



# PAYNE AVENUE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(Disciples of Christ)

1459 Payne Avenue North Tonawanda, NY 14120

(716) 260-1217 [payneavechurch@gmail.com](mailto:payneavechurch@gmail.com)

## APRIL 2026 NEWSLETTER

Elders Communion	Bread	Cup
April 2 (Maundy Service)	Ross Benton	Brett Kofod
April 5 (Easter)	Ross Benton	Brett Kofod
April 12 (Birthday Sunday)	Becky Wilson	Ken Ozzimo
April 19	Bob Link	Barb Wokersien
April 26 (Hot Dog Lunch)	Bob Link	Bill Wolcott
May 3	Ken Ozzimo	Brett Kofod
May 10 (Mother's Day)	Becky Wilson	Bill Wolcott
May 17	Becky Wilson	Barb Wokersien
May 24 (Memorial Day Wknd)	Jim Wokersien	Bob Link
May 31	Bob Link	Bill Wolcott

### Deaconess Schedule - April (5 Sundays) and May (5 Sundays)

Prepare – Nancy Golba Clean Up – To be determined



### Outreach and Mission

This spring we are continuing to collect non-perishable food and personal care products, not only for the North Tonawanda Interchurch Food Pantry, but for the families we serve through our *Church Family to Your Family* Food Pantry. Although our shelves are currently well stocked with staple items, we have very few amenities (e.g., **salad**

**dressings, sauces, seasonings**) that help dress up an otherwise plain meal.

So while you're out shopping for your family's Easter meal, please consider picking up a few extra items to make the season a little more special for people who can't afford such "luxuries."

We also urge you to support the wonderful work of Rainie's Foster Closet by purchasing **underwear and socks** for children of all ages as well as **diapers** (all sizes) **and baby wipes**.

Later this year we are looking forward to a visit from one of Pastor Hope's dear friends - Phebian Abdulai - whose medical ministry in Sierra Leone was the focus of our Lenten offering last year. She will tell us about the tremendous impact the Adama Martha Memorial Community Health Center is having on the residents of Kono District in her native land and how we can support this vital mission.

Thank you in advance for continuing to respond so generously to meet the needs of our sisters and brothers. You show the world that Payne Avenue Christian Church is a congregation of caring and compassionate people!

Yours in Christ, Nancy Golba, Nancy Mueller, Heather Ozzimo  
Coordinators



### ***Our condolences to family and friends of Janith Tooke***

**Obituary: TOOKE, JANITH "JAN" L.**

**January 4, 1931 –March 30, 2026**

Age 95 of North Tonawanda and formerly of the City of Tonawanda, March 30, 2026 under the care of Hospice. Daughter of the late Embury H. and Genevieve L. (nee Conrad) Tooke and sister of the late Lloyd (late Elizabeth) Tooke, Eugene (late Dorothy) Tooke, Eleanor (late Joseph) Fiala, Donald (late Sally) Tooke, Gerald (late Lois Madrid) Tooke, Gloria (late Howard Clark, Elmer Licht, Bart Taggart) Taggart, Lyle (living spouse Roberta "Ronni") (late Dorothy J.) Tooke and Marvin (late Beatrice) Tooke. Also many nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews.

Jan was a 1949 graduate of Tonawanda High School. She was Assistant Vice President of HSBC in Tonawanda and also Buffalo for more than 40 years, retiring in 1991 and was Past President of Erie-Niagara Sunrise Exchange Club.

Jan was also an active member of Payne Avenue Christian Church where she served as Moderator for many years and was also Elder Emeritus.

Calling hours were held on Friday April 3, 2026 at JOHN O. ROTH FUNERAL HOME, INC., 25 William St. (between Morgan & Broad Sts) City of Tonawanda. A private burial will be in Elmlawn Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in memory of Jan may be made to Payne Ave. Christian Church. Memories and condolences may be shared at [www.ROTHFUNERAL.com](http://www.ROTHFUNERAL.com).

### **From the Elders -A Special Thank you message:**

1. Thank you to **Becky and Bob Wilson** for putting on the Seder dinner.
2. Thank you to **Brenda Doucette, Sandy Lange, and Butch Milliron** for their help in cleaning up during and after Jan Tooke's funeral luncheon.
3. **From Jim Wokersien:** I want to thank my church family for thoughts, prayers, and cards, especially Pastor Hope for his calls during my surgery and recovery.

**PACC CHOIR 2026!!** Thank you for *Joyful Noise and Bells of Joy* music to celebrate the Lenten season!





## Prayer Shawl Celebration

Here's the prayer shawl which 9th grader Autum Lee (daughter of Melissa and granddaughter of Dave & Debbie Evans) picked out at church and which we blessed with our prayers on March 1st. And let us all continue to pray that Autum's recent fifth and final surgery on her vocal cords and throat results in the miracle of a normal voice as she grows into young adulthood. Hold it close! And may Christ hold you close.



*Prayer Requests*

## Prayers of Healing and Caring:

Ross Benton and family  
Kay (Sister of Mary Caldwell)  
Devon Compton, (Nephew of Paul White & Nancy Mueller)  
Summer Cook  
Rev. Dr. Arthur Davis,  
Nita Doucette  
Mary Dzik  
AshLynn Dzik  
Deborah Evans  
Lisa Geraci  
Don Golba  
Linda Harle-Mould  
Jaime Hodge  
Shirley Jayne  
Brandon Kofod  
Karen Lawrence and her daughter Ronda

Bob Link's Daughter Shelly and Grandson William  
Autumn Lee  
Matt Lipinczyk (Nephew of Paul White & Nancy Mueller)  
Harry Madrid  
Carol McBride  
Burton Merriam  
Ruth Misko, daughter of Leah Benton  
Diane Misner (Bob Link's daughter)  
David Misner (Son-in-law of Bob Link)  
Madeline Mock  
Family of Heather Ozzimo – Carter  
Sherry Ostwald  
Cynthia Pullman

Heather Raggi (Family of Bob Link)  
Joan Shamrock  
Karen Smith (Friend of Marcy's)  
Linda Staiger (Family of Jim Wokersien)  
Janith Tooke's Sister-in-law Ronni  
Sharon Weiss (friend of Karen Lawrence)  
Bob and Becky Wilson and nephew Billy Wilson  
Bill Wolcott  
Jim Wokersien

\*There will be copies of this list printed and located on the Deacons tables. Please be sure to take one home to continue your prayers. \*Please note, after a 6 week period names will be removed unless a special request is received in the office.

To add to the Prayer Chain call Mary Caldwell 716-692-8108 (before 9pm). Thank you.

### “IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT”

If anyone needs to be placed on the Communion to Shut-Ins list - please be sure to contact Becky Wilson at 716-998-9052



## Thinking of You!

Please remember our members that are unable to be in their homes any longer... send a card to help them know we care! Thank you!

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

Also, some members cannot attend weekly, send a card and show they are remembered: Karen Lawrence, and Janet Holt (all addresses in Church Directory).

## FROM THE PASTOR

### *All in a Day's Work: A poem by Rev. Hope Douglas Harle-Mould*

*At the village of Nain,  
Jesus sees the funeral procession of the widow's only son,  
comes near and simply raises the dead.*

*Near Martha and Mary's home in Bethany,  
Jesus sees the sealed tomb of his friend Lazarus,  
comes near and simply raises the dead.*

*At the home of the synagogue leader Jairus,  
Jesus sees the room in which the deceased little girl lies,  
comes near raises the dead.*

*In our anguished homes and crucified world,  
Jesus sees our places of fear and hopelessness,  
comes near and simply raises the dead.*

*It's really no big deal—all in a day's work.  
Jesus sees the dark and scary places in our lives,  
comes near and simply raises the dead.*

*Then he says to you and me—  
as he said to Jairus' daughter—  
"Now...how about something to eat?"*



### ***Churches Across the Nation Praying for Sierra Leone in March! from Pastor Hope & Global Ministries (Disciples/UCC)***

We have a personal connection to Sierra Leone (West Africa) through our support of **nurse Phebian Abdulai**, founder of three clinics and an orphanage in the Kono District of Sierra Leone. Our donations are still needed for her, which you can give directly through our church's Outreach and Mission budget.

But on Sunday March 15, Disciples of Christ (DOC) and UCC churches were urged to pray for our wider work in Sierra Leone, which many people know little about.

In Sierra Leone, the DOC works through the Council of Churches of Sierra Leone, which has several amazing projects. 1: **Savings & Microcredit Project**, which empowers families in a community to learn to work together and manage projects collectively. When loans are paid back, additional families can receive loans. One loan group focused on fishing projects, another on rice and vegetables, another on a school for the blind, and another on digging wells and piping water (so children do not have to haul water long distances each day).

2: **Street Children of Kenema** (*an eastern province I once toured and stayed with a family*) where children are out begging, as children of blind or disabled parents, or those orphaned or abandoned by relatives. This program supports foster parents and pays school fees to enable these children to learn at school.

3: **Women's Leadership Development project**, which has helped women with literacy, financial planning, starting new businesses, and supporting other women through gender-based violence, parenting support, HIV/AIDS and reproductive healthcare.

Please participate in these projects by offering your generous gift through our congregation (designate "Global Ministries DOC") or directly on their website: [globalministries.org](http://globalministries.org). Thank you for caring.

***A PRAYER FOR THE LONELY & WOUNDED*** (from our March 15<sup>th</sup> worship)  
by Rev. Sherry Molock, Beloved Community UCC, Accokeek, MD

Dear Gracious and Merciful God,

We come to you to give thanks for this day, which provides us with another opportunity to bask in the glow of your love. We thank you because you are so gracious and kind; we thank you for your abundant love, your loving kindness.

God, we ask right now that you heal the hearts of those who are emotionally wounded, that you allow those who feel alone and abandoned to feel your Spirit.

For those of us who feel so lost and forlorn that we can no longer sense your presence, we ask that you send someone to be your eyes, your ears, your arms and your heart so that they can experience your love in the physical realm right now.

When we are at the point where our faith tank feels like it's on "Empty," send someone who is willing to loan us a little faith until we can experience your love for ourselves again.

We ask that you send us an angel, be it in the form of a friend, a counselor, a passage in a book or a newly noticed thing of beauty, so that our spirits can be lifted once again.

We ask that you help all of us have compassion and love for those suffering through the throes of depression, anxiety and other emotions that sometimes try to snuff out our spirit.

Help us to be ever mindful that we are more than conquerors in the God who loves us, that weeping may endure for the night but joy really does come in the morning, and that nothing can separate us from your love.

In the name of the One who promises to love us with an everlasting love, we pray. Amen.

***QUOTATIONS FOR MEDITATION: From Our Worship Services in March***

***For One Who Suffers***

*I know I cannot enter all you feel,  
nor bear with you the burden of your pain.  
I can but offer what my love does give—  
the strength of caring,  
the warmth of one who seeks to understand.  
This I do in quiet ways—  
that on your lonely path you may not walk alone.*

**—Howard Thurman, 20<sup>th</sup> century African-American church leader**

***"It all began for the disciples when they stayed with Jesus.***

*It did not begin when they understood him;  
it did not begin when they discovered who he was;  
it did not begin when they found out what he could do.*

*It began when they stayed with him,  
when they left where they had been and went to where he was.*

*That is how it all began. And ever since then,  
our whole life, whether alone or together,  
has been that simple struggle against ourselves and our world  
to stay with Jesus."*

**—Samuel K. Davis**

**What is forgiveness?** It is not denying the depth of our hurt or giving into martyrdom. And it is not forgetting or excusing unjust behavior. Rather, in the words of **Marjorie Thompson**,...

*...Forgiveness means to make a conscious choice to release the person who has wounded us from the sentence of our judgment, however justified that judgment may be. It represents a choice to leave behind our resentment and desire for retribution, however fair such punishment might seem. It is in this sense that one may speak of "forgetting"; not that the actual wound is ever completely forgotten, but that its power to hold us trapped in continual replay of the event—with all the resentment each remembrance makes fresh—is broken.*

## **Jesus Led Me Here**

**by Kimmarie Brown, a new PACC member since November!**



Jesus has been pursuing my heart since I can remember.

Born and raised a Catholic, Jesus was central to my life. I remember spending time wondering about this omnipresent God even when I was very young. A God who was everywhere and knew everything. God seemed to speak to me even then...on my little nature walks prayers in the rose grove behind my school and in the quiet times when I was alone but not quite as I knew God was there with me.

But I questioned all the pomp and circumstance that went into worship. I sought a simpler God, who could understand me and who I could talk to on a personal level. Although I remained Catholic, Jesus spoke through my Baptist best friend who told me of a Jesus who could come into my heart and change my life.

At 17, I received my first Bible that I could read for myself. Secured in my stance as a Catholic (one is pretty much a Catholic their whole life unless excommunicated), I took the liberty to explore other Christian denominations, landing on Charismatic Catholicism during my college years.

However, in college I experienced suicidal heartbreak and it was not a Catholic who helped me, but a Protestant friend. After attending services with her and accepting Jesus as my Savior, asking Him into my heart, I was baptized by submersion in a bathtub of a Pentecostal home.

This began my personal quest to find out more about who God is, how Jesus' words match up with what I was hearing from born again Christians and whether there was a more ancient path that could lead me to being a better person. Even though I wandered off the Way, Jesus never let me go too far.

My circle of friends and acquaintances grew to include diverse belief systems, and I was eager to learn about each of them. I experimented with drugs and dabbled in witchcraft. Yet, none of these other ways of getting to know the Divine resonated to the personal spiritual relationship I was seeking. Deep within me there was a voice that now I know was Jesus calling me back to the Way.

Stubbornly, however, I kept on seeking an alternative to traditional Christianity. Why? Because the born-again Christians appeared judgmental, ultra conservative, hypocritical and unauthentic.

I was back in the arms of the Catholic church when I met my husband, who was a Pentecostal. I attended church with him and fell in love with their style of worship. I could sing, dance and celebrate openly. It was so free. When the Holy Spirit filled me, I was sure I had finally found my place.

When my daughter had trouble memorizing scripture however, she was berated and lost her faith. I wondered if God really desired us to memorize His word to get into heaven. I thought the meaning of scripture laid within the heart and its ability to be relevant in daily life, not in whether one knew the passage number and exact words (of whatever Bible they decided from). I was completely turned off and looked for another church.

One was found. It was small and seemed rather progressive. Then life got very difficult. My mother was losing a battle with lung cancer, and my days were filled with balancing motherhood, marriage and responsibility of being an only child. My mother was dying; my husband wanted a divorce, and my 14-year daughter was running away to life on the street. I was a mess to say the least.

That small church, despite members knowing my challenges, did not provide strong spiritual support. No one stopped by my home although the pastor and members knew where I lived. No one even reached out through text or messaging to find out how I was handling life and faith.

I felt so alone. Then there was THAT VOICE. I prayed, meditated, then surrendered and things, well, they got better. My mother passed peacefully, my marriage was preserved, and my daughter came home. Yet, I still wasn't ready to return to the church.

I met the Divine in the woods, on walks and in the quiet solitude of my room. I noticed the blessings of life and couldn't understand why the Eternal loved me so much. I heard Jesus down inside but couldn't convince myself that it was he who was speaking. I doubted, but Jesus persevered. I read Roger Wolsey's *Kissing Fish* and began contemplating my own beliefs. I considered and still consider myself a progressive Christian.

Then, Jesus spoke through my son, who for me is a life coach. He truly knows me better than any other living human. He also had the seed of Jesus' salvation planted at an early age but wandered as I did. But Jesus was also pursuing Him and through my daughter-in-law, Colin returned to the Christian faith. Although we were in different places along the Way, he strongly encouraged me to continue seeking Jesus and not other gods or goddesses.

So, I thought deeply about all the things I had experienced spiritually and learned in the sacred texts of Zoroastrianism and Buddhism, comparing them with the words of Jesus. Although I found many similarities. Jesus' Way seemed to make the most amount of sense. It was simple, it was accessible and it didn't require anything more than belief and trust in the Holy Spirit to guide me along the path.

I could confidently state out loud that Jesus was indeed the only person who fully represented the Most High, who sacrificed himself for Love and was resurrected so I could have that Spirit living within me, yet I was lacking fellowship. Colin said I needed to find a church. I told him I had enough of the church but was willing to look into it.

I searched the Progressive Christianity website and found Disciples of Christ. I took time to read through the information on [disciples.org](http://disciples.org) finding the beliefs and mission of the denomination very much matched up with my heart, particularly weekly communion, the call to thoughtfully study scripture and the ecumenical movement to bring healing and justice to a broken (sinful) world.

I toyed with the idea of coming to Payne Avenue Christian Church. I wasn't too sure, being that according to what I found online, the worship service was much lower keyed than the contemporary worship services I was used to, yet there was something inviting too. So, I came.

The **BE THE CHURCH** sign near the entrance door confirmed that this was a congregation that understood its responsibility to the environment and to the people.

Upon entering, I was warmly but not intrusively greeted. Everyone smiled and I felt comfortable. The service was simple, but familiar, like the prayer services I went to as a Catholic youth. The music, a blend of traditional hymns, Christian folk song and contemporary pieces. I could lift my hands in worship without criticism (Thank you Sam). Jesus spoke loudly in this place. I immediately wanted to get to know the people of this church. I volunteered and found friendship.



All the people I have met at PACC, have been authentic, kind and welcoming, people who are inclusive and diverse, people who understand faith as a personal journey. No preaching, no Bible thumping, no questionable doctrines, just people who, to me, truly exemplify discipleship. There is a sweet, no-frills warmth in this place. A place where I feel the Holy Spirit move and hear the voice of Jesus speak clearly.

Jesus led me to PACC, and this is where I desire to remain. Because of all of this, I am answering the call to join hands with this congregation in spreading the Good News of Divine Love through outreach, ministry and example. Let's go and make Disciples!



**OFFICE UPDATES:** Thank you everyone for your understanding with the secretary office hours – childcare & family medical issues caused a few shifts with dates & time in the office – the wiggle room is very much appreciated.

## Upcoming Events: Mark your calendars

Look for sign-ups in church - All are invited - please join us!

### **April 12<sup>th</sup> \*\*EVERYBODY'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!!\*\* EVERYONE IS WELCOME! \*\***

Every April we have our annual birthday party when everyone is to bring in a church offering of a special amount: Multiply your age in 2026 by one penny, nickel, dime, or dollar and put it in the offering!! (ex. 40 yrs old? give 40 dollars or 40 quarters, etc.)

\*\*Please use the special basket in the back by the birthday cake to place your awesome age based birthday donation



### **April 26<sup>th</sup>: after service Fellowship Meal hot dog/hamburger roast**

sponsored by Vern & Jean Ortel

### **CHIAVETTA'S BBQ dates for 2026 set: July 11th, September 26th, and December 5<sup>th</sup>!**

Prices and sides TBD at this time. "If anyone feels it is time for a change in the sides that are offered with the dinners, please speak with Brett. He is reviewing options with Chiavettas. If you love the sides just the way they are, mention that too! "



### **Special Invitation:**

**Baptism of Summer Ann Cook  
Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:00  
Grove Street Christian Church  
85 Grove Street  
Tonawanda, NY**

This a full-immersion baptism officiated by Pastor Hope. It is part of her joining Jesus as an ongoing member at Payne Ave Christian Church, and she is inviting all of us at PACC to come be witnesses and celebrate it together!

## *Easter Flower Donations 2026*



### **Bob & Becky Wilson**

In Loving Memory of All Our Loved Ones

### **Brett Kofod**

In Loving Memory of Rev. Jerry McGlone,  
Rev. Charles Lamb, Gertrude Proefrock,  
Lois Newman, Winifred Schasel, Sue Knoll,  
Florence Janowsky, Ruth Smith, Lucille  
Goldsworthy & C. Raymond Schreiber

### **Brett Kofod**

In Loving Memory of Reginald & Janet Rider

### **Brett Kofod**

In Honor of Becky Wilson, Nancy Golba,  
Sandy Lange & Butch Milliron

### **Kate McCormack**

In Loving Memory of Daniel McCormack

### **Shirley Jayne**

In Loving Memory of Doug Jayne & Kim Arellano

### **Bill Wolcott**

In Loving Memory of Shirley Wolcott

### **Brandon Kofod**

In Loving Memory of My Grandparents &  
Janith Tooke

### **Bob Link**

In Loving Memory of Loved Ones

### **Ken & Heather Ozzimo**

In Loving Memory of Sue Benton, Leah Benton &  
Christine Smith

### **Ed & Barb Wokersien**

In Loving Memory Loved Ones

### **Raymond Milliron**

In Loving Memory of Mom & Kelly

### **Brenda Doucette**

In Loving Memory of My Husband, Jerry & Parents  
John & Vivian Papoi and Edward & Geraldine  
Doucette

### **James Wokersien**

In Loving Memory of Loved Ones

### **Sherry Ostwald**

In Loving Memory of Dan Ostwald

### **Rev. Hope Harle-Mould**

In Loving Memory of My Brother David Harle and  
a Nine-Year-old Friend, Anna Conte

### **Paul Wright**

In Memory of Loved Ones

### **Mitsy Luciano**

In Loving Memory of Dian Loucks &  
Miriam Santiago

### **Ed Boyer**

In Loving Memory of Edward & Janet Boyer

### **Nancy Mueller**

In Loving Memory of Dick & Arletta Mueller

### **Mary Caldwell**

In Loving Memory of Richard Caldwell

### **ON BEHALF OF THE ELDERS**

In Memory of Leah Benton &  
Janith Tooke, Elder Emeritus's

### **ON BEHALF OF THE ELDERS**

In Honor of Karen Lawrence, Elder Emeritus

*\*Extra Flowers are available for sale - please contact Brett or Becky \**

## Let's Celebrate! Birthdays and Anniversaries:

### May Birthdays

4	Erik Hodge	23	Jean Ortel
10	Kathy Koza	29	Dorothea Knoell
11	Brett Kofod		
16	Jason Wokersien		



### May Anniversaries

30	Gabriel and Beverly DiBernardo
----	--------------------------------

### June Birthdays

2	Cecil "Bill" Wolcott	15	Rebecca Benton
3	Summer Cook	23	Nancy Mueller



### June Anniversaries

23	Pastor Hope and Linda Harle-Mould
28	Tony and Marcy DiPasquale

*\*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.*

## PAYNE AVENUE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Hope Douglas Harle-Mould  
Pastor  
Home 716-868-5533  
[hopeharlemould@gmail.com](mailto:hopeharlemould@gmail.com)

Sam Fesmire  
Music Director  
716-423-3458  
[sffesmire@gmail.com](mailto:sffesmire@gmail.com)

Espy Altamar  
Secretary / Financial Clerk  
Office: 716-260-1217  
[payneavechurch@gmail.com](mailto:payneavechurch@gmail.com)



 We say we are  
Disciples of Christ,  
a movement for *wholeness*  
in a *fragmented world*.

Let's be the church  
we say we are.

**This  
Church  
Affirms  
You**



**Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.**  
A quiet room is available for families with small children, in the back of the church.

**WIFI Password: Peace4all**

WiFi is available in the church building and 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](http://www.facebook.com/payneavenuechurch)  
Or <https://www.facebook.com/share/1BoXaPjG7/?mibextid=wwXtfr>