North Star

Fall 2022

September/October/November

An e-publication of North Presbyterian Church

"Embracing Our Future"

847 feels like an ancient time. The United States that year looked like this. Everything west of Iowa (except for Texas) was a territory. The Civil War wasn't on folks' minds, but there were signs already that the fabric of the country would tear from the weight of carrying the institution of slavery. On March 10, 1846, our history tells us, the Rev. Dr. Asa T. Hopkins, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo, chaired a meeting on behalf of the Presbytery that proposed a new congregation be formed in Buffalo to meet the growing need as the city expanded. Members of First Presbyterian would form the founding core of the new congregation. A location was selected at the corner of Main and Chippewa, and on March 21, 1847, a letter was signed by 43 men and women, all members of the First Presbyterian Church, requesting they be dismissed to form a new congregation and North Presbyterian Church was born.

2022 marks 175 years as a continuing congregation for North Presbyterian. In that time we've moved pretty far from our original site. As Buffalo continued to grow and the population moved farther north, the congregation determined it needed to

move to where the people were. In 1904 the building at Main and Chippewa was sold and land purchased at the corner of Delaware and Utica where a new building was built, and North Presbyterian called home until 1952 when it was decided to relocate to Amherst and our current location. The building on W. Utica was sold to the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church which continues to worship there.

As we look back and celebrate our history this fall, we remember with gratitude those earliest founders who saw the possibilities and needs in their community and took the risk to create a new congregation. When God calls us to new endeavors it may not always be clear how best to move forward. All we can do is respond with faith, and trust that whatever lies ahead can be used for the benefit of those we're called to serve and for the glory of God.

One challenge that seems to have motivated North throughout our history is changing demographics in the neighborhood of the church. That first move from Chippewa to Utica was done before cars were around and everyone relied on horses or their own feet. The church had to be accessible within walking distance for most of its members. Today, of course, our members live all over the north towns and our reach into the community extends far beyond our neighborhood. Yet we still struggle with a changing demographic landscape. Physically moving our location, though, might seem impractical and would represent a huge loss to this area considering how important our building is for housing so many organizations committed to education and wellness. Today we're asking, "Where do we go from here, while remaining present for this community?"

Celebrating our past can help us reconnect with our deepest values. The people who began this experiment were committed to bringing Christ to their community through compassionate outreach and humble service. Our theology has always been "liberal" in the sense that it strives to be expansive and inclusive, not restrictive. We've tended to define our spiritual life in terms of what we're free to do, rather than prohibited from doing. That creates an atmosphere for curiosity and wonder. Staying connected to those values as we celebrate our past is essential in helping us embrace our future.

We don't know what lies ahead for our gathering of sinners and saints, but we have a heritage that teaches us to look forward with faith and trust that God will provide us what we need to respond faithfully to God's call. I hope you'll take time this fall to join us in our celebration and give thanks to God for the continuing ministry of North Presbyterian Church as together we embrace the future with joy.

Peace,

Pastor Bill

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Welcome Friends & Neighbors!

by Reyne Jankowski

ow good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity."

~Psalm 133:1

On March 20th of this year, we celebrated Mister Rogers Day and spent some time reflecting and talking about what it means to be a good neighbor.

In his sermon that day, Pastor Bill reflected on an interview that Fred Rogers gave where he was asked, "What do you mean when you say, 'Won't you be my neighbor'?" After thinking about that for a few seconds, Fred said "It's an invitation for somebody to be close to you...it's a parable for the desire for closeness."

In reflecting on this answer, Pastor Bill said that "Being a neighbor means having a connection with someone else, no matter how vastly different your lives might be."

On June 9th, the Hindu Temple of WNY, located at 1595 North French Road, was destroyed by a fire caused by an overheated extension cord. Most of the damage, estimated to be about \$750,000, was caused by thick black smoke and water from the sprinkler system and fire hoses. As a result, the building that was used for religious education was rendered unusable. They estimate it will take a year to rebuild.

In the spirit of being good neighbors, the Session unanimously agreed to reach out and offer a place to conduct religious education classes while their facility is rebuilt. They very graciously and gratefully accepted the offer, and we are pleased to welcome the Chinmaya Mission Bala Vihar to their temporary home at North beginning on September 11.

Chinmaya Mission was founded by His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda in the early 1950's to spread the knowledge of Vedanta. Vedanta, the essential core of Hinduism, is the universal science of life, relevant to all people of all backgrounds and faiths. Vedanta



inspires seekers to understand their own faith better. The Chinmaya Mission also runs schools, hospitals, and various charitable programs, all the while not deviating from the purpose of teaching the ancient texts of the Sanatana Dharma* for the spiritual upliftment of man.

Bala Vihar is a weekly gathering of children, between the ages of five to seventeen years that takes place in Chinmaya Mission Centers under the supervision of trained teachers. The mission of Bala Vihar is to unleash every child's infinite potential and capacity by applying Vedantic knowledge to foster a spirit of inquiry, care for others, love for our culture, strong moral compass, and personal value system.

Chinmaya Mission Buffalo is extremely grateful to North Presbyterian Church for sharing their facility to conduct weekly Bala Vihar sessions. The classes will meet in the Chapel and Sunday School rooms in the north basement from 2 to 4 p.m. every Sunday. They will also occupy the small office N-205 for administrative purposes.

"Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit" - Swami Chinmayananda

* Sanatana Dharma is the term used by Hindus meaning "Eternal Values to be followed such that it is the way of life."

Mission & Outreach

Advocacy and Outreach

During June, the Advocacy and Outreach Committee solicited support of individual church members to urge the U.S. Congress to pass legislation for ending gun violence. With the assistance of Reyne Jankowski who aptly designed postcards for this purpose, cards were placed outside the sanctuary for individuals who wished to support this effort to sign. Over 45 cards were sent to the Presbyterian Church, USA, Office of Public Witness for distribution to Congress.

Special Offerings

The Pentecost/Celebration of Youth Offering resulted in a gift collection of \$1,554. Sixty percent (60%) was sent to the Presbytery and 40% was sent to the Providence Farm Collective in Orchard Park. A thank you note was received from the Providence Farm Collective.

The next special offering, the Peace and Global Witness Offering, will be collected on World Communion Day, the first Sunday in October. This offering enables the church to promote peace by addressing conflict and injustice around the world. The denomination recommends the offering be divided into three parts. Twenty-five percent is to be used by North to address a locally designated need and another 25% designated by the Presbytery for supporting ministries of peace and reconciliation. The remaining 50% is to be used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice through collaborative projects of education and Christian witness. More information on the locally designated organization will be coming in September.

UPC Food Pantry

by Karen Roesser

HELP FILL THE SHOPPING CART!

The Deacons, in an effort to address the issue of food insecurity in our community, over the summer initiated a **FILL THE SHOPPING CART** campaign encouraging the congregation to participate by donating a specific food item each month to support the University Presbyterian Church food pantry.

Typical of the generosity of this congregation, we are pleased to report that we have collected over the summer:

- 78 boxes of cereal (June)
- 66 boxes of pasta and 36 jars of sauce (July)
- 71 bags, boxes, and cans of rice and beans (August)

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to filling the shopping cart over the summer!

Due to the successful results to date, we will continue the campaign by collecting donations that are of high need in the pantry. The donation for the month of:

- September peanut butter and jelly
- October tissues and toilet paper
- November cookie and cake mixes
- December toiletries and personal care items

Watch the weekly bulletins and Thursday's *News* from North email for information on the donation of the month. Please place food items in the UPC shopping cart parked in the Narthex on Sunday mornings. Adding in a reusable shopping bag is also very helpful since they can no longer get plastic bags.

Let's continue to work together to FILL THE SHOPPING CART!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



UPC Food Pantry located at Main St. & Niagara Falls Blvd. is currently in need of volunteers to work in the pantry from 11:30 am-4 pm Tuesdays and

Thursdays. Volunteers may choose 2, $2\frac{1}{2}$, or $4\frac{1}{2}$ hour shifts on whichever days they're available.

Contact University Presbyterian Church Office at 836-7660 if you are interested in helping.

A Big Thank You for Your Generous Contributions!

Thank you notes for the following 2022 donations:

- \$685 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for Ukraine humanitarian aid
- Church World Service (blankets)
- \$4,240 One Great of Sharing
- \$622 Providence Farm Collective (Pentecost)
- \$77 + water battles to Rural Outreach Center (Sunday School cookie sale)

Food to UPC Food Pantry Friends of Night People

The kitchen crew is back and cooking for Friends of Night People the last Tuesday of every month beginning 8:30 a.m. If you are interested in joining this awesome culinary crew, please contact Jeff Ebsary at 716-863-6003.



Calling Women of the Church

Join with others at the Sarah Circle Meeting on Wednesday, September 14 at 1 pm in the Chapel/Dickinson Room.

- COME share your summer adventures.
- COME share your favorite summer book read.
- COME share your ideas for outreach to others.
- COME learn about our programs for the year.
- COME bring 2023 calendars and greeting cards you have received in the mail but will not use. These can go to the University Food Pantry.
- ❖ COME be a part of SARAH CIRCLE!

Spiritual Growth

Adult Learning Opportunities

Adult Ed

Come join our Adult Ed group. The purpose of our group is to discuss and explore how we live out our faith. We believe that following Jesus' gospel is more than checking off boxes of belief. Being a

Christian is also more than feeling deeply about other people or causes. Our discussions tend to focus on the practice of our faith. You could say our faith requires practice, and then even more practice.

This summer we've been exploring the command to practice the Sabbath. Our conversations have been lively as we've explored how to practice Sabbath.

We won't meet on Labor weekend. So come Sunday, September 11th when we return to our regular meeting time at 9 am and begin a new four-week discussion on "Living in Community." The curriculum we will follow raises the questions of:

- How do we navigate our differences and find common ground?
- How do we learn to create a life together with the unique aspects that make us who we are?

Come join this conversation on September 11, 18, 25 and October 2.

Later in October we will read and discuss Dietrich Bonhoeffer's <u>Life Together</u>, which will deepen or offer another point of view of *Living in Community*. For Advent we will read and discuss Rev. Tracy Daub's new book, <u>Holy Disruption</u>, <u>Discovering Advent in the Gospel of Mark</u>.

Follow the Sunday bulletin for specific topics and dates. Everyone is welcome to join our Adult Ed group as their schedule permits.

Bible Study



Pastor Bill hosts a live Zoom bible study on Tuesday afternoons at 1:30. If you are interested in joining in, please call the church office at 632-1330 or email n.church.npc@gmail.com.

Welcome Back to Sunday School

We are excited to welcome back students to Sunday School! Sunday School will be held 2-3 times each month this Fall. Please mark your calendars!! Dates for September and October are:

- 9/11/22 (communion-class starts at 10:15),
- 9/18/22
- 10/2/22 (communion-class starts at 10:15)

- 10/17/22
- 10/31/22 Intergenerational Event

We will be using the Follow Me curriculum starting with **Live in Community** for September and October.

Stay tuned for an **intergenerational activity on 10/31/22** following the worship service to wrap up our Live in Community learning. We also have plans for a parents' night out, special Saturday weekend Sunday school activities, and a couple of mission projects to accompany our November and December curriculum Practice Generosity.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the planning meetings this summer. We are a faith community who values passing on our love for God and Jesus to the children in our community through Bible learning, Godly play and helping others through mission. *Together we are North!*

Please call or text me at 716-903-1053 or email dsnyder97@yahoo.com with questions, concerns or to volunteer to teach. Can't wait to see the kids again!

Debbie Hutton, NPC Children's Christian Education Committee Chair

Communion Schedule

September 11

October 2

November 6

November 27

(Dates are subject to change without notice)

Centering Prayer

Centering prayer is a method of silent and contemplative prayer, where we consent to God's presence and action within us. Learning to quiet our minds and be silent with God is rewarding.

Centering prayer requires practice and being gentle with yourself. It is also helpful when centering is practiced with a group of people. North has a centering prayer group that meets each Friday at 7:30 pm via Zoom. Our Friday meetings close the business week and are a peaceful way to begin the weekend.

If you'd like to join our group, we welcome all people who are interested in this method of prayer. Please contact Debbie Katz at debbie.katz55@gmail.com to receive our weekly Zoom link.

Stewardship

Financial Snapshot July 2022 Year to Date

	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	ANNUAL BUDGET
INCOME:			
Giving	\$186,511	\$165,172	\$283,150
Rental Income	\$38,353	\$36,750	\$63,000
Investment Income	\$8,916	\$8,750	\$15,000
All Other	<u>\$2,073</u>	<u>\$6,538</u>	<u>\$11,200</u>
Total Income	\$235,853	\$217,210	\$372,350
	<u>YTD</u> <u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>YTD</u> BUDGET	ANNUAL BUDGET
EXPENSES:	ACTUAL	<u>Bubull</u>	BUDGLI
People/Staffing	\$168,856	\$166,439	\$285,306
Building/Property	\$44,089	\$32,620	\$55,933
Programs/Outreach	\$7,601	\$8,750	\$15,000
All Other	<u>\$8,026</u>	<u>\$11,095</u>	<u>\$19,000</u>
Total Expenses	\$228,572	\$218,904	\$375,239
_			
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$7,281	(\$1,694)	(\$2,889)

IN A NUTSHELL: The financial results through July continue to reflect the generosity of the North Church community. Giving is \$21,339 higher than budget and the primary reason we have an overall \$7,281 budget surplus. Thank you North!

On the expense side, the building/property line item in particular is of concern, where through July we have exceeded budget by \$11,469. This is largely

due to major maintenance expense items which are reflective of an aging church building and facility. Of note, through July we have already exceeded our annual church maintenance budget.

As always, we are deeply grateful for your continued financial support to the life and ministry of North Church.

Please feel free to contact any member of the Finance Committee if you have questions: Duncan Hemink, Brad Hahn (Treasurer), Mary Beth Karr (Assistant Treasurer), Dick Mesmer (Session Rep), Neil Arnold, Marci Hunt, and Tim Hutton.

What Will Be Your Legacy?

As summer winds down our thoughts begin shifting to all those things we meant to do, but never quite got around to doing. If one of the items on your to-do list is making or revising your will, I hope you will consider including the church in your estate planning. Whether or not you decide to include the church, all adults should have a will for the protection of their families and to ensure their assets are disbursed according to their wishes.

Including North in your estate planning can lead to many positive outcomes, such as:

- providing a continuing level of support for the Church's mission and ministries,
- enabling unexpected needs to be addressed,
- supplementing annual giving during tough economic times when there is a budget short-fall, and by
- avoiding the need for special appeals when important opportunities arise.



A pamphlet entitled Remembering North with a Legacy Gift in the literature rack near

the Church office provides more detail. Please pick up a copy and look it over. Feel free to contact the Church Office if you have any questions. You should also consult with your attorney or financial/tax advisor for specific details concerning your estate plans. Thank you.

Ways of Making Gifts to North



Thank you for your generous continued giving to North. Please know that our offerings to North remain important. They help cover our utilities, staff salaries and other essential expenses. You can make a gift to North in the following ways:

- Check mailed to North Presbyterian Church, 300 N. Forest Rd., Williamsville, NY 14221.
- Online bill pay through your bank (use address above).
- Credit card through North's online giving page on our website: <u>Donate</u>. If you are able to include the processing fees in your gift, that is helpful to the church.
- ACH through the church's website or your bank.
- Charitable IRA Distribution. Please consult your financial advisor about this.
- Appreciated stock. Contact the church office for financial transfer information.

However you make your gifts, please remember to designate how it is to be used, e.g. pledge payment, regular offering for operating fund, per capita, Pentecost, etc. If you are not able to indicate this with online bill pay, please send a message about your gift to Karen Thomas at bookkeeper@northchurchwilliamsville.

If you need additional information, please contact Brad Hahn, Church Treasurer, 574-0223 or brad@bghahn.com.

Events & Happenings

Montreat Youth Conference

by Sarah Koteras

This year, four youth from North Church went to week 6 of the Montreat Youth Conference. The theme was MORE THAN ENOUGH. We lived and breathed this theme for five days.

I have been to Montreat three times now and every year has just been an incredible experience. Being my last year it was extra special to be at a place where you can be yourself. Every year the conference planning team comes up with an amazing theme for the year and I think this year's theme was very fitting. With everything going on in the world I believe it is exactly what we needed

to hear that we ARE more than enough. Our youth is definitely more than enough. From what our keynote speaker Pam talked about in the morning to what Pastor Cece had said to us at night was just so eye-opening and so inspirational. They spoke in a way that was moving and powerful, reminding us that we are more than enough. Montreat is a place with no judgment. It is a place to be yourself and it is a place where you always feel like you belong because you are more than enough.

I just want to thank North for all their thoughts and prayers. We all had an amazing fellowship with one another and with the many other youth that came together in Montreat. Here are a few words from the other youth from North Church that were able to attend.

It was the highlight of my summer. This was an exponential experience and I have met a lot of great people who are now some of my closest friends. Also, I am bringing back the knowledge and wisdom I learned this week. This Conference has been so meaningful, and I will definitely come back if I can \sim Ryan Koteras

I had an amazing time at Montreat, and it was very refreshing to be in this wonderful place with these wonderful people. I would also like to thank the churches for helping fundraise money and the Montreat planning committee and youth directors for making it all possible. ~ Matt Bottorff

I thoroughly enjoyed this week at Montreat. I had already been before, so I was much more relaxed which helped me focus on my faith more. I loved the conference this year and will go back next year for my final year. \sim Charlie Hutton

175th Anniversary

by Jim Atwood & Reyne Jankowski

This Fall/Winter we will commemorate the 175th anniversary of the founding of North Presbyterian



Church. Founded in 1847 on Main Street between Tupper and Chippewa streets in Buffalo, it was considered too far north and was named North Presbyterian Church. The first service was October 3, 1847, and the Church was dedicated on December 29, 1847. In 1905 North Presbyterian Church moved to Delaware and Utica streets, and in 1952 moved to Williamsville becoming the first Presbyterian church in Amherst.

During its 175 years, North Presbyterian Church has lasted through wars and numerous health crises (beginning with the cholera outbreak in Buffalo in 1849). As we move out of the 2020-2022 pandemic, it is appropriate that we celebrate North Church's long history and resiliency.

We celebrate our children's programs, which, through wonderful leadership, continued during the pandemic. We prepared a short <u>video</u> that illustrates the innovation that provided Christmas pageants and children's choir during the pandemic.

We also want to celebrate the 175 years of outstanding worship, music, education and mission at North Presbyterian Church. Sermons are scripture-based and nuanced with modern interpretations and the music is varied with the chancel choir, children's choir, Iner-G (intergeneration choir), handbell choir, dance, organ, piano, and occasionally other instruments. This short video provides samples of the music and another short video shows examples of the worship experience at North Church.

Mission has always been a priority at North Church, and collectively we donated \$41,201 in 2021 to three PCUSA offerings and numerous local, national, and international mission and relief projects. This includes the annual Turkey Basket project (in partnership with Congregation Shir Shalom) that fed 500 Families in 2021, supporting an Afghan refugee family in 2022, and providing a monthly meal to Friends of Night People. In addition, North Church leases the former manse to the Family Justice Center as its Amherst Satellite for \$1 annually.

Sunday School, Adult Education and Bible study are all important parts of the spiritual growth at North Church. The Sunday School and an adult education group meet on Sunday mornings and Bible study groups meet Sunday mornings and Tuesday afternoons.

There are also many social groups that have and still meet on a regular basis: two book discussion groups, Sarah Circle (women's group), NPC needlers, Dress-A-Girl, and many others.

We would like to invite you to join us in celebrating North Presbyterian Church's 175th anniversary. Highlights of this Fall's celebration include:

 September 11- Welcome Back Coffee/ Fellowship following the worship service.

- Come take a visual tour through our history.
- October 2 Special commemoration of the first Service (October 3, 1847)
- October 23 A celebratory luncheon following the worship service.

Many other events and activities are planned, and we invite you to attend any Sunday Worship Service (10:15am) to help us celebrate North Presbyterian Church's 175th anniversary.

Stay tuned to the weekly bulletins and the Thursday *News from North* emails for details on all the exciting events coming up.

Bits & Pieces

Our True North

At North Church we find our true selves and become most like Christ when we persevere and hold each other up in love and prayer.

Please pray for the families of the following who passed away recently:

Mary Louise Berg—August 1, 2022 Islay Tunney—August 7, 2022 Linda Burger—August 30, 2022

If we have missed someone, please accept our apology, and contact the church office so we can update our records.

Senior Wellness

Everyone is invited to participate in wellness classes at the church.

• Chair Yoga meets every Monday and Wednesday at 10 am in Westminster Hall.

Silver Sneakers Circuit meets every Wednesday at 9 am in Westminster Hall. The class is 45 minutes of standing lowimpact choreography alternated



- with upper body strength work. This class is suitable for all levels of fitness, and the instructor will modify to fit your skill level.
- Pilates class meets every Tuesday at 11 a.m. in the Chapel.

All classes are free.

Fall Worship Schedule

Beginning Sunday, September 11, Adult Ed and Bible Study will meet at 9 a.m. and worship service will begin at 10:15 a.m. Tuesday afternoon Bible study will continue on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Church Office Closed

The church office will be closed:

Monday, September 5 - Labor Day Monday, October 10 - Columbus/Indigenous Peoples Day

Thursday-Friday, November 24-25 -Thanksgiving Holiday

Save the Date

September

- 4 Lewis Alford Memorial Service 1 p.m.
- 6 Labor Day- Church Office Closed
- 11 Fall Worship/Adult Ed Hours Begins
- Session Meeting 7 p.m.
- Deacons Meeting 7 p.m.
- 27 FONP 8:30 a.m.

October

- 10 Columbus/Indigenous Peoples Day Church Office Closed
- Session Meeting 7 p.m.
- Deacons Meeting 7 p.m.
- 31 FONP 8:30 a.m.
- 31 Happy Halloween!

November

- 8 Election Day
- 14 Session Meeting 7 p.m.
- Deacons Meeting 7 p.m.
- 15 North Star Deadline
- 24-25 Thanksgiving Church Office Closed

Let's Connect

Sunday Bulletin

If you have an announcement, please e-mail n.church.npc@gmail.com by **noon on Wednesday**.

Weekly E-mail Blasts

This church-wide e-mail generally goes out on **Thursday evening**. If you are not receiving

this communication but would like to be added to the list, e-mail n.church.npc@gmail.com to be added.

Newsletter (North Star)

You can submit story ideas by e-mailing it to n.church.npc@gmail.com. The newsletter is published in March, June, September, and December. The newsletter is available online but we are happy to mail it to you if you wish. Please call the office to make arrangements.

North Star Deadlines

November 15

February 15 May 15 August 15

Phone

Your call is very important to us. We try to take every call but if we missed yours, please leave a message at 716-632-1330. We make every effort to return your call within 24 hours or less.

Phone Extensions:

- 21 Office/Reyne Jankowski
- 22 Pastor/Bill Hennessy
- 23 Bookkeeper/Karen Thomas
- 24 Organist/Marlene Harrington
- Facilities/Mike Callaghan

Resource Center (716) 389-2023

The staff members listed below do not keep regular office hours and cannot be reached at the church with their own extensions; however, you may leave a message for them with the office administrator.

Alanna Carlins, Children's Choir Director Olivia Ebsary, Sacred Arts Kurt Ebsary, Music Assistant Regina Koteras, Childcare Mack Barker, Shared Youth Director

Montreat Youth Conference













Contact Information

300 North Forest Rd., Williamsville, NY 14221 (716) 632-1330 Office Hours: M-Th: 8:00 am-3:00 pm F: 8:00 am-12 noon

www.northchurchwilliamsville.org

E-mail: n.church.npc@gmail.com

