



Connecting UCC and Disciples Congregations in Western New York

No Ordinary Time

By Rev. Lynn Morgan, St. Matthews UCC

If you are looking for a practical gift for the clergy person in your life, think about purchasing or crafting a green stole to bestow on them. We are entering upon the green season, and it's a long one. No, I don't mean the all-too-short season in Western New York between the last frost in April (or May) and the first one in September. I mean we are entering the liturgical season in which green stoles and paraments abound. Let's hear it for Ordinary Time!

Ordinary time is not so named because it isn't special. It gets its name, like so many churchy things, from Latin; in this case, from the word "*ordinalis*," which means numbered. Ordinary time makes up the big chunk of the year between Pentecost and Advent and the sliver between Epiphany and Lent. The green seasons don't relate directly to any of the big celebrations of the church year like Christmas or Easter, and so we number them to keep track.

Growing up as a Methodist, I learned to call this season "Kingdomtide." That designation always appealed to me. The green season should remind us of the growth of the Reign of God that takes place by the Spirit at work in the people of God. It's the season of seeds that grow into mustard trees and yeast that spreads through a bakery-load of bread dough.

Ordinary time is the historical era in which we live as God's people – between the coming of Christ and the consummation of all things. This green season is a season of hope. This is the season of bearing witness to the dignity of all creation and all God's people. This is the season of laboring in the vineyard to bring forth the fruit of justice. This is the season in which we sow seeds of love, trusting in a harvest of perfect unity and peace by God's grace.

This isn't a season *after* Pentecost as though the age of the Spirit was over; it's a season in which the winds of Pentecost blow through us and direct us toward a future God has in store for us. It's a season for us ordinary folks to be prophets and pilgrims.

This time of green leaves and green vestments is no ordinary time. It is the time for flourishing because the power of God is working in us.





**WNYACIC Prayer Lists:
June-August 2023**

June Prayer List

St. John’s UCC, Buffalo. Elaine Utech, pastor
Trinity UCC, Gowanda. Jess Kowalski, pastor
First Congregational UCC, Jamestown
(worshipping at Pilgrim Memorial UCC).
Supply pastors
St. Paul’s UCC, Wendelville, N. Tonawanda.
Rev. Ann Quinn, pastor
Department of Community Ministries
Chautauqua Association of Disciples of Christ
Chautauqua UCC Society
Global Ministries - prayers for Haiti and Ukraine

July Prayer List

Phoenix UCC, Amherst. Marcia Tolman, pastor
Riverside-Salem UCC/DOC, Grand Island.
Rev. Catherine Rieley-Goddard, pastor
First Congregational UCC, Niagara Falls.
Supply pastors;
Rev. Marna Pritchard, pastor emerita
Church of the Nativity UCC, Town of Tonawanda.
Rev. Scott Thomas, interim pastor;
Rev. Dan Schifeling, pastor emeritus
East Aurora Christian Church (DOC).
Rev. Jan Mahle, pastor;
Rev. amos acree, pastor emeritus
Department of Local Church Ministries
VOICE Buffalo
Dunkirk Camp & Conference Center
Global Ministries - prayers for Sri Lanka

August Prayer List

St. James UCC, Hamburg.
Rev. Paul Werner, pastor
Ebenezer UCC, West Seneca.
Rev. Gary Gossel, pastor;
Krista Ulrich, Minister of Visitation & Pastoral
Care, and Director of Faith Formation
United Baptist-Christian Church (DOC), Lewiston.
Vince Eisaman, pastor
New Light Christian Church (DOC – Karen Ministry),
Buffalo. Rev. Nadine Schrodt, pastor
Northeast Region, Disciples of Christ;
Rev. Thaddeus Allen, Regional Minister,
Northeastern Region
Christian Women’s Fellowship (DOC)
Western Area Nominating Committee
Global Ministries - prayers for Venezuela

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

As we turn the corner from spring to summer, the days get sunnier and so do our dispositions. Our financial situation is also sunnier than it has been recently. It was wonderful to see 31 churches receive certificates for giving 100% or more of their 2022 Covenant Share at the Spring Area Meeting!

Covenant Share giving in 2023 is 29% ahead of where it was in 2022 at this time. The faithful giving of our congregations enables all the work of the Area. Thank you.

Although we have a small operating deficit at present (\$840.02), it is not worrisome and there is plenty of cash on hand for current and anticipated expenses. As always, the generosity and commitment of our churches is deeply appreciated.

from Jeff Mason, Finance/Endowment Committee
ENDOWMENT REPORT

The Western Area Endowment Fund statements for the quarter ending on March 31 showed some gains.

Our big account at the United Church Funds stood at \$551,901.80 at the end of December and \$549,564.95 at the end of March, for a decrease of \$2,336.85. That's actually good news, since we withdrew \$29,591.00 from that account on January 30 for our annual disbursement to the Western Area budget, which was reported in the last issue of "In the Vineyard."

Our smaller account at UC Funds increased from \$40,577.53 to \$43,246.46, a gain of \$2,668.93, and our account in the Capital Group American Funds increased \$391.14, from \$36,312.30 in December to \$36,703.44 in March. Our total value increased by \$723.22, from \$628,791.63 in December to \$629,514.85 in March.

The Western Area Finance Committee held its semi-annual meeting on May 4 and voted to change the method for calculating the annual disbursement we make every January. Instead of using the total value on September 30 to calculate the disbursement, we'll take the average total value on four dates during the year and disburse 5 percent of that amount.

The Finance Committee would like to remind all people and congregations in the Western Area that donations to the Endowment are always gratefully accepted. The larger the endowment, the greater the amount that can be distributed among worthy causes such as Plymouth Crossroads, Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center, and the Department of Community Ministries.

from Rev. Gary Ferner, Assoc. Conference Minister
CHURCHES IN TRANSITION

New Covenant UCC, Buffalo: Interim in Place
Covenant UCC, Gasport: In Active Search
Church of the Nativity UCC, Town of Tonawanda:
Interim in Place.

I invite the entire Western Area Churches in Covenant to keep these churches in your prayers as they journey through their respective transitions.



from Rev. Gary Burdick, Pastor Emeritus, Faith UCC, Boston

**WOW! A VARIETY
OF WONDERFUL CAMPS**

One of the greatest things about the Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center these days is how many different kinds of camps are offered. There are seven week-long youth camps, two week-long family camps, two levels of day camps all summer long, six youth weekend camps, eight adult weekend retreats, and several special events such as Halloween Happening, Annual Picnic, and Work Weekends. There is truly something for everyone. So go on line and find the camping experience that fits your schedule and interest. Visit the website at www.Dunkirkcc.com for lots of info and to register.

from Mark Gerlach

BIG CHANGES IN STORE FOR FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC IN NIAGARA FALLS

First Congregational United Church of Christ in Niagara Falls is in the midst of some very big and very exciting changes! Our church building is nearly 170 years old. As is often the case with churches in older buildings, our congregation has found it challenging in recent years to keep it in top condition.

To that end, we've recently formed a partnership with Niagara University. In 2022 we signed an agreement to give NU ownership and responsibility for our building at 822 Cleveland Ave. in the Falls, with us receiving continued usage of the sanctuary space. NU will be restoring and renovating the building, preserving its historic elements while converting a portion of it to offices and gathering spaces for the Levesque Institute, an organization within the university dedicated to community outreach and service, which will raise the profile of our space and have a positive impact on the neighborhood around us. While those renovations are ongoing, we are holding our church services in the Gallagher Center at Niagara University.

The relationship between First Congregational goes deeper, with the church providing members to a joint council for the First Congregational / NU at 822 building, and with the church currently in conversation with NU's Campus Ministry, exploring ways First Congregational can help minister to the Protestant student population on campus.

This is an exciting moment in the history of First Congregational UCC of Niagara Falls! We feel God calling us to minister in new ways to new communities, and we're thankful that the path ahead will see us worshiping in a space that has been a part of our ministry for almost two centuries.

GRANTS AVAILABLE

GRANTS AVAILABLE

Grants from the Department of Community Ministries (DCM) are available to congregations to help develop new ministries serving their local community or bringing them into closer connection with their community or neighborhood.

If you have an idea for outreach in your community, feel free to contact us and we will be glad to help you explore and develop a fundable plan.

Examples of recent grants include: a community "Canine Carnival" collecting donations and supplies for the SPCA of Erie Co., and an "Emergency Preparedness Initiative" in the congregation and local community.

Any member congregation in good standing with the WNYACIC is eligible to apply.

A grant can be requested for a maximum of \$1500 and a church may request up to two grants per calendar year.

Inquiries and requests for more information should be directed to Ted Brelsford (pastor@faithunitedchurchucc.com, 716-941-3925).

from Ginger Comstock, NY/HELP Honduras



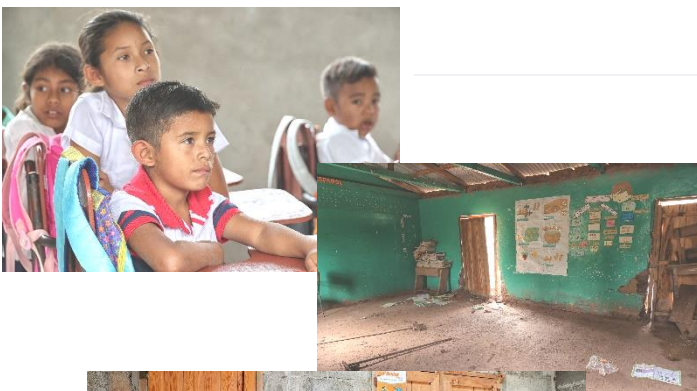
NY/HELP Honduras News

Below are several pictures from the NY/HELP trip in March. Money

was recently sent to help rebuild the kindergarten in the village of La Fortuna, where it had been badly damaged by the last hurricane. The villagers will work on rebuilding but as the rainy season has begun, getting building supplies up the mountain on muddy roads will be difficult.

In the meantime, many patients are being seen in the Gordon Comstock clinic in La Laguna by our nurse, Mirtila and our Nurse Practitioner, Joel.

We appreciate donations to help our mission continue. For the last three years, during Covid restrictions, we were not able to travel to Honduras. Donations diminished although our programs' expenses didn't. Money can be sent to NY/HELP Honduras, c/o Arcade UCC, PO Box 95, Arcade, NY 14009.



We, as the Western Association of the NY Conference UCC, are hosting the Conference's Annual Meeting this June 16-17 in Niagara Falls. Whether or not you plan to attend the Annual Meeting officially, we do need help from volunteers!

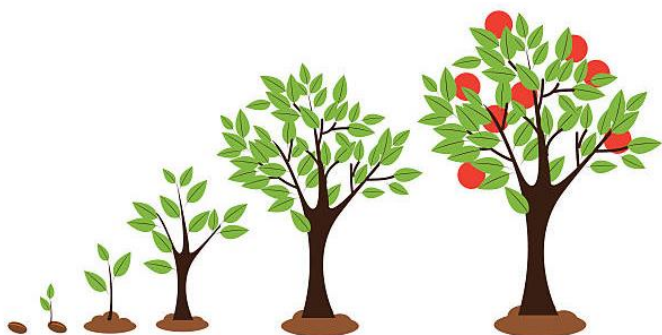
There are 3 ways to volunteer for the Annual Meeting:

1. We need **Greeters/Guides** in the Conference Center in Niagara Falls welcoming people on June 16th.
2. We need **bakers**. We need people to bake cookies and deliver them to the Conference Center on the morning of June 16th.
3. We need **drivers**. We are looking for volunteers to drive people to/from the airport(s) if they need transportation.

Visit www.zionuccton.com/volunteer to sign up for one of these volunteer opportunities. And please, **spread the word** so that we can be hospitable hosts for this NY Conference Annual Meeting!

Please Note!

Grace United Church of Christ's pastoral anniversary celebration has been cancelled for June 25, 2023. Apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused. Thank you.



Planting Seeds of Faith

All-Age Hands-On Faith Formation Event

Who: Anyone! Kids, teens, adults, seniors, church groups, neighbors...

When: Friday, June 2, 2023, 5:30-8:30 pm

Where: First Presbyterian Church
149 Broad St., Tonawanda, 14150

What: Join us for an interactive event for all ages including a shared supper. We'll have stories and song, games and crafts, opportunities to visit and study together, and some hands-on gardening activities.

What else do you get:

- A take-home six-week devotional guide, including small church Sunday school plans for six weeks of curriculum.
- An invitation to return July 15 from 10am to 4pm and enjoy more activities at Tonawanda Garden Walk.

How do I join?

Let us know you're coming. Free will offering will help us continue to offer this program free of charge to anyone interested.

To register or for more information, please call or email Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee, 716-692-1319 or RevRebeccaChaffee@gmail.com

A joint offering by First Presbyterian Church, Tonawanda and Center for Christian Growth of Western New York, the Resource Center of the Presbytery of Western New York and the Western New York Churches in Covenant.



Vacation Bible School 2023 "Hero Hotline"

Mark your calendar and join us at:
First Congregational UCC
132 N. Main St. Angola, 14006
July 25th – 27th 8:45 am- 11:30am
Free: for all children beginning at 3 years old
***Games *Snacks *Crafts *Stories *Music**
Community Children Are Invited!!!
Call 716-549-2115 to register



Register your teen here:
<https://www.zionuccton.com/way/>



We hope you will join us for General Synod 34: the United Church of Christ’s first 100% in-person gathering in almost four years!

General Synod will be in Indianapolis from Friday, June 30, to Tuesday, July 4, 2023.

Come to Indianapolis for the United Church of Christ’s “Family Reunion,” and register to access all things General Synod:

- Inspiring worship services
- Optional fellowship and dining events
- Dozens of engaging workshops
- The exhibit hall
- An electrifying keynote speaker
- Faith-filled business proceedings
- and much more!

After spending years apart, General Synod 34 is sure to be an unforgettable and transformative experience.

Don’t wait -register today! Click below to register.

[Home - The 34th General Synod of the United Church of Christ \(cvent.com\)](http://cvent.com)





IS SEEKING WISHES!

TALK TO A SENIOR TODAY!





Help Bring Joy to a Senior!

*Wish recipients must be 65+ and a resident of Western New York
 *Annual income under \$38,000 for household of one or \$44,000 for household of two
 *Permanent residents of care facilities are exempt from income qualification.
 *Recipients must be unable to fulfill the wish on their own or with family assistance.

For more information:
Go to our website:
seniorwishes.org
or
call 716-508-2121

Visit www.seniorwishes.org for more information!



Have You Seen the WNY Area Churches in Covenant Facebook Page?

When you are scrolling around Facebook, be sure to check out the WNY Area Churches in Covenant page! Stay up-to-date on upcoming events, links for registrations to various meetings, live-streamed services and much more! Simply click the link below to go directly to the Facebook page now! Then “like” the page to receive notifications in the future!

<https://www.facebook.com/WNYACIC>

Kenmore UCC Summer News

Kenmore UCC (295 Delaware Rd., Kenmore, 14217) has had a busy spring including a successful annual plant sale. Now we are looking ahead to the summer months. Please read about and consider joining us for any of the following events:

- **Thur., June 8, 6:30 pm** - An Adult Fellowship presentation about the creation of **da Vinci's Last Supper** with a make and take copy of the artwork (no talent required). Reservations are preferred. We need refreshments and materials for everyone. Call the church 716-875-1725.
- **Sat., July 15, 9-3pm - Flea Market/Baked Goods and Hot Dog Sale.** We hope you will all come to check out the great things for sale. Or rent a 12X12 space (no table provided) for \$25. Call the church at 716-875-1725 for info and an application.
- **Sat., Sept. 16 – Meat Raffle** (more info to follow or call the church for info or to reserve a table).
- **Ongoing fundraisers** – Quilt raffle (to be pulled at the meat raffle); Mystery Boxes for sale at all events; Used Sneakers fundraiser – we get paid for old sneakers. Price depends on the quality.



Memorial Service of Rev. Kenneth H. Kolbe

Saturday, June 3, 2023
11 am at Faith UCC Williamsville, 1300
Maple Road, Williamsville, 14221

Click [here](#) for the Obituary of Rev. Kolbe.



Network of Religious Communities
"Works for Humanity"

The 40th Annual Appreciation Dinner of the Network of Religious Communities

WHEN: 6:00pm Thursday, June 1, 2023
WHERE: Millennium Hotel Buffalo, [2040 Walden Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14225](#).

WHAT: An opportunity to honor persons from your religious community and celebrate the religious diversity of WNY.

SPEAKER: Maureen Rovegno, M.Div Harvard, BA Duquesne, Director for Religion at Chautauqua Institution. Retired February 2023.

ORDER TICKETS HERE:

[NRC 2023 TICKET ORDER FORM.pdf \(dropbox.com\)](#)

NEED MORE INFORMATION:

Call 716-882-4793, ext. 201

Email nrc@religiousnet.net

Website <https://www.religiousnet.org/>

WNYACIC Representatives to the Network of Religious Communities:

-Rev. Pierre Albrecht-Carrie

(albrechtcarriepierre@gmail.com)

-Rev. Dr. Jonathan Lawrence

(yonatan1970@gmail.com)



In the Vineyard asks the question:

"How does a summer ministry such as Dunkirk Camp benefit the life of your congregation?"

From Nancy Pankow

My granddaughters are in confirmation at Ebenezer UCC. They chose to be confirmed because of their experiences and friendships at Family camp!

From Lori Burns

Most of us see church summer camp as a good way to reconnect with our faith in a way that is different from the usual Sunday morning or Christian Education experience. But church summer camp is also a perfect entry point both for new and renewing Christians and for people who are questioning the relevance of faith in their lives. Church summer camp allows people to relax into faith, get out from the tomb of (literally) boxed-in holiness and into God's wide-open Creation. It is not a surprise that more than half of all authorized clergy first heard their calling at church summer camp. Never had the chance to go as a child or youth? Then *definitely* try it as an adult! But watch out - you might become a huge fan!



SUPPORT FOR DUNKIRK CAMP & 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.

Short Bible Verses about Faith

[Luke 1:37](#)

For nothing will be impossible with God.

[Philippians 4:13](#)

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

[Mark 11:22](#)

And *Jesus* answered them, "Have faith in God."

51st Annual Strawberry Social 2023



First Congregational UCC
132 N. Main Street
Angola, NY 14006

Thursday, June 15th 11am-8pm

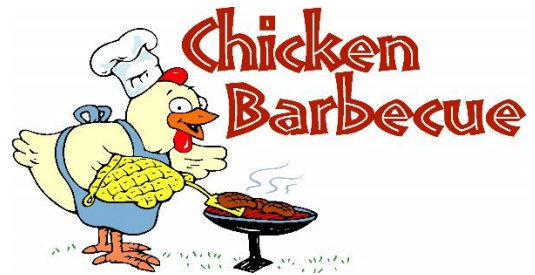
Friday, June 16th 11am-8pm

Hot dogs, Hamburgers,
Cheeseburgers, Grilled Cheese,
Italian Sausage, French Fries,
Sundaes, Milkshakes, Cones
& Strawberry Shortcake
Pop, Water & Coffee
(Menu subject to change)

Children's Pedal Tractor Pull
Ages 6-8 years old
4:00-6:00pm

Entertainment from:
6:00-8:00pm on Thursday
and 1:00-8:00pm on Friday.
Please Bring Your Lawn Chair.

Please contact First Congregational UCC
for details:
716-549-2115.



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, July 8, 2023.

Tickets price will be \$14.00.

Dinners will include $\frac{1}{2}$ chicken, roll and
butter, macaroni salad and baked beans!
Arrive early before they are sold out!
Questions call Debra @ 716-990-3942 or
the Church Office 716-260-1217.



Wendel's
CHICKEN BARBEQUE
at

FAITH U.C.C., Williamsville
1300 Maple Rd., Williamsville, 14221
Corner of Maple / Hopkins
Saturday, June 10, 2023
4:00p.m. until sold out

Drive-thru
\$15 per dinner.

Includes: $\frac{1}{2}$ chicken, roasted potatoes, roll,
and dessert.



Free Community Dinners!

Trinity United Church of Christ
30 Erie Avenue (Erie Ave. and Park St.-
use Park St. entrance), Gowanda, 14070

- Sat., June 10, 4-6pm- Hot dogs, baked beans, chips & cookie
- Sat., July 8, 4-6pm- sloppy joe, salt potatoes, fruit & cookie
- August- no meal

No meal in August due to Gowanda's 175th anniversary celebration!



Free!!! Community Picnic
Wed., Aug. 2, 5:30 pm – 7:00pm
Faith UCC, Williamsville

1300 Maple Rd., Williamsville, 14221
Corner of Hopkins/Maple

Hot dogs, drinks, sides, desserts provided.
All welcome! Bring a friend!
Hope to see you here.

No preachin,' just eatin' indoors!

For more information, please contact us at:
716-689-9274.

**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.)**

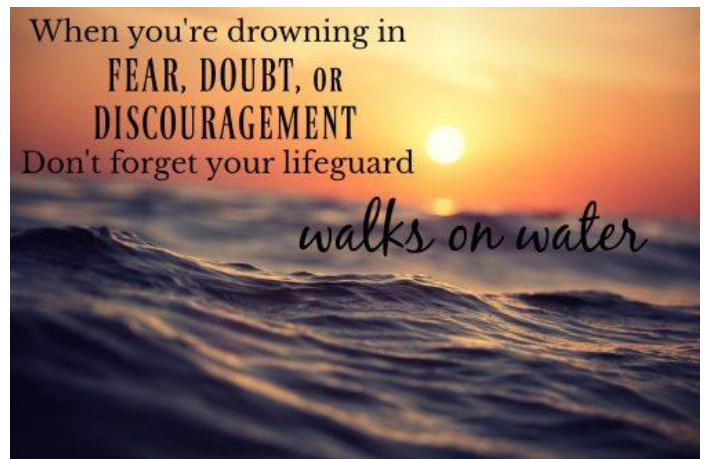
Please submit your piece to
inthevineyardeditor@gmail.com

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.



Reading today's newspapers remind me of an article I wrote for The Buffalo News in the 80's. Nothing changes much, does it? With help from my translator Carol Alt, these stories of separated families have never left my memory.

Keeping Families Together

by Lois Vidaver

Hurrah! At last, the new U.S. immigration law is working to keep families together instead of tearing them apart. A recent front-page story in The Buffalo News features the story of a young El Salvadoran family—Isaac, Norma and 22-month-old Joseph. A picture shows them smiling brightly, looking proud. They are about to set a precedent as the first family granted status as legal aliens, even though Isaac fails to meet amnesty requirements.

This is good news to those of us in Western New York who have opened our homes and hearts to so many illegal aliens from Central America this year. If there is one thing we can recognize, it's broken and broken-hearted families.

Benedict J. Ferro, district director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, said that his ability to allow the family to stay comes from his authority to review each case individually.

Hallelujah! May the service look at every case individually, so that keeping families together becomes more important than following every legal aspect of each case.

Refugees by the thousands began flooding into the Buffalo area soon after November 1986 because a new law tightened regulations of illegal aliens arriving in this country after January 1982. They were afraid they would be sent home. So, the refugees were on their way to new lives in Canada, a land with a more liberal immigration policy.

Refugee advocate groups organized carpools to pick them up at the airports and bus stations and bring them to the Peace Bridge for admittance into Canada. But then, on Feb. 20, Canada changed its immigration policies, requiring hearings to process claims to political asylum; refugees were not allowed into Canada until the hearing dates.

Ordinarily, we must admit, Buffalo is not a glamorous border town. There are no stories of people swimming the Niagara River with babies on their backs, or walking for days across the Pennsylvania mountains to gain their freedom. Refugees coming through Buffalo—illegal or not—have unobtrusively crossed over one of the several bridges into Canada with nary a nod from a Western New Yorker.

But the sheer numbers of refugees drew our attention. That's when more of us got into the act and offered housing to the refugees while they were waiting for their Canadian hearings. Families offered to take the family groups; seminaries and rectories housed the single men. Refugees stayed anywhere from two weeks to two months.

And that was when we began to hear the stories. They were shocking. We heard about war—and what hell it is. We heard about leaving your house in the morning and finding bodies stripped of skin. And being afraid of waking up. We heard about friends disappearing and half a bus load of people being shot to death because they had no money.

After she got to know me some, Lillian of El Salvador showed the scars running up her arms. Government men held her prisoner for three days, accusing her of helping guerrillas. "There are some things," she said, "I'm never going to tell my children."

And that is the biggest shocker of all. Her 6-year-old son Mauricio is with her, but a 4-year-old daughter was left behind in El Salvador with Lillian's mother. Leaving children behind? That is inconceivable to me.

But I've never lived with war. It seems that under those horrible conditions—under any conditions—you would take your children with you. But then, I never had to cross the Rio Grande River in the dark of night with water up to my chin—not once, but four times, like Lillian. What would you do with a 4-year-old under those conditions? Where would you put her? How would you carry her?

Samuel, also of El Salvador, came to Western New York from Houston with an extended family—12 of them. But not with his children. He is bitter. "What this new law does," he said, "is separate families." What he means is, "separate further." Samuel is eligible to stay in the United States; his wife, who came here later, is not. She would have to go back "home" where their two children, 9 and 10 years old, are being cared for by her parents. So, in order to stay at least partly a family, they must pull up roots again and start anew in still another strange country, even further away from their children.

Samuel came to America in 1978. "That's when our problems in our country started," he said. "They were taking men to be either guerrilla or military. Didn't want to be either one. They kill people, destroy houses."

If El Salvador is such a dangerous country, I asked him, how could he leave his children behind?

"They are safe now," he answered. "They are safe until they are teenagers. Then the government doesn't like them. They don't like young people who have new ideas."

Salvadorans Irma and Antonio also lived with a host family who grew to love them "like brother and sister." The Americans were astonished to learn the couple had left two school age children behind in El Salvador in the care of Irma's sister. When their American hosts expressed amazement, their response was, "We want to live in a place without war and this is what we have to do."

The night before their Canadian hearing, a party was held for Irma and Antonio by the host family. A guest brought several Costa Rican records. When one of them was played—"Cancion Infantil"—Antonio unexpectedly ran from the room in tears. Irma explained that song was one Antonio had sung regularly to their two children in El Salvador. All of the parents plan to find a way to bring their children "home" to them when they get settled. But I can remember how wistful Lillian became the night before her Canadian hearing, thinking about moving still further away from her homeland. "Sometimes, I feel like losing my country, my people, is losing my own family," she said. "Sometimes, I think if I went back, I could help, but then, I say, 'No, it is not possible.'" The only time she will go back, she tells me, is to retrieve her little girl.

So, it is with great delight I open my paper to read of this family. They have so much ahead of them. She is just 16; he is 26. They have a baby, a new life together in a new land; they are filled with hope for the future. You can see it in their faces.

That's how I would like our new Central American friends to look. But for all their excitement about moving to the comparative safety of Canada, there was pain in their eyes. They were missing family.

I can't believe how well we got to know them in so short a time, but sharing food and shelter, and throwing around a soccer ball will do that.

We especially found out how much they love their children.

Enough to leave them behind. Incredible! I hope I never have to love mine that much.



New York Area Churches in Covenant (WNYACIC)

In the Vineyard, Editorial Board

Rev. Hope Harle-Mould

Ginger Comstock

Rev. Ted Brelsford

Editorial Assistant - Lois Vidaver

Editor - Shannon King

Distribution: Michelle Kemp

5289 McKinley Parkway, Hamburg 14075

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 Fall issue in by August 14, 2023.****