



**Connecting UCC and Disciples Congregations in Western New York**

**A Summer of Story and  
Liberation Listening**

**by Rev. Nancy Rosas,  
Pilgrim-St. Luke's UCC**

We are story. As writer Jan Richardson says, "we are a prayer book, a holy writ, an ancient scroll, filled with stories embedded in our skin, in our hearts and minds." Our stories hold and release, ache and bring us joy, bind and free us; our stories can be and do so many things for us. Every day we are writing our story. I hope that you know and remember that each one of our own stories are part of a larger story, God's story.

We are story, a living, evolving sacred story. As disciples of Jesus Christ who taught us how to live and be active participants in God's story in our world, every time we connect with one another authentically, bringing all of who we are, light and shadows, strengths and challenges, joys and sorrows, our fears and our courage, doubts and faith, every time we take the time to listen with intention and compassion to and with one another, we encourage the possibilities to co-create in our lives and in our world more love, more goodness, healing and liberation.

This summer I decided to do a sermon-dialogue series titled: A Summer of Story and Liberation listening, inviting my church to journey together through the stories in our Sacred Scriptures in dialogue with the life stories of members of the congregation, community partners, as well as religious leaders of the Jewish and Muslim faiths,

with whom Pilgrim-St. Luke's does ministry together in the community in peace and social justice issues. "Liberation listening" is a term coined by Rev. Otis Moss III in his most recent book "Dancing in the Darkness." It is a way of listening that encourages everyone's transformation. My life and faith have been transformed this summer through my sharing of and listening to stories, through the co-creating of holy spaces where God's love and wisdom have been teaching and healing us, and through imagining and co-creating possibilities together.

Every Sunday when preaching this summer, I did the theological framing for the dialogue and then invited my guest to join me at a table placed by the communion table in our sanctuary where I offered them a seat and something to drink and eat. I always offered them chocolate, one my favorite foods, and because chocolate makes everything better! At the table, together with my guest, we wove our stories with the biblical stories, especially the parables.

One of the parables we engaged with was the Parable of the Sower. Story sharing with our guest, a community organizer from Denver, CO, reminded us that how we listen to our lives, to all of our relationships, and to the world, informs and influences the soil that is our life and the seeds we sow, what we offer to others and to the world. The way we listen to our lives can be a holy practice because it helps us to discern what we need to nourish more and to pay attention to. A close attention to what we are growing, disposing of, or need to uproot, can help us to see how aligned we are to God's ways of love, liberation, healing, and hope in our lives, and what to do when weeds get in our way, and in the way of our communities and our

world to experience the abundant life God envisioned for all people and creation.

Another of our guests this summer was Rev. Ruth Strand, the Director for Pastoral Care at Jericho Road. We reflected on the story of the Road to Emmaus, and it was easy to connect her ministry of presence, listening, and care for refugees and immigrants with the biblical story. She does ministry every day on one of Buffalo's Roads to Emmaus, where her presence embodies the presence of Jesus walking with immigrant and refugees.

Our interfaith guests from the Jewish and Muslim Communities read from their sacred text in their own languages, and together we named the ways that God's love connects us all. We also explored aloud the ways that our communities can continue nourishing relationship and collaboration to build together a more loving, just, and peaceful world for all, to build God's beloved community together.

Through the stories shared, and the dialogue and listening modeled in front of them, people in the pew have shared how easy it was for them to hear God speaking to them because the set up felt more intimate and familiar. They saw themselves and their own journey of life and faith reflected in the shared stories, in the vulnerability modeled, in the struggles and hopes voiced, and in our shared humanity.

I hope that you too, wherever you might be on your life and faith journey, can be inspired to connect with others in your family, church, neighborhood, school, or work site, and engage in the sacred act of listening with the intention to connect, to understand, and to open yourself to growth and transformation. Responding to Jesus' call to us in the Parable of the Sower, may we all keep listening to our lives, to each other, and to our world. May we tend with attention, love, and compassion to what we are growing. May the seeds that we sow bless and heal our world today.

AMEN.

*Rev. Nancy Rosas is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. She is the Pastor of Pilgrim-St. Luke's UCC in Buffalo, NY. A graduate from the Iliff School of Theology, her work includes: education and community organizing for self-development, especially with workers, immigrants, and refugees; art-ivism through theater and embodied performances; and education in the parish and in the community on a variety of peace and justice issues. Within the UCC, she has been a leader with the UCC Latinx Ministries; a theological reflector for General Synod; a writer for Worship Ways and for the blog of the UCC Mental Health Network; and most recently, she was the creator of the theme for General Synod 33 theme, "Rooted in Love," and the co-creator of the liturgy for a General Synod 33 worship service. She is the co-author of "Homegrown Faith and Justice: Faith-Forming Activities, Conversations, Rituals, and Resources for Families with Children."*



*Pastor Nancy in sermon dialogue with Celeste Martinez, who is a performing artist, life coach and community organizer in Denver, CO.*

*from Rev. Gary Burdick*



**Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center  
Going Strong**

It was another great summer camping season at Dunkirk this year. Overall attendance was up 15% compared to 2022. I am blessed to be part of Family Camp Two. This year with 192 campers, we exceeded attendance of any of the last several years. It was so great that nearly half of those 192 campers were children and youth.

One thing I want to lift up is that all of the directors and counselors of each week-long and weekend camp are volunteers. We are greatly indebted to all of these hard working, dedicated and capable people who year after year give of their time, talent and energy to lead our camping program. A heartfelt thanks to all.

Many thanks also to all the churches, the Western Area and individuals who support the Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center financially, prayerfully, and in many other ways. Thank you.

*from Lois Vidaver, gleaned from the DCC Facebook page*

"We celebrated our 2023 camping season with our annual family picnic! Congratulations to the volunteers of the year: Sara and Jordan Hughes! Also, for Nancy Pankow for her recognition of service to the board and Chuck and Sheila Recktenwalt for their lifetime service award!"

*from Ginger Comstock, NY/HELP*



The kindergarten in La Fortuna that had been destroyed by a hurricane has been rebuilt and painted. The people were fortunate enough to be able to get supplies before the rainy season was in full force.



NY/HELP is hoping to have another group travel to Honduras either this fall or else in the spring. We are also looking for people who would like to join this trip. Speaking Spanish is not required, though it would be helpful. Over the years, some people have found that going on one of these trips has been a life-changing experience. Come and see for yourself!

For information, contact Ginger Comstock [gkcomstock@gmail.com], David Makepeace [dmake8@yahoo.com], or Judy Toner [jactoner45@twcny.rr.com].

*As always, we appreciate donations to help our mission continue. Money can be sent to NY/HELP Honduras, c/o Arcade UCC, PO Box 95, Arcade, NY 14009.*

*Thank you!*  
**& GOD BLESS YOU**

**from Vanessa Adams, Arcade UCC and  
the In the Vineyard Editorial Board**

**Another Successful Western Area Youth  
Mission Trip!**

This July, 36 of our Western Area Youth (WAY) between the ages of 13-18, participated in another mission trip, which included important community service, amazing fellowship and so much more! Nine churches were represented on this trip: Amherst Community, Arcade, Ebenezer, Epiphany, Kenilworth, Irondequoit, Church of the Nativity, St. Paul's (Attica) and Zion.

The youth worked for North Country Habitat for Humanity in Malone, NY, cleaned and did small repairs at their host church, Emmanuel Congregational UCC, worked at the Massena Community Center, provided a Celebration of Life luncheon by cooking and serving the food and much more. Through working together, WAY accomplished great things for many who needed their service. The youth also had the opportunity to have dinner with local leaders and Bread for the World.

When they weren't doing God's work through this important mission, there was time for fellowship and fun! The youth went to the beach, hiked Azure Mountain (Waverly, NY), spent a day at Lake Placid, and had a water fight!

The trip ended with a closing worship and blessing, along with washing of the feet of the seniors to show how much they are valued and loved.

The pictures show just a small glimpse of their week. Thank you to all of the youth who participated and especially to the leaders and junior leaders who made the trip happen!

Leaders: Rev. Elizabeth Duffy, Rev. Laurie Heidenreich, Dylan Gruber, Megan Bollman, Jim Cohen, Carissa Gigliotti, Vanessa Adams, Beth Ann Shamrock, Carlton Aures, Brianna Grine, Zak Zientek, Ted Camp.  
Jr. Leaders: Sydney Horschel, DJ Givhan, Jess Ireland, Jake Korte.



***The WAY group poses for a picture at the start of their Mission week.***



***The youth helped to clear a property for North Country Habitat for Humanity's 2023 Veteran Build.***



***The closing worship and blessing with washing of the feet of the seniors.***

**from Shannon King, In the Vineyard Editor**  
**(photo credits, Pastor Josh Bower, Arcade UCC)**

## **FREE SCHOOL SUPPLY AND BACKPACK GIVEAWAY AT ARCADE UCC!**



*Members of Arcade UCC help to fill backpacks with school supplies for the Pioneer middle and high school students.*



*Gwen St. John helps to fill the backpacks with school supplies.*



*Students leave with their free backpacks filled with school supplies for the upcoming year.*

For the second year in a row, Arcade UCC provided a free school supply giveaway for Pioneer Middle and High School students. While the elementary schools within the district provide the needed supplies for their students, families of middle and high school students are given the opportunity on a first-come, first-serve basis to gather their school supplies at Arcade UCC.

The local Salvation Army generously supplied the backpacks for this giveaway again this year and members of the church spent a few hours filling those backpacks with the school supplies provided by the church. In all, 150 backpacks were filled and handed out to families in the Pioneer community.

This outreach program has had great success over the past two years and is met with sincere appreciation from area families. Arcade UCC intends to continue this community outreach in the years to come.

*from Shannon King, In the Vineyard Editor*

### Arcade UCC Participates in Ride for Roswell

The Ride for Roswell was held on Saturday, June 24 this year. Several members of Arcade UCC participated again in this year's Ride. Jay May put together another great team to ride for this great cause. His team raised approximately \$2500 this year. The photos below show Jay with a special Ride for Roswell cake at a gathering following the ride and Jay and Kathy May with their team.



*Left to right: Sheila Vrenna, Jim Vrenna and Ginger Comstock prepare to ride.*



*Ginger Comstock and Sheila Vrenna do their Ride for Roswell at the Arcade Park.*



The 2023 Ride for Roswell had a total of 8,022 riders this year! With the help of these two teams and **so** many others, the Ride raised \$5.6 million (and counting!) Congratulations to everyone who participated in any way to help raise money for this amazing cause!

Bill and Jamey Craft organized a team for Ride for Roswell again this year, that rode at the Arcade Park on June 24. Sheila and Jim Vrenna and Ginger Comstock participated in the ride that morning, with photo credits going to Dona Roll! Following the ride, Sheila and Jim hosted a breakfast at their home. The team raised \$1765.

**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
DONATIONS  
& SUPPORT**

## New Clergy Feature

*In the Vineyard* is now featuring articles about new UCC and DoC pastors and other ministry professionals in Western NY. This is a way to highlight these individuals and allow WNYACIC churches to get to know those who have recently begun new ministries among us.

**Kalee Mielke**



Kalee Mielke is a Member in Discernment in the NY UCC Western Association and a student minister at Zion United Church of Christ in Tonawanda. She has been a member of Zion UCC for about two and a half years after moving here from Michigan four years ago. Kalee began as a student minister in 2022. She is currently completing her final courses for her Master of Divinity at Northeastern Seminary in Rochester, NY, with a chaplaincy focus. Kalee will graduate in May of 2024. She loves learning and growing with her church family. In addition to serving at Zion UCC, Kalee is a full-time Hospice Spiritual Care Counselor and loves journeying with patients and their families. This summer, she has been teaching pastoral care at Zion. Kalee is married to AnnMarie Destino and has two Goldendoodles, Bruley and Enzo.



## In memory of Rev. Harland J. West

Nov. 2, 1928 – July 5, 2023

The Rev. Harland J. West pastored Methodist churches in Western New York and the Rochester area and had also been long-time pastor of the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Dunkirk. He died July 5 in the Chautauqua Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Dunkirk.

Click [here](#) for his obituary.

A funeral service was held August 5 in Harvest Chapel Free Methodist Church, Fredonia.





## **In Memory of Rev. Richard D. Hemann**

September 30, 1929 - June 6, 2023

Rev. Richard D. Hemann, the longtime pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Gowanda, south of Buffalo, died June 6 at home. He was 93 years old. Born on September 30, 1929, in Buffalo, Hemann grew up on the city's East Side. He earned a bachelor's degree in history and government at the University of Buffalo in 1952, then spent eight years working as a cost accountant at General Motors in Buffalo before discerning a call to ministry. He and his wife sold their home to finance his seminary education and moved to Pennsylvania, where he earned the master of divinity degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary.

Hemann was ordained June 21, 1964, at St. James UCC, Hamburg. He was called that year to serve Trinity, and would continue with that congregation until his retirement in 1991.

"It hardly seems possible that over 26 years ago God brought us together as pastor and people," he wrote in his letter to the church announcing his retirement. "I did not dream at that time that I would provide pastoral leadership to Trinity Church longer than any other pastor in your history. There have been very few families in our church and in the community where I have not shared intimate moments of joy and sorrow. These are experiences which I shall treasure in my heart, always."

In addition to his pastorate at Trinity, Hemann served part time as a chaplain at the J.N. Adam Developmental Center, a major mental health facility in nearby Perrysburg, from 1968 to 1991. In retirement, he worked for more than a decade as part-time pastor of visitation for St. Matthew's UCC, Hamburg.

Hemann served briefly on the executive board of the UCC's New York Conference in the 1960s, and was widely active in the Conference's Western Association, including work on its evangelism, stewardship and parish ministry committees. He also held dual standing in the Christian Church (DoC), in support of the Disciples' close working relationship with the UCC in Western New York.

Hemann married the former Beverly Alles on June 15, 1957, a union that would continue for 55 years before her passing in 2013. Survivors include their children, Mark R. (Dawn) Hemann, Diane H. (James) Sprague and Susan J. (Frederick) Centner; eight grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

Hemann held membership in New Light Christian Church, a start-up Disciples church with a special ministry to Karen migrants from Myanmar, and at Ebenezer United Church of Christ, 630 Main St., West Seneca, where a memorial service was held on Sat., June 10.

"The ministry is as challenging and exciting a profession as any which I know," Hemann wrote in a 1972 ministerial profile. "There is an immense need everywhere to demonstrate the compassion and healing of the gospel. God is alive and at work in the world, and we experience him as we enter into ministry with him."



from Good Shepherd Community of Faith

# TWO SEWING EVENTS HELPING HANDS FOR HAITI

Sewing Events  
**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2023**  
and  
**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2023**

9 AM-2 PM  
FIRST BAPTIST EAST AURORA  
591 Porterville Rd (near Vidler's)  
East Aurora, NY 14052



Whether you are a sewer or non-sewer, there is plenty for all to do. We will be gathering supplies, assembling, filling bags and boxing them up as we work towards saving lives of infants and moms of Haiti. Please give me a heads up that you will be joining us as we are tracking how many lunches to order.

For more information, contact **Sue Allen**,  
716-697-1657 [bsuea@yahoo.com](mailto:bsuea@yahoo.com)  
**PLEASE HELP SAVE LIVES!!**  
Parking lot & chair lift available at this location.



**Fall Fest at Arcade UCC!**  
**297 Main St., Arcade, NY 14009**  
Chowder, Basket Raffle, and all the usuals!  
This year's Fall Fest will happen on  
Saturday, October 7, 2023.  
Doors open: 11 am/ Ticket Drawing begins: 3 pm.  
**(Ticket Booths will close at 2:15 this year.)**  
Reverse Bingo begins at 2:30.  
**BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND:**  
**BUFFALO BILLS BASKET RAFFLE!**



Basket includes a Josh Allen Jersey along with other Bills' items valued at more than \$350.00!  
Tickets will be available at Fall Fest for \$10.00 each.  
**Credit cards will be accepted for most items!**  
Fall Fest benefits Arcade UCC's General Fund.



Homemade quilt raffle: tickets \$1 each/\$5 for 6.  
Raffle held the day of Fall Fest – you don't need to be present to win!  
Stay tuned for more details on our Arcade UCC Facebook page!!

## CHICKEN BARBEQUE



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

**Saturday, September 23, 2023**

11:30am – 5:00pm/or until sold out  
\$15.00

Dine-in or Take-out

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC  
132 N. MAIN ST., ANGOLA, 14006

**Pre-sale Tickets call 716-549-2115**

Prepared by Toni & Tony  
To Benefit Our Roof Fund



## Annual Fall Bazaar

First Congregational UCC

132 N. Main St.

Angola, NY 14006

Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Booths Open 10:00am to 4:00pm  
Dining Room 11:00am to 3:00pm

Come and see our booths

**THEME BASKETS**

**TIMELESS TREASURES**

**BOOK NOOK**

**CRAFT VENDORS**

**FARMER'S MARKET**

**CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND**

**JEWELS & GEMS**

**BAKE GOODS**

**RADA KNIVES**

**BECKER'S BISTRO**

*Event Subject to Change Following CDC Guidelines*



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](mailto:inthevineyardeditor@gmail.com)

Thank you in advance!

12th Annual  
**Food & Wine  
 Pairing**

**Bravo Cafe & Catering**  
 5781 Seneca Street, Elma

**September 10, 2023**

**\$65 per ticket\***  
 includes:  
 appetizers, entree and dessert -  
 each paired with the perfect wine!  
\*gratuity not included

Doors open at 4:30  
 Dinner and Pairings begin at 5:00

For tickets call 674-1233

Proceeds to benefit  
 St. Peter's United Church of Christ - West Seneca



**Faith Fall Craft Show  
 & Basket Raffle**

**VENDORS WANTED!**

**FRIDAY OCTOBER 13<sup>TH</sup> 5:00PM-8:00PM**  
**SATURDAY OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup> 10:00AM-3:00PM**

Faith U.C.C  
 1300 Maple Rd. Williamsville, NY 14221  
 (Corner of Maple & Hopkins)

\$50 per table plus a donation for the  
 basket raffle (table included!)

Email : [Cassandra.schwab@gmail.com](mailto:Cassandra.schwab@gmail.com) for an application!

Mark your calendars and be sure to attend in  
 October!

Ornaments ~ wreaths ~ fiber art ~  
 soap/candles ~ wood art ~ jewelry ~  
 quilted table runners ~ note cards  
 ~ AND MUCH MORE!

*Food available for purchase*

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**Wendel's CHICKEN BARBEQUE**

**FAITH U.C.C.**  
 1300 Maple Rd., Williamsville, NY  
 14221

Sat., Sept. 23, 4pm – sold out

Drive-thru, \$15 per dinner

Includes: ½ chicken, roasted potatoes,  
 baked beans, roll, dessert



**TRUNK OR TREAT**

**FRI., OCT. 27, 4:00- 5:30 P.M.**

**FAITH UCC PARKING LOT**

**1300 Maple Rd., Williamsville, NY, 14221**

**BRING YOUR KIDS AS WE PASS OUT  
 CANDY!**

**WEAR A COSTUME FOR MORE FUN!**

*Women's Wellness  
and Mindfulness*


a mind, body and soul experience

September 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
at Dunkirk Conference Center

**Includes:**  
visioning, reiki  
mindfulness and healing

**Enjoy:**  
yoga, beach walks, drum circle,  
bonfires...or simply rest

Registration fee: \$100.00  
Register online at [dunkirkcc.com](http://dunkirkcc.com)  
(use QR code)  
or by phone @ 716-366-1900  
Scholarship funds are available



## Baskets & Brunch

TO BENEFIT  
UNITED CHURCH MANOR  
SENIOR PROGRAMS

**SAT., NOVEMBER 4, 2023**

*The Columns Banquets*

*2221 Transit Road\*Elma*

*Doors Open 10:30 AM*

*Brunch available until 12:00 PM*

United Church Manor's annual fundraising event will be hosted at The Columns Banquet Facility, 2221 Transit Road in Elma on Saturday, November 4. The event includes the raffling of beautiful baskets, a silent auction, and mini-games. A scrumptious brunch will be served from 10:30 AM until Noon. Adult tickets are \$35 and Children (12 & under) are \$20. Tickets are available through the Manor's website ([ucmanor.org](http://ucmanor.org)) or at Event Brite's website: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/baskets-brunch-tickets-687415587527> Tickets can also be purchased from any board member or staff person. Early Bird Offer: Ticket orders received by September 15, 2023 will receive one sheet of basket raffle tickets (a \$10 value).

**Donations Requested:** Baskets – empty (or filled). Please call the Manor office at (716) 668-5804 and we would be happy to pick your donation up.

**VOLUNTEER NEEDED:** United Church Manor's daily lunch program is seeking a volunteer to assist with serving hot-boxed lunches to residents and community participants. The lunch program serves Monday through Friday with preparation work beginning at 11 AM and ending at 1 PM. Please contact Karen or Michele at (716) 668-5804 for more information.

## Church in the Vale Craft Sale

**Saturday, November 4th from 9AM-2PM**

St. John's United Church of Christ  
Located at the corner of Dutch Hollow &  
Centerline Roads in Strykersville  
(608 Centerline Rd., Strykersville, 14145)

Handicap Accessible

Offering a fine selection of handmade crafts for  
Fall, Christmas, home, baby, and more.

Just in time for the holidays!

Questions- email us  
at: [st\\_johns\\_ucc@yahoo.com](mailto:st_johns_ucc@yahoo.com)



# ATTENTION BILLS FANS AND THOSE WHO LOVE BILLS FANS!

[BUY NOW](#)

Enter to win a priceless collage of Josh Allen leaping over opponents!

Click the link above to get your tickets now!



- \$10 - 1 ticket
- \$20 - 3 tickets
- \$50 - 10 tickets
- \$100 - 25 tickets

Drawing held at noon on Fri., Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>. Proceeds benefit Senior Wishes Programming.

[ENTER RAFFLE](#)

facebook

What makes this print priceless is the:

- Brilliant Quality
- Rich high-definition print on radiant satin material
- Special photographic printing that uses 9 colors during the printing process
- Hidden frame that gives the print a 3D appearance.
- Comes with hanging mechanism to hang hidden frame
- One of only five prints ever made
- Cannot be purchased in any store

**Will look FANTASTIC on your wall!**

## 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/WNYA\\_CIC](https://www.facebook.com/WNYA_CIC)



## 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](http://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.



### *In the Vineyard queries its readers:*

**"Is a coffee hour before or after church necessary? Why or why not?"**

#### ***From Jay May, Arcade UCC***

I would say a coffee hour after service, as that would give people a chance to catch up with congregants that maybe they haven't seen in a week or longer.

#### ***From Becky Wilson, Chairperson for the Elders, Payne Avenue Christian Church, N. Tonawanda***

I recently polled our congregation with the question - "Is a coffee hour before or after church necessary? Why or why not?" Our congregation felt that it was very important to have coffee hours either before and/or after church for the following reasons: fellowship, socializing, catching up with each other and seeing what is going on in each other's lives and welcoming new members or guests. This all shows us that we are a family and important to each other!

#### ***From Judy Golde, Kenilworth UCC***

I think coffee hour is very important. It allows the members to congregate and share ideas. It is important to socialize. I also think greeting people before church is equally important.

#### ***From Karen Jasinski, Kenilworth UCC***

I believe it is necessary. It does have two sides. Circulating, inviting new people to join you, asking if you might join their group and chat with them. Sitting with friends is great yet expanding that circle is a step in the right direction. Everyone has a story, jokes, and how-to info. Church undertakings and collaborating ideas is wonderful. Gossip is not. We do not know what undisclosed aspects facing any individual are. We can only speak of ourselves with any modicum of full knowledge, and I suspect at least some of us are a work-in-progress in that respect.

## WNYACIC Prayer Lists: September - November 2023

### 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. Kenneth Keenan, Pastor
- Western Area Support Staff.  
Michelle Kemp, Office Admin.
- Budget & Finance Committee.
- Commission on Ministry – Christian Church  
(DOC).
- In the Vineyard* Editorial Board.  
Shannon King, Editor

### October Prayer List

- St. Peter's UCC, N. Tonawanda.  
Rev. Dr. Jonathan Lawrence, Pastor
- Zion UCC, Tonawanda.  
Rev. Elizabeth Duffy, Pastor
- Western Assoc. Conference Ministers and  
Regional Support Staff.
- Pulpit Supply Ministers.
- Western Area Youth (WAY).
- Climate Justice.

### November Prayer List

- First Congregational UCC, Angola.  
Rev. David Donner, Pastor
- Salem UCC, Tonawanda.  
Rev. Jeremy Lopez, Pastor;  
Rev. Alice McDermott, Pastor Emerita
- Faith UCC, Williamsville.  
Tina Bacon, Pastor
- New Light Christian Church, Buffalo.  
Rev. Nadine Schrodtt, Pastor
- General Office [US & Canada],  
Christian Church (DoC),  
Indianapolis, Indiana.

Rev. Teresa (Terrie) Hord Owens,  
General Minister and President  
SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for  
Nonviolence.  
Plymouth Crossroads.

\*\*\*\*\*

*from Rev. Gary Ferner, Associate Conference  
Minister for Search & Call, NY Conference UCC*

### Churches in Transition

- Covenant UCC Gasport
- Church of the Nativity
- New Covenant UCC
- St. Matthews UCC
- St. Stephens-Bethlehem

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*from Rev. Lynn Morgan, Treasurer, WNYACIC*

### Western Area Treasurer's Report

Everything moves a little slower in the summer, which is a welcome change of pace. Unfortunately, support for the Western Area through Covenant Shares also slows during the summer. Our current operating deficit is \$4,816, which is typical for the end of summer and a bit better than last year at this time.

In September, each church will receive a letter that will report their giving to date for 2023 as well as each church's Covenantal Share for 2024 (based on reported membership in the 2023 Yearbook). Each church will be asked to give \$8 per member. The Per Capita support to the NY Conference UCC will continue at \$2 per member (which we receive in the Association and pass on to the Conference).

As we prepare for the return to the routines of fall at home and school and church, we recall God's goodness and grace in every season. Thank you for your faithful giving.

from Jeff Mason, Finance/Endowment Committee

### Endowment News

All three of our endowment accounts showed gains for the second quarter of 2023. The American Funds account was \$38,852.92 on June 30, up \$2,149.48 from March 31. The United Church Funds account ending in 010 was \$47,267.91 on June 30, up \$4,021.45 from March 31. The United Church Funds account ending in 009 was \$564,330.05 on June 30, up \$14,765.10. It's now above where it was before we withdrew the annual disbursement in January.

Our total on June 30 was \$650,450.88, which was a quarterly increase of \$20,936.03. Our Finance Committee will be working on the proposed 2024 Western Area budget when we meet in September. The annual disbursement in January 2024 will be determined at that time, but if the current trend continues, we should see an increase over the January 2023 amount.

Please make sure all submissions to *In the Vineyard* are at least 12-point font for easy readability. 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.

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### 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 winter issue in by November 14, 2023.\*\*\*\*

