



PAYNE AVENUE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(Disciples of Christ)

1459 Payne Avenue North Tonawanda, NY 14120

(716) 260-1217 payneavechurch@gmail.com

SEPTEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

The next Elders Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 23rd at 6:00 pm

There will be a Board Meeting on Sunday, September 21st following the Worship Service. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

<u>Elders Communion</u>	<u>Bread</u>	<u>Cup</u>
September 7	Bob Link	Brett Kofod
September 14	Ken Ozzimo	Bob Link
September 21	Beck Wilson	Bill Wolcott
September 28	Jim Wokersien	Barb Wokersien

Deaconess Schedule

September (4 Sundays)

Prepare – Nancy Golba Clean Up – Mary Caldwell

OUTREACH & MISSION

Who Is My Neighbor?

The Gospel reading and Pastor Hope’s message on August 10th focused on Jesus using the parable of the Good Samaritan to teach us that everyone is our neighbor and that our response to those in need determines whether we’re doing God’s will.

I consider the North Tonawanda Inter-Church Food Pantry to be like the Good Samaritan because it provides low-income people with supplies they need but can’t afford to purchase. Eligible families come once a month to receive bags filled with nutritious food and personal care products. Nearly everyone expresses gratitude for helping them make ends meet.

Our neighbors include elderly widows whose social security checks don’t cover the cost of rent, utilities and groceries; heads of households who lost their jobs and have been looking for work for months; refugee families with young children who escaped dangerous conditions in their home country. All of them are worthy of our compassion and care.

As the number of people who rely on the Food Pantry grows and government funding is cut, some shelves have few items left for us to offer. We are especially low on canned fruits, salad dressings and sauces/gravies. While these are not absolutely essential, they do allow families to enjoy some tasty meals.

I encourage you to pick up a few extra cans of food and personal care products while you’re out shopping and place them on the “sharing table” near the sound board. The Doxology we sing each Sunday is a reminder that “We give Thee but Thine own.” Everything we have comes from God and we need to be good and generous stewards of those gifts.

Yours in Christ,
Nancy Golba, Coordinator



*Recognizing Marcy DiPasquale,
our awesome retiring Church Secretary of 16 years:
Sunday, September 7th, 10:00 am in Worship and
afterwards*

Join us in worship on Sunday September 7th to add your personal thanks to Marcy as she receives our church's appreciative praise as well as a gift of gratefulness. Then stay for the party and celebrate Marcy's faithful years of serving our church with excellence as well as that twinkle in her eye! Brava, Marcy!

*Welcome to the new office Secretary:
Espy Altamar on Sunday, Sept 14th
10:00 am and after worship*

*Regular office hours:
Wed - Friday, 9 am - 12 pm*



Let's be the church
we say we are.

Espy, aka Esperanza, Altamar has made a career in non-profit administration and community arts

leadership. After living a creative and nomadic life in NJ, Virginia, the Netherlands, Brooklyn, and Philadelphia, she purchased her first home in Buffalo. She welcomed two foster children in 2020 and they became a forever family in 2023 with the final adoption. Their family motto: We measure our life in love, use growth mindset, and go with the flow. Their favorite family song: Bob Marley and the Wailers, Three Little Birds.

With Amina (10) and Kingston (8), together they love to hike and travel; chase their dog, Charlie; avoid cat scratches from their rescue kitty, Opal; play cards; watch movies; dance silly, sing loudly and terribly in the car; and have ice cream after Tae Kwon Do practice.

She fell in love with Western New York as an arts student and was fortunate to have her parents and brother relocate to the area in 2006. In 2005, she completed Restorative Justice training with the WNY Peace Center while working with Concerned Ecumenical Ministries and the Say Yes Buffalo Youth program. Recently, she dedicated herself to office administration with Autism Services, Senior Affordable Housing at Delta Development of WNY, and homelessness prevention at Harvest House.

MORTGAGE FUND



15 years ago, our church secured a loan from Church Extension, the financial arm of the Disciples of Christ denomination, to purchase the former St. Joseph's Roman Catholic church. The amount was \$573,000.00, and with that, we returned "home" to Payne Avenue and reclaimed our former name after 7 years of calling the Mason's Lodge on Ruie Road our temporary home.

In the years to follow, we sold off the former rectory and school building on our new campus with the proceeds going towards the mortgage. We sold our property in Wheatfield, with some of the proceeds going towards the mortgage. The church received a substantial bequest from the estate of Winifred Schasel, and this gift carried us through to the end of 2024 enabling us to make our mortgage payments for many, many years.

At the beginning of 2025, we had \$41,000 in mortgage principal left to pay. Our savings had been run down to historic lows. For the first 4 months of the year, we were not able to make our mortgage payments. Church Extension graciously worked with us through this period, not charging late fees or penalties. In late May, Pastor Hope "challenged" the congregation to raise enough money to make one mortgage payment of \$3,423.00. This was an instant success! Combined with our Chiavetta's BBQ profits from July 12th, we were able to make full payments in May, June, and July.

**During this time, a substantial gift from an anonymous donor was received which enabled the church to pay off its mortgage in full. PACC is debt free in 2025!
A mortgage burning celebration is planned for October 5th!**

Praise be to God and a heartfelt thank you to all of our generous donors over the years!

*"I do believe in miracles, I do believe in miracles,
I do, I do, I do, I do, I do believe in miracles!"*

*- Pastor Hope, upon first hearing Brett's report at the Elders meeting
(and echoing a famous Wizard of Oz moment).*



Chiavetta's Chicken BBQ



**Drive-through will be held on
Saturday, September 6th,
from Noon – 4:00pm
Hope to see everyone there!**

**Please be sure to tell your family and friends.
Dinners will be \$15.00 and include baked beans, tuna macaron salad, a roll with butter
and dessert! Thank you!**

Prayers of Healing and Caring:

Leah Benton
Ross Benton and family
Kay (Sister of Mary Caldwell)
Devon Compton, nephew of
Paul White and Nancy
Mueller
Rev. Dr. Arthur Davis,
Nita Doucette
Deborah Evans
Lisa Geraci
Don Golba
Jaime Hodge
Shirley Jayne
Brandon Kofod
Karen Lawrence and her
daughter Rhonda

Bob Link's Daughter Shelly
and Grandson William
Autumn Lee
Harry and Lois Madrid
Carol McBride
Burton Merriam
Ken Miller, (Brian Wilson's
father-in-Law)
Ruth Misko, daughter of Leah
Benton
Diane Misner (Bob Link's
daughter)
David Misner (Son-in-law of
Bob Link)
Madeline Mock
Sherry Ostwald

Kim Potfora
Cynthia Pullman
Luz Quinche and husband
Luis Caiz
Joan Shamrock
Karen Smith (Friend of
Marcy's)
Janith Tooke and her Sister-
in-law Ronni
Sharon Weiss (friend of Karen
Lawrence)
Bob and Becky Wilson and
nephew Billy Wilson
Bill Wolcott
Jim Wokersien



Prayer Requests

Prayers of Gratefulness: Celebrating Sam Fesmire's new home!

***There will be copies of this list printed and located on the Deacons tables. Please be sure to take one home so you continue to keep them in your prayers.**

***Please note, after a 6 week period names will be removed unless a special request is received in the office. Thank you.
To be added to the Prayer Chain call Jan Tooke 693-2848 (before 9pm).**

Thinking of You!

Please remember our members that are unable to be in their homes any longer...they would love to hear from you...send a card it will help them knowing we care! Thank you!

Cynthia D. Pullman,
Comfort Care @ Our Lady of Peace Skilled Nursing
5285 Lewiston Road, Lewiston, NY 14092
Room 254 (daughter of the DiBernardo's)



Also, some members who are not able to attend weekly due to health and weather issues, a card would be a wonderful reminder that they are being remembered...Jan Tooke, Karen Lawrence and Janet Holt – all addresses are in our Church Directory.



“IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT”
If anyone needs to be placed on the Communion to Shut-Ins list - please be sure to contact Becky Wilson at 998-9052.

Let's Celebrate!

September Birthdays

14	Beverly DiBernardo	26	Susan Lyon
18	Ian McGlone	26	Leah Benton

September Anniversaries

Paul White and Nancy Mueller September 14
Robert and Becky Wilson September 20th



October Birthdays

8	Barbara Wokersien	24	Edward Wokersien
16	Philip Ozzimo	25	Alex Krull
18	Kate McCormack	27	Ken Ozzimo
22	Brenda Sass	28	Linda Harle-Mould

October Anniversaries

Edward and Barbara Wokersien October 20th
Andy and Suzanne Krull October 22nd

***I would like to update the birthdays and anniversary dates so please be sure I have this information for all members of your family so they can be included each month.**

OUTREACH

The food pantry is running low on some supplies, especially tea, salad dressing, sauces and condiments. Please consider picking up even one item when doing your regular shopping!

***During the month of July PACC contributed 5 bags of food & personal care products!
Thank you all! Your donations are greatly appreciated!**



Congratulations to Our Graduate:

Austin David Lee

Son of Melissa Lee, Grandson of David & Debbie Evans

On Sunday, August 17th, Pastor Hope called forward Austin Lee to be recognized for his awards and graduation from Niagara Wheatfield High School and celebrated for his future career path and dreams.

Austin graduated in the top 12% of his class with a 4.0 GPA, having also taken several college courses (and no lunch!). He participated in football, wrestling, tennis, and unified basketball (where they help the special needs kids in the sport) and earned his varsity jacket. He received scholarships from the Niagara Wheatfield Boosters, from the Niagara County Rotary, from the WNY Firefighters Association and from his current employer, Ted's Hot Dogs.

Austin has chosen UB to begin his higher education, where he was also offered a scholarship. His dream is become a medical doctor specializing in radiology. He is currently a manager at Ted's Hot Dogs and saving money for a better vehicle.

He is also proud of his sister, Autum, who is following closely in his footsteps, with high honors and AP classes, who wants to be a firefighter or K9 officer.

Pastor Hope presented Austin with a greeting card and a selection of Quotations to Live By, chosen for this day. He also presented Austin with a beautiful square white box for holding small treasures. On top it features an excerpt from "Footprints in the Sand" and two little silver feet along a shoreline. Pastor Hope said, *"The church gives you this box not just as a graduation gift but as a prayer from all of us for those times in the future of adversity and struggle—that you might know our trust that God will take you by the hand even then."*

A Coincidence and a Spontaneous Gift: My unexpected experience at a Hallmark Store by Rev. Hope Harle-Mould



On Saturday, August 16th, I headed out from my home to find a good gift to present to Austin Lee the next morning for his graduation recognition during our worship.

Normally when I go out looking for a gift, I always know where I'll go first:

CardSmart, a Hallmark-like gift shop in Kenmore that is close by, less

expensive, and where I know the staff. In fact, that's where Julie works, whose sister Lori is the one who has gifted us with all our wonderful prayer shawls that we have dedicated and given to others.

But instead of heading that way, I found myself heading up Delaware Avenue into Tonawanda toward the Hallmark Store there. And I didn't even realize my mistake 'til I was just a couple blocks away. So I thought, *OK, I'll look here first, and I can always go to CardSmart if necessary.*

I wandered all over finding nothing but finally discovered the religious gifts in the center of the store, where there was already an African American woman studying the shelves very intently. Indeed there were many good possibilities right near us both. I found just the right thing, but she was still deciding. I offered a friendly, "I'm looking for a graduation present. How about you?" She replied, "I'm looking to get a present for my daughter-in-law...because my son recently died."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," I immediately replied. She said, "That's ok." I said, "No, it's not ok, but I'm so sorry. What was his name?" She told me his name was Domini, he was just in his '40s, had died July 8th, and he lived in

Detroit. Her name was Robbie and was from Amherst. I spontaneously said, “Who’s going to get you a gift, Robbie?” She was silent. I immediately knew what I had to do.

I happened to be wearing my wooden cross at that very moment, the one I wear every Sunday in worship, but rarely during the week. It’s my only wooden cross pendant, and it was crafted and handpainted for me by Charlie Hunt from my previous church. I took it off and handed it to her. “I think I’m supposed to give this to you. And you should know that tomorrow my whole church will pray for you and your daughter-in-law.” She thanked me, all the while just looking at the cross in her hand. She thanked me again, just looking at it.

So the next day here at church, some of you may have noticed I was wearing a different kind of cross, one made of nails, one I usually wear only during Lent. But I think Charlie would have been very happy. His cross was exactly what I needed to best express from my heart—on behalf of all of you—that Robbie is not alone, and God will not abandon her, and the Risen One still walks along the road with her. And us, too.

So, thanks Austin, for being the spark that put me in the “wrong” store with the right person at the right time.



Building a Good Pastor-Church Relationship

*****NEW** DATE: OCTOBER 21st, 6:00 - 8:00 pm***

A workshop led by Rev. Jan Mahle, pastor, East Aurora Christian Church, and representative of the Disciples NE Region for all churches in WNY

Rev. Mahle is skilled in facilitating this kind of workshop and hopes to help us grow together as a healthy, positive, and faithful Body of Christ. And since Jan is known in her church for her delightful sense of humor, you can bet she’ll keep us laughing when we take ourselves too seriously! Read her special message below:

September 4, 2025

Dear Payne Ave. Christian Church Family,

I am so very excited to join you in conversation regarding the covenantal relationship between pastor and congregation. My guess is that you are still getting to know Pastor Hope and he is getting to know you. To assist in the process of “knowing one another”, I was asked by Pastor Hope to lead a session on Expectations and Conflict Resolution in October.

We will begin the session by discussing beliefs, values and expectations. These areas are foundational and often assumed rather than discussed. Understanding one another is crucial to a healthy ministry.

And then we will engage in discussion about conflict resolution. I encourage you to read Philippians 4 in preparation for our discussion. Engaging in a discussion on conflict resolution will bring to the fore the practice of humility, patience, and empathy. When a church is able to resolve internal conflicts effectively, it frees up energy and resources to focus on its core mission: worship, fellowship, and outreach.

I truly believe our time together will be a blessing to each of us and I can't wait to see you there and share in conversation.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Jan Mahle

Pastor of East Aurora Christian Church

Moderator of the Northeast Regional Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

PAYNE AVENUE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Hope Douglas Harle-Mould

Pastor

Home 716-868-5533

hopeharlemould@gmail.com

Sam Fesmire

Music Director

716-423-3458

payneavechurch@gmail.com

Espy Altamar

Secretary

Office: 716-260-1217

payneavechurch@gmail.com



Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

A quiet room is available for families with small children, which is in the back of the church.

****NEW** WIFI Password: Peace4all**

WiFi is available in the church building and on the grounds.

Visit us on the Web: <http://www.PayneAvenue.org>

All upcoming Events are in the Newsletter which is always posted on the website!

Like and share our Church Facebook page!

www.facebook.com/payneavenuechurch

or

<https://www.facebook.com/share/1BoXaPjG7/?mibextid=wwXtfr>

**This
Church
Affirms
You**

