

NEWSLETTER July – September 2024



Summer is here. It's commonly known as a time to take it easier, take vacations, take things slower. But some among us, it means getting busier. Either they can't take a break, or don't know *how* to take a break. Burnout is a real issue.

Here at church, there are a handful of people who do a significant amount of work each week to keep things going. I won't name names here (because I would assuredly leave someone out accidentally who absolutely should be mentioned). They work behind the scenes. They work out in front. Tasks done each week may seem small but take no small amount of work. Burnout can be a significant factor at church.

This year, I've noticed two healthy trends happening to fight burnout. 1) I've seen certain tasks being handed to others...tasks traditionally held by just one person...like making coffee in the morning or helping on certain repair projects. 2) Other people are simply taking extended breaks...like a break from projecting slides in worship for the summer, or having guest music leaders. These are healthy ways to acknowledge no one person can handle it all alone.

I think it's helpful just to recognize here, there is only a small pool of available volunteers. Only so many people to ask. Plus, our age and energy levels may not allow us to do all we used to do.

Boundaries are a good thing. Drawing boundaries is a way to help us avoid burnout. Boundaries can be defined as knowing what is *my responsibility* and what belongs to others. I'm responsible for my own thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and behaviors. You're responsible for yours. Boundaries mean realizing that I have certain limitations...knowing what I can do and what I can't do...at least knowing what's no longer healthy for me to do. People should have the ability to say no from time to time.

Personally, I don't want anyone to serve out of a feeling of guilt or obligation. The church has a history of being experts at the guilt trip to influence certain behavior. I think we all know what it feels like. Whenever we hear statements like ...“If no one steps up, we'll be disappointing a lot of people.” “If you really cared, you'd [fill in the

blank].” The examples can be endless. Sometimes we can spot the guilt trip right away. But other times, it happens so casually and naturally that we may not realize it until we get home.

I'd much rather people serve from a sense of calling, or wanting to use their time and talents for a community or cause they love. Being part of the community is so important to them, they want to contribute to the cause.

This is the power of a healthy community. One of the best ways for people to feel connected and included is when they get involved. No guilt. But if you feel drawn to serve, there are a few areas where we need more hands to help and give others a break. The more glaring concerns are:

- 1) **Childcare**: we need a few more people to take the Safe Sanctuary course and take the kids during the service. The idea is to get a rotation, so no one has to do it every week.
- 2) **Secretary for the General Committee**. Talk to Malcolm for Nominating Committee if you'd like to help out.

This next sentence could easily sound like a guilt trip (hint: it's not meant to be). If we find ourselves in a position where no one volunteers without feeling obligated or guilted into it, maybe it's time to reconsider whether we can honestly do it. Sometimes “no” is a faithful answer. The question then can be, what are we called, able, and energized to do as a church in this community? Sometimes less is more.

If we listen to our own inner knowing (the Spirit speaking inside us), or the wise counsel of others (the Spirit speaking through others), we can discern what is right and best for all involved. That may mean learning to rest from time to time...both in body and Spirit. I truly believe the Spirit doesn't call us to burnout.

Chris



CHURCH PICNIC JULY 7TH

Join us for food, activities, fellowship. Everyone welcome. Bring a covered dish to share. We plan to have it outside if the weather permits right after church. If not, we'll have fun inside Pierce Hall. Signup sheets are on the table in Pierce Hall for food or helping set up/ clean up. Don't forget your hat, sunscreen and if you want – lawn chair.

Note that the next Safe Sanctuaries training will be held Aug. 3. A link to registration will open on July 3. Send Barbara Terpening your certificate for church records.



UPPER NEW YORK ZOOM TRAINING DATES

3.5 HOUR BASIC TRAINING

(this training is for all Clergy, and anyone working with children, youth or vulnerable adults)

Saturday, February 3, 2024 9am - 12:30pm

Registration Opens January 3, 2024 @ Midnight

Saturday, May 4, 2024 9am - 12:30pm

Registration Opens April 4, 2024 @ Midnight

Saturday, August 3, 2024 9am - 12:30pm

Registration Opens July 3, 2024 @ Midnight

Saturday, November 2, 2024 9am - 12:30pm

Registration Opens October 2, 2024 @ Midnight

TRAINING OF TRAINERS - TOT

(this training is for anyone who would like to become a church or district Safe Sanctuaries trainer in the Upper New York Conference. Must have completed 3.5 hour basic Training prior to taking the TOT Training.)

Saturday, April 6, 2024 9am - 12:00pm

Registration Open Now

Saturday, October 5, 2024 9am - 12:00pm

Registration Opens September 5, 2024 @ Midnight

*IF YOU NEED TRAINING BETWEEN THESE DATES OR WOULD LIKE TO
HOST AN IN-PERSON TRAINING
PLEASE CONTACT YOUR DISTRICT OFFICE OR EMAIL THE SAFE SANCTUARIES TEAM.*

For more information regarding Safe Sanctuaries please visit our website:
www.unyumc.org/resources/safe-sanctuaries or email us at: safesanctuaries@unyumc.org

Sunday morning Recorded services continue for the summer

As we go through the summer our Sunday morning services will continue to be recorded and shared Sunday evening.

Go to <http://www.stephentownfederatedchurch.org> to catch the weekly services or come in person 9:30 each Sunday morning.



Special Music for Anthem Slot in Summer Services

Time is running out for you to sign up to share your special CDs from home during the summer months. We are obligated by copyright laws to check that they are covered. In order to do this, I'm asking those who have CDs they want played to fill out the form on the front seat of the church by the piano and get it back to me before the end of June. Once I get the sheet, I can then go to our CCLI program and make sure we are covered to use it. We cannot afford to violate copyright laws, but still want to be able to share music that is meaningful to others. Thank you for helping us in this way. I'm asking for June deadline simply because for six weeks in the summer I will not be available, and it needs to be done ahead of time. Thank you so much for all your consideration in this matter. Bev

SonShiners

Meetings: July 21st, Aug 18th, Sept 16th 8:00am – Bring a dish to share

EVENTS FOR 2024 – Mark your calendars

September 14th – Community Breakfast Group/SonShiners Community End of Summer BBQ Bash

October 19th – Italian Dinner

November 5th – Election Day Luncheon

Please consider helping with these events. Ideas are always welcome.

Mission Work: Medicine Bottles

We turned in all the bottles everyone was good enough to bring to church. We are continuing to collect medicine bottles that have been washed and labels and glue removed. Thank you for the great support with this project. The bottles are used to get medicine to people in third world countries. They will accept the bottles from the pharmaceutical companies again with labels removed and washed.

Even though this is a Women's group all genders are welcome.

Bake and Plant Sale - We thank everyone who baked and supplied plants, books and flowerpots for our sale. We also thank everyone who came out and bought.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

July 5 Heather Eckhardt

11 Patience Westfall

18 Don Leab

24 Joe Leland

August

1 Tammy Madden

7 Don Lewandoski

17 Maureen Saxby

19 Kate Beach

26 Bev Westfall

Sept. 4 Don French

3 Eric Ross

6 Jay Hennig

8 Madison Rontey

8 Georgie Bebee

9 Bonnie Bates

17 Alicia Jacobs

27 Gene Jacobs

27 Gene Sawin

28 Dorothy Zuckerman

Manse Outside Maintenance



The General Committee has approved specs for redoing the outside of the Manse. We are looking to get quotes to do the work. We are looking for contributions to complete this work. If, you would like to help paying for this project, please write Manse Outside Maintenance Fund. on your check or when you donate online chose Manse Outside Maintenance Fund. You can find our Giving Button on our website: stephentownfederatedchurch.org

Devotions By Bonnie & Bev

Keep checking the website (stephentownfederatedchurch.org) for the latest inspiration by Bonnie & Bev. If you are having problems seeing them, remember to refresh your browser.

Long – term Prayer Concerns:

Holly Wheeler, Carol, June Ross, Rusty Melancon, Makayla & Julie, Kathy Carringer, Sean Northrup, Georgie, Kelly, Joey, Peggy, Mike, & Greg, Lance, James & his family, Garrett, Brenda & Bob, Mathew, Emma Richardson & her son Mike, Connie (FL), Pat Sample, Del Wise and his sister Vicki, John L., Bev & Jerry, Bob Vincent, John & Danielle, Melaney, Colleen P., Norm, Tanya Joyes, Tasha-Chris & family, Sal, Karen, Christina, Linda Lee, John Anello, Mary Martin, Sherry Ciliberti, Carolee, Toby, Kelly, Kevin, Angelica, Jim & Ann Peck, Radley family, Jenny, Rick Newton, Jim Chambers, Michael Monyahan, Judy & Joe Leland, Geralyn, Pat B., Joy & Bob Lowenthal, Susan G., Peter, Samantha, Owen McGinnis, Shannon W., Pattie Lewis, Sahara, Cindy Hennig, Hal, Don Leab, Frank, Janice, Donnie, Sue, Bob & Deb, Dorothy Zuckerman, Tom Foody, Sally Guimarra, Jerry (AZ), Stephanie & Devin, Dan & Nancy, Dennis L., Eckhardt's friend going through depression, Terriane Koepp, Lori, Trygve Tomlinson, Nancy & Malcom Beal, Linda P., Adrienne & family, Sandy & John, Tracy & family, Wanda, Kay Sessor, Isabella, Carter & family, Molly & family, Mary's brother and his family, Sue Freihoffer & Hanley Palmer, Debbie Knapp, Bonnie & Rick, Barbara (Leland's daughter), Dottie Meppan, Larry Eckardt's cousins in NM, Gene Sawin, Joe & Arlene Longo, Tony Longo & his partner Dana (praying for the blessing of a baby), Sal Longo, Liane, Liam (Beal's grandson), Sal, those from the Ukraine and all who are helping them, Shannon & Scott Adams, Perry, JoAnn (Pastor Chris' mom), Joan (Ellie's grandma) & Brittany (Ellie's mom), Laurelyn & Doug's daughter-in law's mom, Beth, Kathy, Zack Hanson, Glady (Nancy Beal's sister), Carol Baker, Edna May, Peter Hamilton, Tom & family, Leo & family, Karen, Peter, Jackie Eckhardt, Kathryn & the twins, Betty Ann Hanlon, Mike, Rev. Betsy, Carter La Casse, Doris & Arnold Sours, Rick Monyahan, Bonnie Frank, Jodie Doherty, Craig (Ellie's Uncle in MT), Ella (Beal's Granddaughter), Nancy Machler, Nancy & her brother John, Mary Hamilton, Tammy Madden, Baby Gus, Rick Fosby, Dwight & Devon Peterson, Martha Lagerwahl, Karen Volpi, Kathi Jones, Don French, Raymond (Marianne Smith's brother), Becca Fenander, Theresa Terpening, Ed Mullett, Don French, and the LGBTQ community

As always . . .we pray for:

Our farmers, Pastor Chris & family, those with emotional/mental/physical illnesses, the unknown addict, those being cared for & the caregiver, those in transition, those suffering from addiction(s), Emergency Responders, youth of today, those in weather ravaged places, those who don't get where they are going who are cold/alone, the Military and their families, our Veterans, & our elected leaders, those imprisoned, Citizens of Lesothos & the student we sponsor, organ donors, those who mourn, those persecuted for their faith, those who have no one to pray for them, those not mentioned out loud, the unemployed, all refugees and the nations locked in conflict. Safe travel for all

THANK YOU GOD FOR OUR MANY BLESSINGS!