494) or
Ellen Church (716-207-6614)



UCC -NY Conference
and the
Center for Racial Justice
PRESENTS
“Let’s Talk Race”



PART I

White Savior: Racism in the American Church
Monday, February 7, 2022
7-8:30 p.m.

This online film screening and discussion will explore the historic relationship between racism and American Christianity, the ongoing segregation of the church in the U.S., and the complexities of racial reconciliation.

PART II

Online Learning Sessions
Mondays, March 7-April 11, 2022
7-9 p.m.

Building upon the film screening, we will examine the impacts of racism in our communities, the challenges of diversifying churches, and the tragic impacts of the “Unholy Trinity”—implicit bias, stereotypes, microaggressions. And we will discuss how we can make racial justice an important part of our faith journey.

“I cannot more highly recommend this course of study!

Our nation must finally reckon with the tragic elements of our racial history.

There will be no progress until this occurs. The first step is learning about it.

Conversations, difficult as they may be, will help us come to healing and reconciliation.”

(Kathleen Elliott-Birdsall, educator and “Let’s Talk Race” participant)

from Patricia Burgstahler

Kenmore UCC – Past, Present and Future



(From left to right) Jim Aichinger - President of the Church Council, Sandy Martineck - Anniversary Organizer, Carol Graczyk - Member for the longest time (70+ years), Pat Burgstahler - Historian

The congregation of Kenmore UCC celebrated its 95th anniversary in October. After a special service commemorating the historic date, we enjoyed a delicious luncheon for members and invited guests. A display was put together including scrapbooks, photo albums and memorabilia showing the original building and all the additions. Anyone taking the time to look through the books could see all the people who helped make the church what it is today.

Some events coming up in the next few weeks are a Thanksgiving chicken dinner, Mitten Tree collection, and the Hanging of the Greens and Christmas crafts on Advent Sunday. In December, we will have our Adult Fellowship Christmas party and an afternoon of caroling to our shut-ins. We will also be helping to celebrate Doris Bailey’s 101st birthday. She is without any doubt, our oldest member. Congratulations Doris!

Wellness Events Being Offered at Good Shepherd Community of Faith

187 Southside Parkway, Buffalo 14220

- On Wednesdays, 3:30-5pm NY Project Hope representatives will continue to be available in the parking lot at Good Shepherd Community of Faith, 187 Southside Parkway to answer questions, offer support and connect persons with necessary resources. All are welcome.
- CHRONIC PAIN / FIBROMYALGIA SUPPORT GROUP will meet Thursday, December 2, 2021, 4:30-5:30pm.
- Gentle chair arthritis exercise with Cheryl is offered on Thursdays, 6-7pm.
- NY PROJECT HOPE COVID SUPPORT GROUP continues on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of every month from 5-6 pm.
- **Looking ahead to 2022.** Come join us in the New Year for New Self-Care Workshops which will focus on a variety of self-care topics and activities including health, yoga and a new component, Nutrition Education. **Unique Brown**, SNAP-Ed Nutritionist, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Erie County will be providing *hands on experiences for persons of all ages. (Kids welcome) We might even cook up some tasty treats together.*

EVERYONE is welcome to attend all programs mentioned above. Masks are mandatory in-house at this time. Social distancing will be respected. Each opportunity is held at Good Shepherd Community of Faith, 187 Southside Parkway, downstairs, and will be handicap accessible.

Contact Sue bsuea@yahoo.com, 716-697-1657 if you have questions. Hope to see you!

The “In the Vineyard”
Editorial Board welcomes any
meditations or devotions that
tie into the church year for
our newsletter’s front page.

(Word count of 400-475
words, please.)

Please submit your piece to

inthevineyardeditor@gmail.com

Thank you in advance!





Church & Ministry Meetings –

2nd Monday of each month

9:30 am to 2:00 pm

Ebenezer UCC, 630 Main St., West Seneca, 14224.

Members & guests are notified directly of any changes.

New York Area Churches in Covenant (WNYACIC)

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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 Spring issue in by February 14, 2022.