



It doesn't feel like an exaggeration or overstating things. Our nation has not been this divided since the days of the Confederacy or Civil War. Just drive down the road. You can see the dividing lines printed on banners, flags, and lawn signs. The coming election shows little hope of uniting us. Chances are: it will further divide us.

The derision and division are not only here on the home front. There are major conflicts abroad. Talk to anyone about the offensives in Israel, Gaza, or Lebanon. You might be surprised how deep and strong the differing opinions run—even with people you normally agree.

Pick your issue—immigration, abortion, you name it. The differences seem insurmountable. In this time of heightened tensions and opposing viewpoints, we come as a church family to worship together. We certainly have our differing opinions as a family of faith. One Spirit, one Lord brings us together.

The theme for our World Communion celebration (October 6th) seems rather timely and appropriate, “*Sowing the Seeds of Peace.*” I appreciate the analogy of the seed. Seeds take time to germinate. They need the right conditions to grow. It takes time and patience to see the fruit of our labor.

Peace doesn't happen overnight on a wing and a prayer. To be certain, it takes a lot of prayer. But it also takes active work on our part to cultivate the environment for peace to grow.

Jesus says, “*Blessed are the Peacemakers.*” One way we can make the peace is to take care with how we speak. We can declare a cease fire and stop weaponizing our words.

I believe peace doesn't first start with words. It's a mindset. Realizing each of us has a different point of view that deserves dignity, empathy, and care. Knowing people reach their own conclusions through a long history—which often has little to do with us or what we say to them. Peace might just start from the willingness to see another person's vantage point. A little understanding can go a long way.

My friend, Michael Plank, pastor of the Hudson Falls Presbyterian Church came up with these questions to help work with diversity. I find them helpful to adopt a more peaceful (if not loving) attitude toward people with whom we disagree.

1. Tell a story of someone you love who you know or suspect will vote differently than you. What are their lovable qualities?
2. Can you articulate, with generosity, one reason that a person may hold a view opposite of yours?

These two questions are just an example of seeds we can sow. We may not be able to do much to wage peace on the world stage. But we can sow the little seeds to make a big difference here at home.

Peace Be With You,

Chris

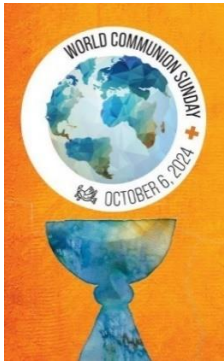


Prayer Partners - Church to Church

World Communion Sunday reminds us of the connection to churches all over the world. We may worship differently, we speak different languages, but it's the same Lord and Savior who unites us into the Body of the Church. We pray for the churches around the world, but this year we begin praying regularly for one particular church. And they will be praying for us.

Our Church has adopted a Prayer Partner Church in Guatemala. They are the *Dios Viviente Aldea Pueblo Nuevo* congregation located in the town of San Juan Ostuncalco (population 20,763). The Albany Presbytery has had a long partnership with the *Mam Presbytery* in Guatemala. Mam is a Mayan language spoken by about half a million Mam people in that region.

The only thing this partnership means is that our two congregations are committing to praying for one another. The struggles we face, they face. This is not a financial connection. In fact, the presbytery encourages no gifts or offerings to be exchanged. Please join us in praying for our brothers and sisters in another country.



World Communion Sunday, Oct. 6th

We will again be taking offerings of mission items. So be prepared to give whatever you can if able.

Methodist Mission: UMCORE US Disaster Response This past year funds were sent to Vermont for Hurricane Beryl damage and Hurricane Debby damage in the Upper NY Conference (ours) near Rome, NY.:

Presbyterian Mission: 1) Family of Chickens \$25 Eggs for food, feathers for pillows and fertilizer for crops.

2) Piglet \$40/piglet Your gift of a piglet can serve as a valuable safety net – source of income for a family in need. When sold at market, a pig can be the very thing that helps a family through times of struggle.

3) Garden Well \$50/share: \$1500/well A well and hand pump provide a reliable and convenient source of clean water for drinking, bathing, washing and irrigation.

Choir

The fall season has begun. Our first choir rehearsal was September 5th. It was good to have everyone back. We welcome Laura to our group. It's always nice to have more people. We continue to welcome anyone that would. Like to sing? Come and join us on Thursdays at 6:30. There always seems to be a flip side. We are sad to be losing one of our dedicated members. Laurelyn will be moving in a month or so. We will miss her flexibility in singing pretty much any part. Our thanks, blessings and prayers go with her as they relocate.

SonShiners

Meetings:

October 20th 8:00am

November 17th 8:00am

December 15th 8:00am

Bring a dish to share

Italian Dinner: Bring Family & Friends and join us at the



Stephentown Federated Church 1513 Garfield Road - Stephentown, NY

For our Eleventh Annual Italian Dinner

It's an "all you can eat" Italian dinner to include:

Lasagna, Penne with Marinara sauce, or Fettucine Alfredo

Meatballs, Salad, Bread, Beverage and Dessert

October 12, 2024 ~ Serving 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Takeouts begin at 4:30 p.m. ~ All are invited!



ELECTION DAY LUNCHEON

November 5th 11:00am to 2:00pm *Mark your calendars*



Our Church Sign is Back!



We are grateful to Kevin Doherty for refurbishing the sign which had significant damage from the sun over the past 20+ years. He sanded it and applied 4 coats of oil-based paint and all new 23K gold leaf. There are minor flaws that would require much more extensive work to remedy, more work than making an entirely new sign. The cost to us is entirely free of charge, as promised. If you see Kevin out and about, thank him.

We also wish to thank Keith Westfall for purchasing new poles, installing them and putting the sign on the posts. Looks beautiful!

The Community Breakfast Group News

Fall 2024

Welcome to Fall. The leaves are turning, the home gardens are a giant weed-patch and its time to start our monthly breakfast meetings of the Community Breakfast Group at the Stephentown Federated Church. First Sunday of every month, October thru June. Breakfast starts at 8:00am sharp. Attending church after breakfast is not required, however, we'd love to have you for both! Come and join us. Bring a friend, there's always plenty to eat.

If you'd like to be on our e-mail list or know of someone who would like to receive our church newsletter in the mail, please reach out to Paul McMillan, Larry Eckhardt or Ted Bears. Everyone is invited – come one, come all.

Our “End-o-summer” BBQ was a success despite a less than stellar turnout. We had several very generous donations and a great crew of folks helping with all the duties of putting on a dinner. Special shout-out to some people: Matt Eckhardt smoked the pork and turkey, Doug and Lauralyn Mayen prepared the coleslaw, Kate Beach supervised all the serving, take-outs and clean-up. Great job everyone and thank you! We netted \$1,500 to be donated to the siding project for our manse/parsonage. This was a joint effort of the SonShiners and the Community Breakfast Group.

Some activities for the upcoming months:

October 6th, First Community Breakfast for the fall. 8:00am sharp.

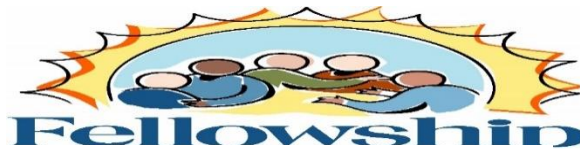
November 3rd – Breakfast at 8:00am. Daylight Savings begins. Set your clocks back 1 hour.

December 1st – Breakfast at 8:00am.

January 5th – First Breakfast of the new year, 8:00am sharp.

Any questions or need additional information, contact Larry Eckhardt at 518-573-2565.

Coming Events – Mark your calendars



Valley Faith Community News

The area group of local churches now has a name. It's called the Valley Faith Community. The group currently includes our congregation, Church of Our Savior in New Lebanon, and the Canaan Congregational Church. We are looking to support one another's ministries, as well as plan certain events together.

The Valley Community Thanksgiving Service (Sunday, November 24th at 4 pm) will be our first event together. We are hosting it here at Stephentown Federated Church with a Community Choir, prayer, scripture, and a brief message by Rev. Frank Lockhart. Donations of food or financial gifts will be taken as an offering.

Donations will be split between the Stephentown Food Pantry and Charlie's Pantry in New Lebanon.



We will be celebrating All Saints Day on Nov. 3rd during our Sunday morning service. We would like to encourage anyone that would like to celebrate anyone who had gone before us to send a picture to Arlene and she will add it to the PowerPoint presentation for that day. Her email is alongo6177@fairpoint.net.

Advent begins December 1st – Hanging of the Greens – decorating the church for the season

Thanksgiving Sunday November 24th 9:30am Donations for food pantry received

Longest Night, Sunday Dec 22nd 4pm Members of Immaculate Conception joining our choir

Long – term Prayer Concerns:

Albany Presbytery & Mam Presbyterio Prayer Partner – Dios Viviente Aldea Pueblo Nuevo, San Juan Ostuncaico

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, Jim Chambers, Michael Monyahan, Judy & Joe Leland, Geralyn, Joy & Bob Lowenthal, Susan G., Peter, Samantha, Owen McGinnis, Shannon W., Pattie Lewis, Sahara, Cindy Hennig, Hal, 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, Terrienne 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, 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), 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, Gladly (Nancy Beal's sister), Carol Baker, Peter Hamilton, Tom & family, Leo & family, Karen, Peter, Jackie Eckhardt, Betty Ann Hanlon, Mike, Carter La Casse, Doris & Arnold Sours, Rick Monyahan, 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, Kathi Jones, Becca Fenander, Margie Fenander Theresa Terpening, Ed Mullett, the LGBTQ community, Santo, Ronnie, Ella, Alex, Kathryn, Sam & Ben, & Kathy Norton, Nancy Rogers, and Tommy Castillo

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!



October	3	Tom Smith
	6	Joanne Hennig
	7	Janet Atwater
	16	Jessica Rontey
	18	Chris Garrison
	20	Stephen Schnyer
	26	Richard Terpening
	28	June Ross
November	2	Kalee Hennig
	9	Mark Morris
	11	Judy Leland
	11	Aliza Berry
	19	Valerie Sandstrom

