



North Star

Fall 2024

October / November / December

An e-publication of North Presbyterian Church

From the Pastor's Desk . . .

Fall is my favorite time of year. That's not a very unique opinion, I know. A lot of people feel that way about fall. Personally, I love seeing the leaves turn, first gradually then all at once, and the air start to get a little cooler, sunsets a little earlier. It's also harvest time. Where I grew up in southern Illinois surrounded by farmland, harvest time was always busy. A lot of friends in school whose families farmed would have to miss some days to help with it. Bringing in the harvest was an excused absence. (So was the first day of hunting season, also in the fall, but that's another story!) I can remember seeing tractors and combines out late into the evening trying to get things in because so many farmers also worked other jobs during the day.

Farming's not an easy life, but most farmers I knew growing up loved it. It demonstrates so tangibly what we often forget about the world: we are surrounded by abundance. Bringing in the harvest is a celebration of abundance. It's a time we set aside to give thanks for the goodness of the earth. Every culture and every religion, that I know of anyway, practices gratitude for the harvest. It's a unifying principle we can all agree on. We all need the earth and what it provides, and the earth provides plenty and more for everyone.

This year the Jewish holy days begin in early October with Rosh ha-Shana through Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, and ending with Sukkot, the

time of harvest. It's as if the days leading up to harvest require interior preparation. Our spirits need to be ready to celebrate abundance by expelling our sins and being re-consecrated. Then we can turn to the world with a fresh appreciation for all that the earth offers.

Islam doesn't have a specific harvest festival, but at the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting, Muslims celebrate Eid al-Fitr which is a celebration of abundance. Also, during the last month in the Muslim calendar, Eid al-Adha is celebrated in commemoration of Abraham's near sacrifice of his son (for Islam the son was Ishmael, rather than Isaac). This resulted in God providing a ram for sacrifice instead which is part of the celebration. God's provision and the earth's abundance are celebrated through acts of charity to people in need.

It's easy when we're so preoccupied with day-to-day problems to forget the abundance that surrounds us. We fall into the "scarcity trap" when we become fixated on the world's demands and fail to look around and appreciate the earth's beauty. Scarcity thinking tells us we need to hoard and protect all that we can because we'll lose out if we don't. Abundance says we can be generous with what we have because there's plenty to go around. Scarcity is an illusion that sets us against others and denies God's provision. Abundance is the reality that allows us to embrace others and celebrate God's goodness. Both perspectives are present in every culture, and every religion offers a way to reject scarcity and enjoy abundance.

I hope as we enter these last months of the year you will lift your heads and look around to see

the abundance that surrounds you. Resist the illusion of scarcity by reaching out to others in need with compassion and generosity. Revel in the changing seasons and the joy of harvest and be thankful for the goodness of the earth.

Peace,

Pastor Bill



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Where did that come from?

by Reyne Jankowski

Have you ever wondered where some of our most common catchphrases come from? I heard an origin story once about the phrase “the whole nine yards” that I thought was quite fascinating. We all know what these phrases or words mean but not always where they originated from. Here are a few origin stories (some historical, others maybe more mythical) that I found interesting.

From Newworld.com:

Wake: Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and wait to see if they would wake up – hence the custom of holding a “wake.”

It’s raining cats and dogs: Houses had thatched roofs—thick straw-piled high—with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof – hence the saying “It’s raining cats and dogs.” There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed – hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top provided some protection. That’s how canopy beds came into existence.

From Grammarly.com:

Bite the bullet (To accept something difficult or unpleasant): In the olden days, when doctors were short on anesthesia or time during a battle, they would ask the patient to bite down on a bullet to distract from the pain. The first recorded use of the phrase was in 1891 in *The Light that Failed*.

Butter someone up (to impress someone with flattery): This was a customary religious act in ancient India. The devout would throw butter balls at the statues of their gods to seek favor and forgiveness.

Turn a blind eye (to ignore situations, facts, or reality): The British Naval hero, Admiral Horatio Nelson, had one blind eye. Once when the British forces signaled for him to stop attacking a fleet of Danish ships, he held up a telescope to his blind eye and said, “I do not see the signal.” He attacked, nevertheless, and was victorious.

Bury the hatchet (to stop a conflict and make peace): This one dates back to the early times North America when the Puritans were in conflict with the Native Americans. When negotiating peace, the Native Americans would bury all their hatchets, knives, clubs, and tomahawks. Weapons were literally buried and made inaccessible.

Give a cold shoulder (being unwelcoming or antisocial toward someone): The first recorded use of this phrase dates back to the early 1800s. It refers to an old custom of giving an unwelcome guest a cold piece of meat from the shoulder of mutton, pork, or beef chop, as opposed to a welcome guest receiving a warm serving. This was a polite way to communicate, “You may leave, now.”

Go the whole nine yards (to try your best at something): During World War II, the fighter pilots were equipped with nine yards of ammunition. When they ran out, it meant that they had tried their best at fighting off the target with the entirety of their ammunition.



Who's in the building?

Sarah Haykel Latin Dance Classes



At 16 years old, Sarah Haykel began to dance. Raw, expressive, and energetic, it was a freestyle way of dancing, which helped her begin to heal from a rocky road in her early teens. This journey of movement and

healing continues to evolve throughout her life, where she utilizes a certification in life coaching to teach, support and guide people into healthier, happier, and more harmonious relationships with themselves, others and life itself, through the language of partner dancing, artistic expression, life coaching and mindfulness. As a visual artist and self-proclaimed "song channel," Sarah also inspires, uplifts and empowers people through art workshops and inspirational music. You can find her various offerings in art, music, life coaching and dance at her website, SarahHaykel.com.

Sarah, known as "Salsa" Sarah in the Buffalo area, is the co-founder of Salsa in the Park, a beloved annual summer Latin dance event held in the Rose Gardens in Delaware Park. Having just completed its 11th season, Sarah is grateful for the source of inspiration God provides to her to co-create these wonderful and life affirming events and experiences, like Salsa in the Park, for the community.

Sarah also teaches Latin dance, healing art workshops, mindfulness, life skills and leadership development to adults, students in grammar schools and universities, and performs The History of Latin Dance and Music from the Latin Caribbean presentation throughout the community, including in elder care facilities, where residents light up at the sight of partner dancing and the sound of the infectious grooves from the Latin Caribbean!

Also a founding member of Buffalo Rueda, a group that teaches, performs and practices the Cuban style of salsa, called casino, in a circle, similar to square dancing, Sarah also sings in the Holy Trinity Lutheran Chancel Choir and is proud to be a member of both groups.

Sarah holds Latin dance classes on Monday evenings here at North Church throughout the fall and winter. Go to SarahHaykel.com to find out more about Sarah and what she has to offer you, your family, your school or organization.

Advocacy and Outreach

by Marcia Hunt

Peace and Global Witness Offering will be collected on World Communion Day, October 6. This offering enables the church to promote peace by addressing conflict and injustice around the world. We have selected **Seeds of Peace** in Oxford, ME to receive our local portion of the offering. Seeds of Peace brings together hundreds of young people from around the world to engage with each other across lines of conflict and difference—sharing meals, living spaces, and learning experiences in a traditional summer camp program opening dialogue and creating seeds of peace to take back to their communities.

On behalf of the A&O committee, I'd like to thank Lynda Roemer for her work with the UB Nursing school to arrange the donation and transfer of the funds from Sharon Dittmar. The funds of \$5,263.13 will support tuition and books for a 3rd or 4th year student in the BSN or Nurse Practitioner program who is planning on working in an underserved area in an urban or rural setting. We haven't heard who is receiving the funds but will keep you posted.

Youth News

by Marcia Hunt

I am very proud to report that Henry Hutton, Katherine Carlins, Leah Bottorff, Matt Bottorff, and Ryan Koteras all attended Montreat this summer. They will be sharing their Montreat experience with



the congregation during the October 6 worship service. We hope you will join us to share in the joy and enthusiasm they experienced!

After the worship service on September 15, we went apple picking. It was a beautiful fall day and everyone had a great time!



Financial Snapshot August 2024 YTD

	<u>YTD</u> <u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>YTD</u> <u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ANNUAL</u> <u>BUDGET</u>
INCOME:			
Donations	\$177,513	\$178,336	\$267,500
Building Use	\$43,443	\$26,540	\$63,700
Investment & Other Income	\$21,213	\$23,464	\$16,000
Total Income	\$242,168	\$244,264	\$366,400
	<u>YTD</u> <u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>YTD</u> <u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ANNUAL</u> <u>BUDGET</u>
EXPENSES:			
Personnel	\$188,853	\$181,608	\$272,390
Property	\$59,366	\$63,176	\$68,654
Programs	\$3,246	\$3,922	\$8,116
Total Expenses	\$251,467	\$248,706	\$373,033
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(\$9,297)	(\$4,442)	(\$6,633)

IN A NUTSHELL: As expected, with very low income and three pay periods in August, we turned from a surplus to a year-to-date deficit of \$9,297. We need to have good income and contained expenses for the next four months to try to get back to a balanced budget for 2024.

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: Neil Arnold, Jim Atwood, Brad Hahn (Treasurer), Marcia Hunt (Session Rep), Tim Hutton, Mary Beth Karr (Assistant Treasurer), Dick Mesmer

Property Updates

Nonprofit Security Grant (NPSG) Update

by Joe Alber

Considerable progress has occurred on the grant, since the update in the previous edition of the *North Star*. Recall our grant for \$150,000 is intended to improve the security of the church building and enhance the safety of its occupants. This will occur by improving the entrances; enhancing security by installing cameras, access controls and alarms; applying a transparent film to ground-level windows making it difficult to break through them; and strategically placing planters and other attractive obstacles on walkways near entrances making it difficult to gain access by crashing a vehicle into the building.

After issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for the main church doors, the Committee received a number of responses from companies in the tri-state area. A contract was issued to Baut Studios, Inc, in Pennsylvania that specializes in building doors and windows for churches. The doors are under construction and a rendering of what they will look like is in the Narthex.

Similarly, an RFP was issued for the security system and the committee is currently evaluating the proposals that were received. It is anticipated a selection will be made in the near future. Once this occurs, the vendors for the doors and security system will integrate their efforts, since the doors and security access controls work together.

Over the winter, decisions will be made about the vendors for the windows and outside barriers. However, the actual work on “hardening” the windows and installing the planters will take place in the spring when the weather improves.

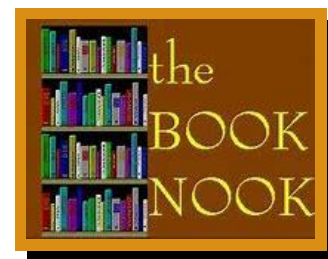
If all goes according to plan, and that is a big “if”, the project should be completed by late spring. More

updates to keep you informed of our progress will be provided in future editions of the *North Star*.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to ask any of the committee members: Joe Alber, Randy Bigler, Livy Ebsary, Reyne Jankowski, and Pastor Hennessy.

P.S. In reports and presentations to the Congregation it has been mentioned there are many rules specified by FEMA that must be followed. One of them labeled as a “special condition” for accepting the grant reads in bold text: ***“Replacement doors should match the dimensions and profiles of the original and or existing doors, including the door frame. Door openings should not be altered in size, in addition, sidelight(s), and transom windows flanking the door(s) should remain in place and not be removed.”***

Another “special condition” related to the exterior of the building references the security system: ***“Camera, alarm system, and access control equipment should be installed without damage, Installation of equipment on masonry walls must be installed through mortar joints to avoid drilling holes into the masonry and use existing penetrations to the greatest extent possible.”***



Wednesday Morning Group

The Wednesday morning group read *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks. The story is told in three separate timelines. From Goodreads.com: “Based on the remarkable true story of the record-breaking thoroughbred Lexington, *Horse* is a novel of art and

science, love and obsession, and our unfinished reckoning with racism.

"Kentucky, 1850. An enslaved groom named Jarret and a bay foal forge a bond of understanding that will carry the horse to record-setting victories across the South. When the nation erupts in civil war, an itinerant young artist who has made his name on paintings of the racehorse takes up arms for the Union. On a perilous night, he reunites with the stallion and his groom, very far from the glamor of any racetrack.

New York City, 1954. Martha Jackson, a gallery owner celebrated for taking risks on edgy contemporary painters, becomes obsessed with a nineteenth-century equestrian oil painting of mysterious provenance.

"Washington, DC, 2019. Jess, a Smithsonian scientist from Australia, and Theo, a Nigerian-American art historian, find themselves unexpectedly connected through their shared interest in the horse—one studying the stallion's bones for clues to his power and endurance, the other uncovering the lost history of the unsung Black horsemen who were critical to his racing success."

Wednesday Afternoon Group

The Wednesday Afternoon Group read *West with Giraffes* by Linda Rutledge for their September meeting.

From Goodreads.com: "An emotional, rousing novel inspired by the incredible true story of two giraffes who made headlines and won the hearts of Depression-era America.

"Few true friends have I known and two were giraffes..."

"Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to his grave.

"It's 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a

custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Behind the wheel is the young Dust Bowl rowdy Woodrow. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world's first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as spotty as the giraffes.

"Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, *West with Giraffes* explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late."

Overall, the group thought this was an enjoyable and worthwhile read.

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!



Keep Fit!

Keep fit with the many fitness opportunities that are happening here at North:

New Moon Mindful Movement with Carrie
Chair-Based Soft Strength (Mondays 9:30 am)
Mat-Based Soft Strength (Thursdays 9:30 am)

Soft Strength prioritizes fluidity, ease, and inner resilience with a no-judgment approach to movement. These unique group fitness classes blend functional strength and mobility training with the mindful practices of yoga, Pilates, and somatic movement (Feldenkrais). They focus on building strength, coordination, and balance through purposeful, controlled movements. Whether you're a fitness beginner or a seasoned athlete, these classes offer a supportive

environment to improve your strength, flexibility, and balance.

Register at Carrie@newmoonmindfulmovement.com,
716-885-9100

Sheila's Aerobic Jazz

Mon/Wed 6:00 in Westminster Hall
with Patrice 716-912-0842

Love is Real

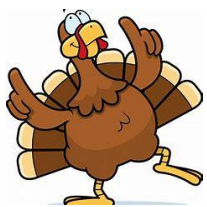
Latin partner dance classes for beginners
Couples and Singles Welcome
Details or questions at www.SalsaSarah.com

SilverSneakers Classes with Olivia

Circuit Mon 9 am
Chair Yoga Mon/Wed 10 am
Pilates Tues 10:45 am
Classes free, no registration!

This 'n That

2024 Turkey Basket Project



We will continue our community partnership to provide Thanksgiving dinner for those in need. It is a special privilege to work together to care for others!

Our Turkey Basket Project team consists of friends and members of North Presbyterian Church, Congregation Shir Shalom, Williamsville East High School and Temple Beth Zion. Additional yearly support is from Wolter's Bakery, Bureau Veritas, Amherst Presbyterian Church, Christ United Methodist Church, Girl Scout troops, and dedicated individual financial supporters each year.

Each meal contains the following:

- 1 frozen turkey (10-15 lbs. please)
- 1 box/bag stuffing mix

- 1 can cranberry sauce
- 2 cans of vegetables
- 2 cans of fruit
- 1 bag or box of potatoes
- 1 dessert (cake mix with can/pouch of frosting, or brownie mix)

Following is a schedule of activities for this year's project:

- **Friday, 11/22/24, 3 pm** Canned goods will be sorted and categorized by Williamsville East High School students and church and temple volunteers.
- **Saturday, 11/23/24, 9 am** Meals will be assembled in the Westminster Hall by volunteers.
- **Sunday, 11/24/24, 9 am** Area agencies who receive and distribute the food will pick up meals. (We utilize community agencies to identify community needs and distribute meals).

We will continue signing up for volunteer time slots and staging two separate assembly areas in the church.

Please sign up to volunteer!

- For volunteer signups, call/text Debbie Hutton at 716-903-1053.
- Questions, call/text Tim Hutton at (716) 481-4781

Election Day Bake Sale

We are starting to prepare for our first annual Election Day Bake Sale to be held on 11/5/2024 from 7:30 am-9 pm with proceeds to benefit the Turkey Basket Project. We

will be accepting Free Will Donations. We need congregation members to bake and donate baked goods and to sign up to sit at the table and greet visitors/tell folks about North Church who stop for



baked goods and to look at picture boards about our church community.

Action Item: Please email pictures and short descriptions about committee, youth, church and church building activities that you are involved in or that you lead to Reyne Jankowski in the church office church.npc@gmail.com. Please contact Debbie Hutton to sign up to sit at the table and to donate baked goods at dsnyder97@yahoo.com or 716-903-1053 voice or text. This is a great opportunity to supplement funds for one of our favorite outreach projects and to let the community know about all the opportunities available in our church and in our building.

Welcome New Members!

North Church was pleased to welcome Patricia Thayer, Fred Hacker, and Suneel Ram into membership during the morning worship service on September 29, 2024. Suneel was also baptized. Please join us in welcoming new friends into the fold!



Members in the News

Congratulations Brad Sprague!

Bradley Sprague, son of Jim & Diane Sprague, recently received the Oishei Children's Hospital 2024

Stan Thompson Award for Outstanding Service in the Care for Injured Children in Western New York. Brad is a pediatric STAT transport team coordinator who has worked for OCH for over 15 years. He is being recognized for his ensured competence, compassion, and excellence in the care he provides to every patient. Congratulations, Brad!



9/11 Remembrance Ceremony

The Town of Amherst held a "9/11 Ceremony of Remembrance" on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at the Amherst Memorial Hill Grove, located along the Ellicott Creek Trailway, near the entrance at North Forest Road. The ceremony commemorated the 23rd anniversary of the attacks on September 11, 2001.

The Williamsville East High School Vocal Jazz Group (which included our own Henry Hutton) sang "God Bless America."



Proud Great-Grandparents!

Kai Harrington, the great-granddaughter of Marge and Harvey Blakely, graduated from Williamsville South Senior High on June 28, 2024. She has been awarded a full four-year scholarship to the Eastman School of Music in Rochester and began her studies this past September. During her senior year at South, she participated in numerous symphony and orchestral music programs playing the violin and appeared in several musical and drama productions. She was most recently hired to be part of the Westminster Presbyterian Church senior choir.



Matthew Harrington, Kai's brother, is a junior at Williamsville South Senior High School this year. He recently completed an eight-year association with the Greater Buffalo Gymnastic Club in Amherst where he competed and won the NYS title for Top Overall Gymnast for his age classification.



Matthew is an accomplished cello musician and along with his sister, Kai, has taken private lessons from Roman Mekinulov, a member of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. He plans to continue his study of music and voice at Williamsville South in anticipation of pursuing a career in a related field.

Both Kai and Matthew are members of BRAVO, an international classical workshop that offers local high school musicians the opportunity to learn and present classical programs at local churches (including North) during the year.

NPC Fall Retreat at Duffield

On Sunday, September 29, Tim Hutton organized a fall retreat at Camp Duffield in Delevan. It was a lovely day to spend outdoors in nature and a good time was had by all who made the trek!



Looking Ahead

Save the Date

A Tour of Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church

In order to further the commitment of the Presbyterian Church USA to ecumenicity by “seeking to manifest more visibly the unity of the body of Christ” through opportunities for conversations with “other Reformed and Christian entities” (PCUSA Book of Order 2023-2025, G-5.0101), Jim Loree, your Community Librarian, has arranged a visit to Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church on Delaware Avenue at West Utica, the former home of North Presbyterian Church–Buffalo, for an educational tour of their sanctuary.

Thursday October 17, 2024 at 7:00pm. Father Christos Christakis, their Proistamenos (Presiding Priest), looks forward to welcoming us. Please contact Jim Loree or the church office if you plan to attend.

An Evening on Broadway



Mark your calendars for an evening of music from popular Broadway shows on Sunday, October 20, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Dale Suckow

will be performing familiar songs from Rodgers & Hammerstein, Lerner & Loewe, and many more. Cantor Arlene from Congregation Shir Shalom will also be performing an aria by Puccini. And who knows what other special guests may make an appearance!

We hope you will join us for a fun evening of music and fellowship. Refreshments will be served in the Dickinson Room and a free-will offering will be

received to benefit the mission and work of North Church.

Mark Your Calendars



October 14 – Holiday, Office Closed

October 20 – *An Evening on Broadway*

November 5 – Election Day / Bake Sale

November 22-24 – Turkey Basket Weekend

November 28-29 – Office Closed

Happy Thanksgiving!

December 1 – First Sunday of Advent

December 22 – Children’s Christmas Pageant

December 24 – Christmas Eve Services 4 & 9 pm

December 25 – Office Closed – Merry Christmas!

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

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