

PAYNE AVENUE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(Disciples of Christ)

1459 Payne Avenue North Tonawanda, NY 14120

(716) 260-1217 payneavechurch@gmail.com



AUGUST 2026 NEWSLETTER



Please enjoy catching up with the current events and all the happenings within our church, community, and church families. August marks the end of the "dog days" of summer, named for **Canis Major**, the Greater Dog constellation. This constellation holds **Sirius**, known as the "Dog Star," which is the brightest star in the night sky. Also look out for the annual Perseid meteor shower, peaking mid-month, and the Sturgeon full moon.

Deaconess Schedule – August (5 Sundays)

Prepare – Nancy Golba Clean Up

****Please see Sandy Lange to sign up or use the clipboard in the back of the church.**

Outreach and Mission



We are delighted to report that we have received over \$800 to support Phebian Abdulai's ministries in Sierra Leone. In addition to the three clinics she told us about during her powerful testimony on April 26th, we will ask Jericho Road to use a portion of our gift to purchase uniforms, books and supplies for children whose families can't afford such "luxuries." It's wonderful to know that we'll be making it possible for kids to get an education and the opportunity for a better life!

I also have some not-so-happy news to share from the North Tonawanda Interchurch Food Pantry: the huge supply of non-perishable items collected by the US Postal Service in mid-May has already disappeared from the shelves. And every week brings more hungry families looking for assistance in putting nutritious food on the table. So please consider picking up a few extra items while you're out shopping. They especially need **saucers** and **dressings** to add flavor to meals, as well as **Jello** and **pudding**.

Each week I have the chance to meet the people who turn to the food pantry for help and hear how grateful they are for the food and personal care supplies we're able to provide. I give thanks to God that our PACC family continues to share in this important ministry to our community!

Gratefully,

Nancy Golba, Coordinator

FROM THE PASTOR: Sunday, August 2nd was a special day to celebrate the following members:



INSTALLING OUR NEW ELDERS: NANCY GOLBA AND ED WOKERSIEN

May they find joy in their walk of faith, knowing your abiding presence with them in every act of ministry – from committee meetings to budget discussions, from outreach events to continued prayers for the health of the congregation.

Pictured: Pastor Hope, Ed, Nancy and Becky

THANK YOU FOR OUR LONG-STANDING ELDERS -

Your many years of faithful service are appreciated and cherished!! Let us continue to surround them with a supportive community that encourages, uplifts, and unites them in purpose. May they build relationships rooted in trust and respect, fostering a culture of discipleship and outreach

1986 Jim Wokersien
1995 Barb Wokersien
1998 Ross Benton
2006 Ken Ozzimo
2010 Karen Lawrence
2010 Brett Kofod
2011 Becky Wilson
2018 Bill Wolcott
2022 Bob Link



CELEBRATION OF MARY CALDWELL'S 100TH BIRTHDAY!!



Exciting News: Pastor Hope's Devotions Have Been Chosen to Be Published in a New Presbyterian Book

Pastor Hope has been chosen as one of fifty-two writers whose devotions published in the These Days devotional magazine over the last 25 years will be collected into a hardcover book titled Always Near, to be published by Westminster/John Knox Press later this month. They have selected seven of his 35 devotions which UCC and Presbyterian congregations have read in These Days over the years.

One of these devotions was shared with us by Pastor Hope recently as a sermon illustration: "Spaghetti Dinner." We share it here for all of you to enjoy and be inspired by.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

A true story by Pastor Hope Harle-Mould, about a moment in his previous church
**"But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.
And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you..."**

--Luke 14:13-14a (from Jesus' Parable of the Great Feast)

Sharon decided not to go to our church's spaghetti dinner. How could she? Her cousin's son had just committed suicide. But then she changed her mind: I did sign up to help in the kitchen, but most of all, Sue's counting on me, and I won't let her down. Six weeks earlier, Sue had had a heart bypass, and though everyone at church said she didn't have to coordinate the dinner again this year, she insisted — as long as she had plenty of help. Her determination amazed and inspired us all.

Sharon showed up to help, but told no one the sorrow in her heart. The kitchen volunteers were efficient, fun, and friendly. They didn't act as if this was an onerous chore but rather a celebration to which they had been specially invited. Their joy was contagious. Half the evening was gone before Sharon realized she was having fun. For the first time in a long time, she had been able not to think about her cousin's heartbreaking situation. For three hours, Sharon simply delighted in the preciousness of the life we are given and the people we are given to share it with.

That Sunday I told the congregation: "We thought we were putting on a fundraiser for our church. We didn't realize that we were being the church, the body of Jesus Christ, one to the other, serving up heaps of hope and healing — along with a lot of pasta."

Kathleen Cook (Summer's Aunt) Joins PACC on July 19th

Kathy was baptized at 17 at Niagara Falls Church of Christ, her grandmother's church. When she was in her late 20's, she went through a serious crisis, but she said God pulled her safely through. Her mother once told her: "The Good Lord loves you more than you'll ever know." As an adult, Kathy was diagnosed with an extra heartbeat, which has never bothered her.:

"Maybe it's an extra beat from Jesus to help me," she explained.

In recent years she hadn't been able to find a warm and welcoming church, until she started driving Summer and her son Jaydon here, she said she feels so at home here and closer to Christ. Standing up next to her was Nancy Golba, her sponsor, who then presented her with a gift: a devotional book for every day of the year. We rejoice with you, Kathy, that the Spirit has made you part of our extended family. And may your new apartment at Bishop Gibbons be a blessing.



On May 9th, Pastor Hope officiated a full immersion baptism for Kathleen's niece, Summer Cook.

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST STATEMENT - JULY 21, 2026
REGARDING THE KILLINGS OF LORENZO SALGADO ARAUJO AND JOHAN SEBASTIÁN DURÁN GUERRERO



"Thus says the Lord: Act with justice and righteousness and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place." (Jeremiah 22:1-3, NRSVue)

"...do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another." (Zechariah 7:10, NRSVue)

"We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ Those who say, "I love God," and hate a brother or sister are liars, for those who do not love a brother or sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. ²¹ The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also." (1 John 4:20-21, NRSVue)

In the space of less than one-week, human life has once again been lost because of ICE activity in our communities. Once again, we are left with families mourning the loss of loved ones, and we are left with the knowledge that it simply did not have to happen. Loss of life at the hands of anyone is devastating, but we continue to see the actions and modi operandi of ICE failing to honor appropriate and legal due process for these persons. We have yet no indication that anyone involved will be held accountable for such abject failure of process and disregard for human life. As followers of Jesus, we must speak and let the world know that we cannot condone these irresponsible and deadly approaches to what is being called "immigration enforcement." Scripture reminds us that we are to love, to love our neighbor because God is love. No one is excluded from the limitless expanse and inclusion of God's love. The prophet Jeremiah is specific in his forbidding of violence against the alien, the orphan, the widow.

The bottom line of Jesus' teaching is to love God and love our neighbor for if we do not know love, we do not know God, for God is love. Lorenzo Salgado Araujo had been a resident of Houston, TX for over 35 years and owned his own construction company. He had built his family home, and was a beloved husband, father and valued community member. Johan Sebastian Duran Guerrero was a young father who simply wanted to give his daughter "the American dream." Neither of these men were the actual targets of the investigative or detention activity that ICE said it was there to do. Neither of these men had criminal records. Given the testimonies of their communities and the lack of credibility that ICE currently has in these matters, it is beyond comprehension to believe that either man represented a life-threatening presence to ICE agents. There is no reasoning that can justify the loss of an innocent life. We can never stand as judge, jury and executioner with such careless regard for the life of another.

In early February 2026, I visited the communities in Minneapolis where both Renee Nicole Good and Alex Pretti, both American citizens and neither of whom were the intended targets of investigative or enforcement activity. People of many faith traditions participated in religious ceremonies led by local indigenous leaders and attended by a wide diversity of people from the local community and across the nation. We had hoped that the response in Minneapolis had resulted in reforming the actions of ICE agents, that somehow the needless loss of life had raised awareness and that ICE officials wanted to avoid these mistakes going forward. But last week has shown us that current ICE practices continue to devalue human life. These practices must stop. As people of faith, we cannot be silent when the injustices continue to result in needless death. Accountability must prevail, policies must change, and this unspeakable evil against humanity must end. I pray that we may continue to walk in the strength that gives voice to those who cannot speak, those who now live in fear.

May our bold advocacy let the nations know that we will continue to speak, to advocate, to work to change policies that provide greater compassion for all humanity. How long must we do this? *"Until justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream."* (Amos 5:24, NRSVue)

Moving towards wholeness together,
Rev. Terri Hord Owens
General Minister and President



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)
Family of Heather Ozzimo –
Carter
Sherry Ostwald
Cynthia Pullman

Family of Heather Raggi
(Family of Bob Link)
Joan Shamrock
Karen Smith (Friend of
Marcy's)
Family of Madeline Mock
(Friends 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 Sherry Ostwald 716-471-6842 (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, Sherry Ostwald, and Janet Holt (all addresses in Church Directory).



We are heartbroken to share the news that Bob Link's granddaughter Heather Raggi, passed away suddenly at home on Friday July 10 at age 40. We had prayed for her in January and February as she went through a two-team surgery to implant a new valve. She had fully recovered and they were planning a second heart surgery in the future to do more.

Bob...

May God turn your mourning into dancing as we celebrate Heather's life. And may the Risen Christ take Heather by the hand and welcome her to her heavenly home – her Redeemer

whom she loves with all her heart and soul and mind and strength. In Christ's love and presence and promises, Pastor Hope and all PACC

Heather Raggi Obituary

Of Town of Pendleton, NY, passed away on Friday, July 10, 2026. She was born in Niagara Falls, NY, on January 12, 1985, the daughter of Paul H. (Terri Samuelson) Link and the late Kimberly J. (Poirier) Link.

Heather was a graduate of both Niagara Wheatfield and Niagara University. She was a 1st and 3rd grade teacher at Starpoint CSD for the last 17 years.

Heather's greatest joy in life was being a mom to Kaden and Kyla. They were her heart, her center, and the reason behind everything she did. She was their biggest supporter, always there cheering them on through sports, activities, milestones, and everyday moments.

To know Heather was to know her smile. She had a gift for making others feel happy, encouraged, and loved. She cherished time with her family and friends, and the friendships she built throughout every part of her life reflected the warmth, loyalty, and joy she brought to those around her.

Heather lived life with energy and positivity. She enjoyed swimming, working out, and vacationing with family and friends. As a teacher, she touched the lives of so many children, offering not only knowledge but also kindness, encouragement, and the kind of smile that made every student feel seen. Her love, joy, and beautiful spirit will live on in her children, her family, her friends, her students, and all who were blessed to know her.

Heather is survived by her devoted husband of 12 years, Anthony M. Raggi, whose unwavering love and support carried her through every obstacle she faced acting as her greatest advocate and supporter. She is also survived by her father, her beloved children, Kaden and Kyla Raggi; her brother, Ryan (Jill) Link; her nieces, Avery and Ellie; her sister-in-law, Angela Raggi (Ben Clennon); her brother-in-law, Nathan Raggi; as well as other cherished nephews, extended family members, and friends.



In Memory of Madeline Mock

July 14, 1972 — July 30, 2026

Our deepest sympathy to the family of Madeline Mock who is a family friend of Marcy DiPasquale. Hoping that the support of friends and loved ones brings all of you comfort and joyful memories during this difficult time

Of Buffalo, NY entered into rest on July 30, 2026. Beloved wife of 32 years and 1 day to Andrew Mock; devoted mother of Ellarose Irene Mock; daughter of the late Paul Iannello Sr, Anthony Panetski and Frances Testa; also survived by loving family and friends



OFFICE UPDATES:

Please join us to welcome and celebrate our new Interim Music Director: Kelly Salas!!
Her email is KellyLynnSalas@gmail.com

The Greatest Test of Courage ***A poem by Hope Douglas*** ***Harle-Mould***

The greatest test of courage
is not one day to die
dramatically,

but day by day
to go on living:

faithfully,
fearlessly,

creatively,
compassionately,

unobtrusively,
unrelentingly,

astonishingly,
indefatigably,

singingly,
contagiously—

for all that we're worth,
for as long as we have breath.

That is the most grueling
and revealing of tests,

refining a courage
worthy of the Holy One's
"Yes!"

Sign Project Update:

Earlier this week, Becky Wilson and Brett Kofod met with another sign company in Lockport to discuss our ongoing project. The first company that we had been working with was not able to move forward with our project, citing staffing issues. We provided our previously approved sign designs at this meeting, and we expect to receive something back from their designers by mid-August. The approximate cost of the project is expected to be in the neighborhood of \$7,000.00

Thank you

Capital Campaign Update:

Through the end of July, we have collected \$4,095.00 for our capital campaign. Thank you to all who have pledged to this additional effort and who continue to give generously. It is never too late to take part in this special campaign that we launched back in December. Please mark your envelopes and checks as "capital campaign" when giving towards this specific effort.

SAVE THE DATES:

• Sun. Aug. 16th – Ice Cream Social – Please Join us!

Coordinated by Vern and Jean Ortell and Pastor Hope's sermon will be: "Meeting Jesus for Ice Cream at Jaime's in North Tonawanda".

• Sun. Aug. 23rd – Poetry reading by Paul White

• Sun. Nov 22nd at 4pm: Formal Installation ceremony for Pastor Hope featuring Regional DOC Minister Rev. Dr. Thaddaeus Allen*

THANK YOU TO ALL THE HELPERS WITH CHIAVETTA'S BBQ!! OUR PROFIT WAS JUST OVER \$2,901! A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS!!

CHIAVETTA'S BBQ dates for 2026: **September 26th, and December 5th!**

Tickets are only \$17 includes ½ chicken plus sides & dessert treat!!

Please call Brett @ 716-491-6205 or
email: payneavechurch@gmail.com for more info. We accept Cash and Venmo



Let's Celebrate! Birthdays and Anniversaries:

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

2	Marilyn Blockus	16	Lisa Geraci
5	PACC	22	Sherry Ostwald
7	Mary Caldwell	23	Gabe DiBernardo
8	James Evans	26	Bob Wilson
8	Sandy Lange	29	Autumn Lee



AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

8	Butch Milliron and Sandy Lange	18	Brett Kofod and Kate McCormack
---	--------------------------------	----	--------------------------------



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

14	Bev DiBernardo
----	----------------

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

14	Paul White and Nancy Mueller
20	Bob and Becky Wilson

**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

Espy Altamar
Secretary / Financial Clerk
Office: 716-260-1217
payneavechurch@gmail.com



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