

North Star

Fall 2023

October / November / December

An e-publication of North Presbyterian Church

From the Pastor's Desk . . .

I think fall is my favorite season of the year. I love how the temperatures drop at night and the mornings are crisp, only to have them rise a bit during the day so it's comfortable to take a long walk or go on a bike ride. As the trees begin to turn, I'm always astonished by how vivid the colors can be, how beautiful it all is.

Two poems come to mind for me this time of year. One by Gerard Manley Hopkins, that I refer to often, is titled "God's Grandeur" and extols the amazing resilience of the earth in spite of all the things we do to despoil it. "The world is charged with the grandeur of God," Hopkins writes. It's this time of year that I see that grandeur on display. And even though we often fail to notice, or as Hopkins asks: "Why do men then now not reckon his rod?" Why don't we comprehend the measure of God around us and appreciate God's presence in the turning seasons? We are blind too often to so much that could astonish us.

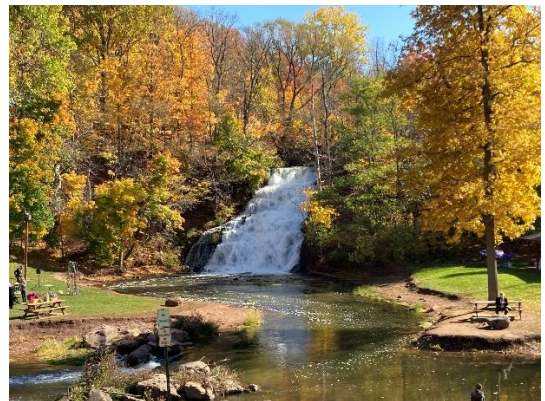
Another poem that comes to mind for me this time of year is by e.e.cummings. It starts: "i thank You God for most this amazing/ day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees/and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything/which is natural which is infinite which is yes". Such poetry expresses my experience of creation much better than my own words. Fall is a time of wonder and renewal for me, even though it

may seem as if things are beginning to move into hibernation there is a vibrancy, an electricity in the air I find invigorating.

As we enter this new season, I encourage you to pay attention to the changes going on around us. Breathe deeply as the air chills. Take time to wander along hiking trails and country roads. Let the earth feed your soul as you bathe in its beauty. And be grateful. Every day offers new wonders to be discovered. Seek them out! Discover God's grace revealed in creation and give thanks. And if you happen to come across a poem that speaks to your heart, please share it with us. Perhaps we can discover together a renewed appreciation for God's goodness.

Peace,

Pastor Bill



Harvest Moon

by Reyne Jankowski

The first full moon closest to the autumn equinox is called a Harvest Moon. If you were watching the skies over the past weekend, you most likely noticed that bright orb in the sky. So what's so special about a Harvest Moon? Why does it look bigger or sometimes even orange in color when it rises?

The simple answer is the daylight hours are getting shorter. The moon rises close to sunset so when the moon rises close to an autumn equinox, it's doing so closer to sunset. After sunset around the time of any full moon, the moon will always be near the horizon. It'll have just risen. It's the location of the moon near the horizon that causes the Harvest Moon – or any full moon – to look big and orange in color. And because the moon's orbit around the Earth is not a perfect circle, there are times when the moon is actually closer to the Earth.

In the days before tractor lights, the light of the Harvest Moon helped farmers gather their crops despite the diminishing daylight hours. As the sun's light faded in the west, the moon would soon rise in the east to illuminate the fields throughout the night. The name was popularized in the early 20th century by the song below.

Shine On Harvest Moon

By Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth (1903)

*Shine on, shine on harvest moon
Up in the sky,
I ain't had no lovin'
Since January, February, June or July
Snow time ain't no time to stay
Outdoors and spoon,
So shine on, shine on harvest moon,
For me and my gal.*

In this Issue

From the Pastor's Desk	Page 1
Harvest Moon	Page 2

MEMBER PROFILES

Meet Jeff Ebsary	Page 3
------------------------	--------

WHO'S IN THE BUILDING?

Niagara Frontier Chord Authority.....	Page 3
---------------------------------------	--------

THE BOOK KNOOK

Wednesday Afternoon Group	Page 4
Dreaded Voice—A Memoir	Page 4

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Exercise and Seniors	Page 5
----------------------------	--------

ADVOCACY & OUTREACH.....

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

August 2023 YTD	Page 6
-----------------------	--------

THIS 'N THAT

Chicken BBQ News.....	Page 6
ConnectLife Blood Drive	Page 7
Extreme Makover	Page 7
Baptisms	Page 7
Welcome New Members!	Page 7
Adult Fellowship	Page 8
Members in the News	Page 8
Fall Kickoff Sunday	Page 8

LOOKING AHEAD

Intergenerational Event.....	Page 9
Mark Your Calendar.....	Page 9

FINAL THOUGHTS

Your North Church Family Wants to Know About YOU!	Page 10
Share Your Ideas	Page 10
Contact Information	Page 10

Member Profile

Meet Jeff Ebsary



Jeff Ebsary is a native Western New Yorker, growing up in East Aurora, with his older brother, Steve, and younger sister, Jan. Jeff's family history is quite interesting. Jeff's father was born in Newfoundland, Canada. Jeff's grandfather was

a cooper by trade (he made barrels) and moved his family to Bath, NY when Jeff's father was 8 years old, where he worked making wine barrels for wineries in the Hammondsport area. Jeff's father eventually moved to Buffalo to attend UB and, after serving in the Philippines during WWII, he settled in Chicago where he met Jeff's mother. They landed back in Buffalo when his best friend, Raymond Blackman, offered him a partnership in a food brokerage business, Blackman & Ebsary, and the family settled in East Aurora.

After graduating from East Aurora High School, Jeff earned a B.S. in business from Wittenberg University in Ohio. After a brief stint at a job in Toledo, a college friend (Jay) convinced him to move to Dallas where he found a job as a sales representative with the J. T. Chapman Company. Jeff worked in Dallas for six years then transferred to Kansas City, Kansas. While he was working in Dallas, Jay introduced him to his cousin, Olivia. The rest, as they say, is history!

Jeff and Livy married in 1981 and after spending a year in Kansas City, decided to move back to WNY to be near family. Jeff was a partner for three years in RPM Control Company until 1986 when he set up his own company, BRS Sales, where he worked as an independent sales representative selling industrial equipment until his retirement in 2022. Jeff and Livy have three sons and three grandchildren, all of whom they are very proud of!

Shortly after moving to Williamsville, Jeff and Livy decided to look for a new church. They visited North Church (coincidentally, on the same day as Jeff's brother, Steve, and wife Cindy) and soon decided they had found their new church family. They joined in 1983 and Jeff has been an active member ever since. He has taught Sunday School, participated in youth group activities, Bible study, choir, served two terms as a Deacon and two terms as an Elder. While on Session, Jeff chaired the Personnel Committee and is quite proud that during his tenure Mike Callaghan, Karen Thomas, and Cynthia Machamer were hired. Jeff took over the leadership role in arranging the monthly Friends of Night People cooking after Ed Eisenlord moved to Pennsylvania.

In his free time, Jeff learned to play the guitar and plays tennis twice a week with Neil Arnold and Andres Soom. He also loves to cook (especially smoked BBQ, a skill he picked up while living in Dallas), travel, and family vacations. Jeff said that the best part of traveling is coming home and that he loves living in Western New York!

Who's in the building?

Niagara Frontier Chord Authority (NFCA)



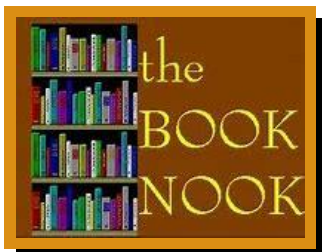
One of the newest groups to rent and share space at North Church is the Niagara Frontier Chord Authority (NFCA), a chapter of Harmony, Inc.

Harmony, Inc., an international non-profit organization, promotes the barbershop style of singing that originated in North America in the late 1800s. Founded in 1959, Harmony, Inc. currently has over 65 chapters and over 2,000 members. Their mission statement is *Empowering all women through education, friendship, and (four-part acapella) singing.*

The NFCA was established in 1985 and is the only chapter of Harmony, Inc. in WNY. Under the direction of Ron Mason and Carol Zeffiro, the NFCA has received numerous awards and recognition. A portion of their annual performance proceeds are directed to community service organizations chosen by the members.

The NFCA practices in Westminster Hall every Thursday evening from 6-9 p.m. from September through March and we hope to host their annual concert later this year.

Anyone interested in learning more, including about singing with them, can visit their website nfcaharmony.org or reach out by email to nfcapresident@gmail.com.



Wednesday Afternoon Group

by Reyne Jankowski

Paradise Falls: The True Story of an Environmental Catastrophe, by Keith O'Brien, is the story of an unlikely band of mothers in the 1970s who discovered Hooker Chemical's deadly secret of Love

Canal—exposing one of America's most devastating toxic waste disasters and sparking the modern environmental movement as we know it today.

In a captivating narrative, O'Brien tells the story of how Lois Gibbs, Luella Kenny, and many others exposed the secrets of Love Canal and the devastating effects it had on the families that lived there.

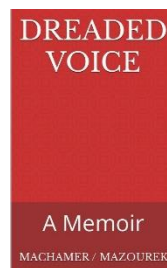
We were very fortunate to have Luella Kenny speak at North Church on Wednesday, September 27. Luella is a retired research scientist who worked at Roswell Park for over 50 years. Luella's seven-year-old son died in 1978 from illnesses caused by dioxins found in the creek behind their home in Love Canal. You can read more about Luella's story [here](#).

Two book groups regularly meet each month in the Dickinson Room: 10:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday and at 1:00 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday. Look for the upcoming books in the Thursday News from North emails. Come and read with us!

Dreaded Voice: A Memoir

by Cynthia Machamer

Our own Cynthia Machamer announced the recent release of her memoir, *Dreaded Voice: A Memoir* co-authored with her mother, Gail Mazourek.



Ten-year-old Cynthia chatted with classmates lined up in the school cafeteria hallway. She became immobilized upon hearing her name spoken by a dreaded voice. Fear struck her young heart as she was beckoned and compelled to come with him. In short order the school principal notified Gail, awakening her innate mothering instincts and tenacity, called into urgent use, no longer dormant in a quiet setting. This is a remarkable true account of a mother's ordeal to find her daughter. It's a daughter's testimony of holding on to hope more than 2,000 miles away. These two enter the fight of their lives—to restore that which had been stolen from them.

The book is available through Amazon in both Kindle and paperback.



Exercise and Seniors

by Olivia Ebsary

As an older adult, regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. It can prevent or delay many of the health problems that seem to come with age. It also helps your muscles grow stronger so you can keep doing your day-to-day activities without becoming dependent on others.

What are some of the benefits of exercise for seniors?

- It improves your strength.
- It improves your balance.
- It gives you more energy.
- It prevents or delays diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, or osteoporosis.
- It can improve your mood and fight off depression.
- It may improve cognitive function (how your brain works).

We are fortunate to have several physical activities held right here at North Church that you can take advantage of:

New Moon Mindful Movement with Carrie

Yoga Mon/Thurs 9:30-10:45 am in the Chapel

Register at newmoonmindfulmovement.com

Sheila's Aerobic Jazz

Mon/Wed 6:00 in Westminster Hall

Contact Patrice Rosenberry

716-912-0842

Love is Real

Latin partner dance classes for beginners

Couples and Singles Welcome

Details or questions at

<https://www.sarahhaykel.com/dance-yoga/>

SilverSneakers Classes with Olivia

Chair Yoga Mon/Wed 10 am (WHall)

Pilates Tues 11 am (Chapel)

Circuit Wed 9 am (WHall)

Classes free, no registration!

Bodyshaping Fitness

20-20-20 Thurs 6 pm (Chapel)

Pilates Sat 9:30 am (WHall)

Contact Sandy Manella

716-868-0246

Do your body a favor and give it a try! Cheers!

Namaste, Livy

Advocacy and Outreach

Greetings from the A&O committee. We planned a dinner outing in lieu of our August meeting with the goal to support the WEDI Food Bazaar. We were disappointed upon arrival to discover they'd changed their summer hours and were closed. We ended up having a lovely meal at the Liberty Hound on the waterfront.

In support of our Mathew 25 initiative, the A&O committee is sponsoring the Walk of Abraham on October 11 and mailing of the NPC Task Force Vital Congregations questionnaire.

Our next special offering, the Peace and Global Witness Offering, will be collected on World Communion Sunday, 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: 25% 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. Journey's End will be our locally designated charity for this offering.

Financial Snapshot August 2023 YTD

	<u>YTD ACTUAL</u>	<u>YTD BUDGET</u>	<u>ANNUAL BUDGET</u>
INCOME:			
Giving	\$203,270	\$185,128	\$277,700
Rental Income	\$38,650	\$44,000	\$66,000
Investment Income	\$10,300	\$10,000	\$15,000
Fundraising Income	\$4,616	\$1,000	\$1,500
All Other	<u>\$6,538</u>	<u>\$2,864</u>	<u>\$4,300</u>
Total Income	\$263,374	\$242,992	\$364,500
	<u>YTD ACTUAL</u>	<u>YTD BUDGET</u>	<u>ANNUAL BUDGET</u>
EXPENSES:			
People/Staffing	\$190,538	\$195,068	\$293,398
Building/Property	\$49,795	\$43,648	\$65,472
Programs/Outreach	\$3,172	\$6,000	\$9,000
All Other	<u>\$10,740</u>	<u>\$10,128</u>	<u>\$15,200</u>
Total Expenses	\$254,245	\$255,384	\$383,070
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$9,129	(\$12,392)	(\$18,570)

IN A NUTSHELL: The August 2023 actual year to date results reflect a surplus of \$9,129. Total income is higher than total expenses by this amount. By comparison, the August 2023 year to date budget is a deficit of \$12,392.

On the income side, all line items are higher than budget with the exception of rental income. As reported in the previous update, rental income is lower than budget primarily due to a one-time adjustment credited to LE3 for overpayments made in 2022. Note the 3 summer BBQ fundraisers netted

\$4,616 after expenses, surpassing our total year budget of \$1,500. Many thanks to all our volunteers and those who supported the BBQ dinners!

On the expense side, most line items were less than budget or only slightly higher. Building/property was the notable exception, primarily due to the garage repair (\$2,000 insurance deductible).

We are grateful to be in a surplus position through August yet note that timing of donations and major expenses can impact financial results throughout the year.

We continue to be deeply appreciative of your 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.

Finance Committee: Duncan Hemink, Neil Arnold, Brad Hahn (Treasurer), Marcia Hunt (Session Rep), Tim Hutton, Mary Beth Karr (Assistant Treasurer), Dick Mesmer.

This 'n That



Chicken BBQ News!

And that's a wrap! The third and final chicken BBQ of the season was held on August 30. We sold 950 dinners and total profit from the three fundraising events on June 6, July 19, and August 30 was **\$4,616!**

A total of **116 dinners were donated** (thanks to your generosity!) to residents of Willow Lodge at the VA, Family Promise, Friends of Night People,

our homebound members, families at the Amherst Youth Center, UPC Food Pantry, friends, and neighbors.

Many thanks to event coordinators, Louise Cooper, Brian Pettit, and Sue D'Angelo, and the *many* volunteers who helped make this year's fundraiser a success!

Proceeds from the sales will help fill the gap in this year's budget.

ConnectLife Blood Drive

The ConnectLife mobile collection unit was at North Church for a blood drive on September 7 organized by the Deacons. A total of 16 units of blood were collected.



Many thanks to those who took the time to donate to this life-saving cause.

Extreme Makeover

by Gina Koteras



Everyone has probably seen the TV show Extreme Makeover from a few years ago with Ty Pennington and his slogan "Move That Bus". Well, we didn't have Ty

Pennington and we didn't have a bus, but we did have an amazing makeover team! Randy Bigler, Olivia Ebsary, Kerri Bigler, and Tim Hutton worked tirelessly over many weeks during the summer to freshen up the nursery.

The walls were repainted, the bathroom updated with a new sink and toilet, a new rug was acquired, and some new play sets added. Stop



by and see what's new.

If you see any of our extreme design team members, please let them know we appreciate all they did to freshen up the littlest members fellowship area.

Baptism



"Every good and perfect gift is from above..."
James 1:17

North Church is pleased to welcome a new little one into the fold!

Aiden James McMullen, daughter of Lisanne and Alex McMullen (born October 27, 2022) was baptized on September 17, 2023. Grandparents are Jim & Diane Sprague.



Lisanne & Alex McMullen, Aiden,
Diane & Jim Sprague

Welcome New Members!



North Church is pleased to welcome Marjorie and Harvey Blakely to our family of faith! Marjorie and Harvey were formally received into membership on Sunday, August 6. Marjorie and Harvey reside in Getzville.

Adult Fellowship

On September 21 a group of 25 people attended the Musicallyfare production of *Guys and Dolls*. Jeff and Livy Ebsary hosted a dinner before the show. It was a very enjoyable evening, and a good time was had by all!



Members in the News



Henry Hutton singing in Williamsville East Vocal Jazz group at Town of Amherst 9/11 Memorial event on 9/11/23



Fall Kickoff Sunday

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Kick-Off Sunday lunch. It was great being together and sharing some yummy food. Everyone was generous with their side dishes, desserts, and free-will offering. We cooked 50 hot dogs, and all were consumed!





Looking Ahead

Intergenerational Event

October 29, 2023

The Peace Pole

How many of you have ever noticed the Peace Pole in our front yard? (Hint: it's behind the pine trees!) If you look closely, the words *May Peace Prevail on Earth* are displayed on three sides in English, Hebrew, and Arabic.



What is a Peace Pole? A Peace Pole is an internationally-recognized symbol of the hopes and dreams of the entire human family, standing vigil in silent prayer for peace on earth. Each Peace Pole bears the message *May Peace Prevail on Earth* in different languages on each of its four or six sides. There are estimated over 250,000 Peace Poles in

every country in the world dedicated as monuments to peace.

Planting a Peace Pole is a way of bringing people together to inspire, awaken and uplift the human consciousness the world over. It is a wonderful project for any community, organization, or your home. Peace Poles are now recognized as the most prominent international symbol and monument to peace. They remind us to think, speak and act in the spirit of peace and harmony. Stand as a silent visual for peace to prevail on earth.

At the intergenerational event on October 29, which will take place in Westminster Hall immediately following the worship service, we will visit our Peace Pole, place some flowers, and take some pictures. We will then register our Peace Pole on the [May Peace Prevail On Earth International](https://www.maypeaceprevail.org/) website. The children will make their own peace pole for their desk. Lunch will be served, and we hope to have international comfort food at our table for all to enjoy with skippy cups for dessert!

Everyone is invited to join in the fun! We hope to see you there on October 29!

Mark Your Calendars

October 29 – Intergenerational Event

November 5 – All Saint's Day

November 19 – Turkey Basket Sunday

December 3 – First Sunday of Advent

December 17 – Children's Christmas Pageant

December 24 – Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

4 and 8:30 p.m.

Final Thoughts

Your North Church Family Wants to Know About YOU!

We would love for North Church Members to share about the activities of their children and grandchildren. It is important to us to know more about our Youth and what makes them *More Than Enough!* (Montreat 2022 theme).

Please share concert and athletic schedules, pictures and achievements, a short story about a youth you know who is related to North Church. *Together We are North!*

Share Your Ideas

Do you have an interesting story or idea you would like to share in an upcoming issue of the NorthStar? All submissions are welcome! Just email your stories and ideas to n.church.npc@gmail.com and we'll do our best to include them in an upcoming edition.

The NorthStar is published in January, April, July, and October. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month before publication.

Contact Information

300 North Forest Rd., Williamsville, NY 14221

(716) 632-1330

Office Hours: M-Th: 8:00 am-3:00 pm

www.northchurchwilliamsville.org

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