

# Announcements

June 22, 2025

## THIS WEEK AT UPC:

[6/22] Coffee hour, 11:15am in the Sanctuary

[6/23] Bible Study, Mondays, 1–2pm on Zoom.

We're reading from Marcus Borg's *Evolution of the Word: The New Testament in the Order the Books Were Written*, and everyone is welcome to join us. Right now we're reading the Gospel according to Luke, talking about what it meant for early Christians and what it might mean for us today.

To join UPC's "Zoom Room" online: [upcbgm.org/zoom](https://upcbgm.org/zoom)

To dial as a phone call:

(+1) 646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 865 274 8433

[6/24] Community Meal, Tuesdays, 5–6pm. Every week we offer a sit-down meal that is free for anybody. This week we served **over 200 meals!** Volunteers are needed on Mondays and Tuesdays during the day for food preparation, and on Tuesday evenings for meal service and cleanup afterwards. If you'd like to help with this mission, contact Community Kitchen Coordinator Sherry Conklin: [meal@upcbgm.org](mailto:meal@upcbgm.org) or 607-722-4219.

[6/25] Sewing Group, Wednesdays, 10am–1pm in the Upper Lounge. The Sewing Group meets at the church each week to craft quilts, mittens, hats, scarves, pillows, and more. At noon, those who can't come in person are invited to "Zoom in" for their lunchtime social hour. All are welcome; bring a lunch and enjoy the company.

**Community Food Pantry, Wednesdays, 12–5pm.** Our free food pantry also offers personal care & hygiene items when they're available. Volunteers help staff the pantry, and donations of non-perishable food and personal care items are always welcome. Contact Sherry Conklin to help or donate: [meal@upcbgm.org](mailto:meal@upcbgm.org) or 607-722-4219.

[6/27] Zoom Happy hour, Fridays, 5–6:30pm. Our "socially distanced" social gathering is still going strong after more than 5 years of Zooming together! Bring your own beverage and join the fun as we catch up on the events of the week and share how we're doing.

## LOOKING AHEAD:

[6/29] Worship, 10am — Acts 4:32–5:11, Community, Authority, and Commitment  
Annual congregational meeting "Part 2", after worship

**Practical Resources for Churches** ([prcli.org](http://prcli.org)) offers resources on a variety of topics including caring ministries, spiritual practices, small church life, social justice, and environmental stewardship. Check out all they have to offer and take advantage of the abundance of programs and information. Webinars are recorded and can be watched later on PRC's website.



- **Know Your Rights: Welcoming the Refugee and Keeping Church Safe — Tuesday, June 24, 2–3pm.** Churches seeking to carry out a mission of welcome and creature care for refugees and other new migrants are faced with frightening challenges in this new era. Knowing your rights and how to implement them is a first step to preserving the basic elements of our religious freedoms in the US. In her webinar presentation, Rev. Dr. Ellen Clark Clemot provides insights to protect church staff and the sanctity of church property in face of new legal challenges, as well as practical tips on how to help the refugee feel more secure in seeking assistance and engaging in community life. [upcbgm.org/prc062425](http://upcbgm.org/prc062425)

Other resources from PRC include:

- **Hands to Work, Heart to God online craft group — 3rd Thursday of the month (next meeting July 16), 7–8pm:** Join us each month on Zoom as we share our love of crafting and desire to connect with God online. Bring any “lap work” you may have. While we craft, we will listen to and discuss readings from Joyce Rupp’s book, *Constant Hope*. If interested, contact Karen Smith, [karen@prcli.org](mailto:karen@prcli.org), 631-821-2255.
- **Online book club: *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhorn — Sat., July 12, 11am–12pm.** Maine, 1789: When the Kennebec River freezes, entombing a man in the ice, midwife and healer Martha Ballard is summoned to examine the body and determine cause of death. Months earlier, Martha documented the details of an alleged rape committed by two of the town’s most respected gentlemen — one of whom has now been found dead in the ice. But when a local physician undermines her conclusion, declaring the death to be an accident, Martha is forced to investigate the shocking murder on her own. *The Frozen River* is a thrilling, tense, and tender story about a remarkable woman who left an unparalleled legacy yet remains nearly forgotten to this day. [upcbgm.org/prc071225](http://upcbgm.org/prc071225). Questions, email [karen@prcli.org](mailto:karen@prcli.org)
- **What’s Next:** A biweekly sharing of timely resources and upcoming webinars. The most recent (6/10/2025) letter is at [conta.cc/4kz5JtT](http://conta.cc/4kz5JtT)
- **Cultivate: Growing in Faith:** Christian ed and faith formation resources, ideas, and anecdotes for all ages of adults and children. June’s letter: [bit.ly/3FKbtla](http://bit.ly/3FKbtla)

## What's Happening Around the Synod of the Northeast

The Synod's May 2025 newsletter is out and it's full of compelling information. Read it at [upcbgm.org/SNEwh2505](http://upcbgm.org/SNEwh2505). Highlights:



- Matthew 25 in Action: Celebrating Love and Inclusion at the First Annual Presbytery-Wide Pride Service
- **Urgent Action Alert:** Oppose House Reconciliation Budget Proposal
- Emerging Gospel Community grants
- Celebrating the Success of Early Ministry Institute 2025: Engaging Conflict
- Gov. Hochul apologizes to Seneca Nation for "atrocities" at state boarding school
- Updates from the April meeting of the Synod Mission & Ministries Commission
- Resources, job postings, upcoming events, and more

### Synod of the Northeast 2024 Annual Report

As we reflect on the past year, the Synod of the Northeast is pleased to share the 2024 Annual Report. Rooted in the theme "**In Us, Through Us, Among Us,**" this report bears witness to the Spirit's work in our shared life and ministry. Inside, you will discover stories of renewal, highlights from key initiatives, and vivid examples of how the Spirit continues to shape, move through, and dwell among us as a connectional community.

We're invited to read, reflect, and celebrate with us all that God has made possible through our shared witness. The report is online at: [online.fliphtml5.com/zkpz/nbmi](https://online.fliphtml5.com/zkpz/nbmi)

### Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley Faith Formation Scholarship *supporting church members and sessions in attending spiritual and congregational vitality conferences and workshops*



The Presbytery wants to encourage you to find opportunities to nurture spiritual life and congregational health — such as a church conference, workshop, retreat, or seminar that will strengthen your faith or better equip you to help your congregation. The Faith Formation Scholarship is offered to all congregations in a spirit of generosity, in hopes that you will seek good opportunities.

The Faith Formation Scholarship offers substantial support of the registration fees for church conferences and programs — up to 75% for programs from PC(USA) groups like seminaries, Montreat, or the Stony Point Center; less for programs from ecumenical partner denominations or other Christian programs. We ask that you also request support from your own session, but their support is not a requirement to receive ours.

More information and the online application are at [susvalpresby.org/cclef-scholarship](http://susvalpresby.org/cclef-scholarship).

Questions? Contact Elder Scott Kindig, [cclefchair@susvalpresby.org](mailto:cclefchair@susvalpresby.org), or call the Presbytery office, **607-323-4477**.



The Presbyterian Foundation is bringing back our popular Day of Learning program to offer support for churches, ministries, and mid councils on financial sustainability. Join us on **Thursday, June 26**, for a series of workshops on Storytelling, Stewardship, and Generosity, all online, and offered free of charge.

You'll hear from experts on our staff who will share knowledge and tactics with you. You'll walk away with actionable steps you can implement in your congregation, grounded in theology. Our focus is on you: helping you build generosity in your congregations to stabilize and grow your ministry.

- **11:30am–12:00pm Keynote: *Storytelling***, presented by Robyn Davis Sekula, Vice President of Communications and Marketing
- **12–12:45pm Workshop: *Stewardship***, presented by Rev. Ellie Johns-Kelley, Ministry Relations Officer; followed by a time of Questions & Answers
- **2–3pm Workshop: *Planned Giving***, presented by Rev. Sandra Moon, Ministry Relations Officer and Karl Mattison, VP of Planned Giving Resources; followed by Q&A

Register at:

[presbyterianfoundation.org/day-of-learning-storytelling-stewardship-and-generosity](https://presbyterianfoundation.org/day-of-learning-storytelling-stewardship-and-generosity)

**Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York presents a Concert  
to benefit the Unadilla Food Pantry — Sunday, June 29, 2pm at Unadilla First PC**

On Sunday June 29 at 2:00pm, there will be a benefit concert for the Unadilla Food Pantry performed by members of the Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York. The program will be held at the First Presbyterian Church at 156 Main Street, Unadilla. This is a wonderful opportunity for anyone who has interest in guitar music to see and hear some quality work by classical guitarists. Accomplished classical guitarists will be traveling from as far away as Binghamton, Albany, and Oneonta to entertain for this benefit.

## Being Transgender: Medical History, Church, Society, and Families

Monday, June 30, 6:30pm — an educational webinar from the Joint Justice in Ministry and Mission Team of the Presbyteries of Susquehanna Valley and Cayuga-Syracuse

### Presenters:

- *Dr. Carolyn Wolf-Gould* is the founder of Bassett's Gender Wellness Center, a rural-based interdisciplinary center for transgender healthcare, clinical training, advocacy, and research in upstate New York. She is co-editor of *A History of Transgender Medicine in the United States: From Margins to Mainstream*. Sweeping in scope and deeply personal in nature, this groundbreaking volume traces the development of transgender medicine across three centuries, centering the voices of transgender individuals, debunking myths about gender-affirming care, and empowering readers to grasp the complexities of this evolving field.
- *Stephanie Nawyn* is an associate professor in the Department of Sociology at Michigan State University (MSU). Her research and teaching expertise are in migration, gender, and refugees. She is the former director of MSU's Center for Gender in Global Context, where she oversaw the Women's and Gender Studies program and supported research and activities related to sex, gender, sexuality, and feminist studies. She is also the mother of two wonderful young men, Henry (age 20) and Zach (age 16).
- *Zach Nawyn-Hellinga* is a high school junior who aspires to study engineering in college. He enjoys robotics and building electronic devices, biking, and theatre. He has participated in a community children's theatre program since he was very young, performing on stage and working on the crew (especially building sets).

Stephanie and Zach are members of the Presbyterian Church of Okemos, Michigan, where Zach's baptism was reaffirmed with his true name in January of this year.

Please register at: [upcbgm.org/jimm250630reg](https://upcbgm.org/jimm250630reg)

Join the Zoom meeting on June 30, 6:30pm: [upcbgm.org/jimm250630](https://upcbgm.org/jimm250630)

Meeting ID 872 1730 2511 | Passcode 691603



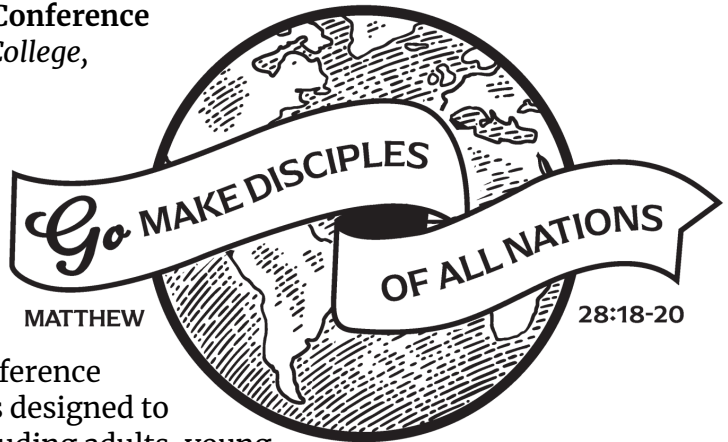
The food pantry is staffed entirely with volunteers and is dependent on grants and donations.

There is no charge for the concert other than a free will offering that will benefit the Food Pantry. A reception will be offered following the program in the fellowship room of the church so that the audience may meet the performers. The church is handicapped accessible via the Church Street entrance.



**New Wilmington Mission Conference**  
**July 18–23 at Westminster College,**  
**New Wilmington, PA**

You are invited to join us for the 120th New Wilmington Mission Conference as we spread God's peace in a broken world and support each other in the work of the Kingdom of God.



The New Wilmington Mission Conference provides a wide range of programs designed to inspire individuals of all ages, including adults, young adults, middle school and high school students, and children. This intergenerational conference brings together mission-driven individuals, pastors, congregations, youth groups, and mission workers to connect with each other, worship together, and gain a deeper understanding of what God is doing in the world through mission. The NWMC fosters a unique community of Christ through keynote speakers, workshops, and interactive sessions.

**World Mission Still Matters:** The decision of PC(USA) leadership to stop global mission-sending brought mission co-workers service to an abrupt end. Because the denomination is no longer giving leadership in this area, it will be natural and easy for many churches to end their global commitment. It is a Kairos moment for Presbyterian churches seeking to follow the Great Commission. This gathering at NWMC will create hope and provide synergy for churches and individuals who want to participate in God's global mission.

Although the PC(USA) has ended mission-sending, God is not done calling and sending individuals throughout the world. On Monday and Tuesday (July 21–22) from 1:00pm to 4:30pm there will be sessions dedicated to participating in God's global mission. Time will be devoted to listening to mission co-workers, sharing feelings and perspectives, and offering ideas and strategies. These discussions are intended to envision what next steps God may want us to take.

 @nwmcinsta

 **New Wilmington  
Mission Conference**

[nwmcmmission.org](http://nwmcmmission.org)



**Register Here**

*Note: Eligible for the PSV Faith Formation Scholarship — the Presbytery will reimburse 75% of the “Daily Commuter” program cost, or 33% of the “Part-Time” or “Full-Time” registrations including meals & lodging.*

**The Summer Institute of Theology at Hartwick College**  
**Sunday, July 27 – Friday, August 1 at Hartwick College, Oneonta**

Welcome to The Summer Institute of Theology at Hartwick College (SITHC for short) — formerly known as Hartwick Seminary Summer Institute of Theology.

Our 2025 season runs from Sunday, July 27 through Friday, August 1st at Hartwick College in Oneonta, NY. We offer courses and seminars open to all for personal enrichment and continuing education. People of every faith (and those seeking) are welcome.

The 2025 faculty includes our Lead Presbyter, Rev. Greg Garis, and Rev. Cynthia Walton-Leavitt of the Oneonta “Red Door” Presbyterian Church, who are leading seminars. Download the full schedule: [bit.ly/4kjEWRr](https://bit.ly/4kjEWRr)

**Courses** meet for one hour each day Monday through Friday. Topics this year include:

- Introduction courses in: Old Testament, New Testament, Christian Worship, Christian Theology, Preaching
- The Art of Preaching Resurrection
- Death, Dying, Grief, and Lament

**Seminars** meet once for 2.5 hours, Mon. – Thurs. afternoon/evening. Topics include:

- How Can the Church Change and Shift? *(with Rev. Greg Garis, Monday @ 2:30)*
- Immigrants & Refugees in the Bible and Today *(with Rev. Cynthia Walton-Leavitt, Tuesday @ 2:30)*
- Pronouns and the Name of God
- Wives and Mothers of Old Testament Kings
- The Council of Nicaea: What Happened 1700 Years Ago?
- Christian Nationalism
- Church Finances
- The Supreme Court: What Are Those 9 People Doing?
- Christian Imagination in the World of Harry Potter

Faculty faith traditions have included Assembly of God, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Orthodox Church in America, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic.

To register, download and complete this registration form: [bit.ly/4lg65oT](https://bit.ly/4lg65oT)

For more information about SITHC, please contact Pastor Paul Messner of the Otsego County Lutheran Parish, at 607-287-4534 (mobile) or [prpaul\\_theoinst@hotmail.com](mailto:prpaul_theoinst@hotmail.com).

**Note:** *Eligible for the PSV Faith Formation Scholarship — the Presbytery is offering the 75% reimbursement rate for your registration for this program, including lodging and meals if you choose an overnight option or the full-week Commuter option.*

## Welcome to our new Nursery Attendants

Please welcome our two new nursery attendants, Zoe and Emmanuel!

Emmanuel will be with us for the summer. He is a graduate student at Binghamton University studying Biomedical Engineering. He lives here in Binghamton, but originates from Ghana.

Zoe will be with us more long term. She is an undergraduate student at Binghamton University studying Biology. She lives in Vestal, but is originally from Kansas.



The nursery will be open on Sundays from 9:00am to 12:00pm, and can care for ages infant through 4 years old right now while they are settling in.

---

*More news from around the presbytery and across the denomination  
can be found at [susvalpresby.org/thursday-thoughts](https://susvalpresby.org/thursday-thoughts)*

**This week's issue features an update from the Interim Unified Agency about  
*New Leadership for PC(USA) Global Ecumenical Partnerships***