



# The Trumpet

Genesee Valley Association  
New York Conference  
United Church of Christ

June 6, 2015

## A Message from the Moderator

I'm not sure the contractors would appreciate my comment, but things are simply in chaos at the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Spencerport. We have things being torn down and "stuff" is moved out of the way and rooms that have been usable are not usable for the moment. Someday soon we will have a new kitchen and fellowship hall and security system in place. But at the moment it looks like chaos. And finding spaces for meetings is an adventure.

Sometimes I think the church in general can be chaos. We have folks who think things should be done one way and so they begin the process. And other folks think things should be done another way and they begin that process. The people who don't really care sit and watch what's going on and marvel that anything gets done at all.

Jesus called us to be the church. (You knew I'd get there sooner or later, right?) We can debate what that church is supposed to look like. And we can spend great amounts of time figuring out the theology of the church. But Jesus called us to be the church and to: "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." (Luke 16:15)

I guess I'd like to challenge us all to be the church! And to follow the mandate of Christ to preach good news. And somehow, in the midst of doing that, perhaps the chaos will abate and we can find peace in simply being the people of Christ together.

*The Rev. Nancy Peebles, First Congregational, Spencerport*

*I lift up my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come?  
My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*

*Psalm 121:1*



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## Wellspring Update - Settling In at a New Home, Physically and Cyber-ly!

Boxes of resource materials have made their way from Wellspring to their new digs and now it's time to let them loose! As a next step in the new partnership between G.V.A. and Presbytery of the Genesee, G.V.A. folk are invited to lend a hand in settling the Wellspring

materials - especially U.C.C.-specific resources - into their new spaces at the Resource Center, which is located at 1190 Winton Rd S. at the north end of Twelve Corners Presbyterian Church (next to Brighton High School).

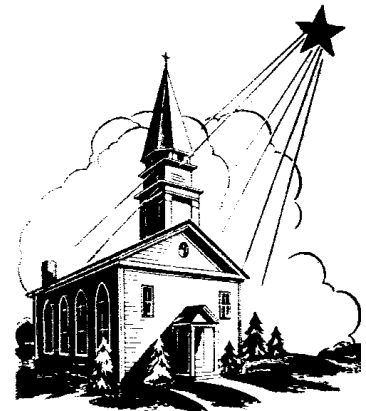
Susan Orr's invitation follows - we hope some G.V.A. folk can offer help. Can't get to the Resource Center easily? Visit on-line at <http://pbygenval.org/about-us/missions-ministries/resource-center/> To access the catalog, check out <http://pbygenval.org/about-us/missions-ministries/resource-center/line-catalog/>

--G.V.A's P.A.M.S. Committee

## Social Media for Churches

If you have a website for your church, maybe it's time to add a Facebook page! At a recent workshop on Social Media presented by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Cynthia Pacia gave an overview of why and how to use social media. Social media can be used to:

- Connect and engage participants/ members
- Drive traffic to your website
- Reinforce your print/email messaging
- Expand your reach (peer-to-peer sharing)



A recent Pew Research Center study found that multi-platform use is on the rise with 52% of online adults now using two or more social media sites. And for the first time, more than half of all online adults 65 and older (56%) use Facebook. This represents 31% of all seniors, so we may need to challenge the idea that we cannot reach our older constituents electronically.

Social media is about conversations, community, connections, and building relationships. It is not just a broadcast channel and needs to be used in ways that are compelling, relevant and engaging. Pacia suggests that *Facebook should be used for messages that will generate responses, likes, comments, a two-way conversation*. She said very few people go directly to a website; most are driven there by other platforms such as Facebook. It isn't as important how often a church posts but that they post something of interest that will generate response.

Several of our GVA churches already have Facebook pages, including Community Christian Church, First Congregational in Fairport, Mountain Rise, Irondequoit UCC, Lakeville, and Christian Temple-First Congregational in Wellsville. Go check out how other churches in GVA are using social media by going to your Facebook page and typing in the church name in the search bar at the top. Congratulations to these churches on being more visible in the greater community!

## **Counselors Needed at Dunkirk**

If you know any responsible teens over 16 who are looking for something to do the week of August 1-8, perhaps they would consider helping out with Pioneer Camp at Dunkirk Camp and Conference Center. Counselors are responsible for shepherding their elementary-age groups throughout the activities of the day, and for supervising cabins at night. They receive free room and board, plus the perk of a week with great kids at this beautiful lakeside campground! For more information, contact Sophia Stone at [stone9@u.rochester.edu](mailto:stone9@u.rochester.edu), or check out the Dunkirk webpage at [Dunkirk Camp & Conference Center](#)



## **People News**

- Eric Kelley was licensed by the Committee on Ministry on May 5 to preach and serve communion at First Congregational in Perry Center
- Mark Dibelka was approved for ordination at an Ecclesiastical Council at First Congregational Church in Spencerport on May 14. He has been called to *Epiphany* UCC in *Clarence Center*.
- MID Diane Ellis will have her Ecclesiastical Council on June 18 at Community Christian Church in Chili.
- Marci Gass was selected by the GVA Executive Committee to be celebrated as a person who truly lives her faith at the Greater Rochester Community of Churches' annual Faith in Action Banquet on June 2. Marci has served as GVA Wellspring Resource Center for many years.

## **2016 P.A.M.S. Grants**

The Program and Mission Support Committee will soon issue a call for funding proposals for 2016. Watch for announcement next month that grant applications are available online, with a September 1 deadline.

## **Resource Center Work Day!!**

Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup> 9:00-11:30am

Come for an hour or the morning! Help glean the Resource Center curriculum shelves of all those non-circulating things to make way for the Wellspring (UCC) collection. You'll get first crack at the freebies too! Coffee and goodies will be provided. Please let us know you're coming by contacting Susan Orr at [<sorr@pbygenval.org>](mailto:sorr@pbygenval.org)

*Sponsored by Presbytery's Resource & Education Committee*

## **GVA Youth Head to General Synod**

Nine young people from Henrietta UCC, Mountain Rise, and First Congregational Church in Spencerport will be attending the first few days of General Synod in Cleveland at the end of June. They will participate in mission projects, visit the church house and the Amistad Chapel, observe plenary sessions, attend workshops, learn about resolutions, worship with the delegates and share an outdoor meal with homeless people in downtown Cleveland. May the Spirit work in them as they take part in the work of the wider church!

## **Calendar of Events**

### **June 13**

-Wellspring Resource Center Work Day at 1190 Winton Rd S. 9:00-11:30am  
-Chicken Barbecue Dinner at Parma Greece United Church of Christ, starting at noon until gone.  
Available for take-out or to eat-in. <http://parmagreeceucc.weebly.com/2015-chicken-bbq.html>

### **June 14**

West Bloomfield Congregational Church's annual Service on the Lawn at 10am. Sticky Lips BBQ available from 11:30am -3pm. Eat in or Take out. Music from Dirt Child live on the lawn at noon! BBQ is \$13 pre-sale/ \$14 day of. Dinner tickets available at Cheap Charlies, Toomey's Express & Shivers in Bloomfield, Dapper Dans in Honeoye Falls and As We Grow in Canandaigua till 6/11.

### **June 17**

Salem UCC Women's Fellowship Strawberry Social will be held Wednesday June 17<sup>th</sup>, 5pm – 7pm at 60 Bittner St Rochester, NY 14604. The meal will be our traditional picnic. Full meal ticket includes choice of hamburger or hotdog and (4) sides from a variety of choices, beverage and your choice of traditional strawberry shortcake or strawberries and ice cream. A la cart is also available. \$8 for the full offering. Call the office (585-454-5973) to place your reservation.

### **June 19**

Webster UCC Chicken BBQ Take Out – 4:30 pm until gone

### **June 20**

Practical Advice for Community Ministry from 9 am to 12 noon at Covenant United Methodist Church, 1124 Culver Road. This course offers practical advice on getting started or expanding on your congregation's community ministry. Cost: \$29. Advance registration is required. More information and registration at <http://rochester-community-ministry.eventbrite.com> or contact Dana Horrell at [dkhorrell@gmail.com](mailto:dkhorrell@gmail.com) or 315-439-9154.

### **June 26-30**

UCC General Synod 2015, "Unexpected Places," in Cleveland, Ohio. More information is available at the [Synod website](#).

### **Editor's Note**

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this newsletter. Please print a copy and post it in your church so others can learn about the wider UCC community of which they are a part. Some of the church news was taken from your church website or newsletter and I was impressed with how current and thorough some of the churches are in making their work visible to us all.

In the next issue we will continue to highlight a Program and Mission Support grant recipient. Please let us know what your church is doing so we can build our sense of community in GVA. Please send anything you'd like included to [gvaucc@gmail.com](mailto:gvaucc@gmail.com). Thanks! *Diane Ellis, GVA Communications Coordinator*

## Church News

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Church Garage Sales:

July 9 – 11: First Congregation in Fairport

August 1: Community Christian in Chili

Salem UCC will be hosting NY conference youth traveling to General Synod on June 24<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 57 young people and their chaperones will stay overnight at Salem. Salem will be providing a cold breakfast the following morning and bagged snacks for the journey. If you would like to take part in supporting the youth's trek, you can do so by making a donation of boxed cereal, fruit, and juice for breakfast as well as small bottles of water, juice boxes, granola bars, fruit, and lunch style snacks for the ride. For more information contact the office Wednesday's 10-2 (585-454-5973) or email Kathi at [khorch4587@aol.com](mailto:khorch4587@aol.com).

Community Christian Church will start its Sown in Good Soil program July 5 which provides the opportunity for people to share the abundance from their gardens and for others to find fresh produce for themselves and their families. The youth group is in charge of the table each Sunday. There will be an LGBT Workshop: Transgender 101 on Sunday, July 19 immediately following worship at 10 am.

First Congregational at Fairport will make worship more inviting and friendly for younger church family members with a table at the front of the sanctuary for young ones to sit at and do quiet activities during worship— while their parents sit close by. The table will be up front and near the pulpit to intentionally give it a place of prominence— to communicate that the children are of special importance to the community.

The Structure and Organization group, which was formed as a result of the April 11 Council Workshop, has begun meeting to explore and develop a more efficient and easier to understand model of governance for our church. Presently we are looking at the ideas of Dan Hotchkiss and other sources to gather information on what might be good for First Church.

Rev. Tomi Jacobs-Ziobro is offering a series of eight renewal VBS workshop available to attend or listen to recorded. The first two are on June 15 on Co-pastoring and Creative worship. For more information, see <http://www.fairportucc.org/clientimages/55091/epistles/may%2028,%202015.pdf>

United Church of Christ, Congregational in Webster

An eight-session Thursday morning group for a new resource, “Zealot, the Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth,” a New York Times bestseller by Reza Aslan will begin on June 11 at 9:30 am in the lounge. The book is a fascinating exploration of the Jesus of history rather than the Christ of faith. Contact Joe Roth (671-8458) for more information or to join the group.

The Mission Awareness Project (MAP) reported on its second year of operation ending this June and the distribution of over \$8,000 to a variety of organizations. The Webster congregation supported these organizations:

Open Door Mission

Sojourner House

Hope House

Veterans Outreach Center

Homeless Health Care

Sponsoring a Girl in India

Water for South Sudan

Micro Loans in the Congo

River Blindness

Honduras Scholarships

Honduras Health Clinic

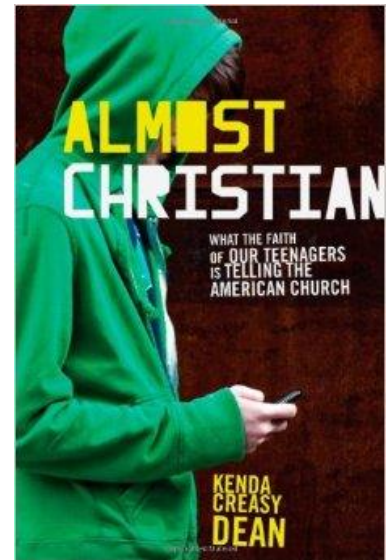
Nicaragua Seed Silos

## Reflection on Moralistic Therapeutic Deism

In her book “Almost Christian – What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church” Kenda Creasy Dean discusses how the National Study of Youth and Religion “reveals a theological fault line running underneath American churches: an adherence to a do-good, feel-good spirituality that has little to do with the Triune God of Christian tradition and even less to do with loving Jesus Christ enough to follow him into the world.”

The religion of Moralistic Therapeutic Deism’s guiding beliefs are:

- A god exists who created and orders the world and watches over life on earth
- God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the bible and by most world religions
- The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself
- God is not involved in my life except when I need God to resolve a problem
- Good people go to heaven when they die



The Study found that most youth surveyed seem to accept this bland view of faith as all there is – nice to have, like a bank account. They suggest that the churches have not invested in their Christianity accounts.

What are your thoughts on this? Do you see this reflected in the youth in your church? Talk to others in your church about this and/or email your thoughts to [gvaucc@gmail.com](mailto:gvaucc@gmail.com) and we’ll include them in next month’s Trumpet?