

The Visitor



Pastor

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Congregational Care & Family Ministries

Rev. Jeff Hodge 315-383-4384

Pastor Emeritus

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IN THIS ISSUE

Church on the Island Page 2

Eureka! Book Club Page 2

UNYC Director of Stewardship Page 4

Thanks and Praise Page 5

Blessing of the Backpacks Page 6

September Birthdays Page 7

Church Office: 315-635-6442

Fax: 315-635-6963

Normal Church Office Hours:
Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
(beginning September 8)

E-mail: secretary@bvillefirstumc.org

Website: www.bvillefirstumc.org

PLEASE NOTE:

Articles for the **OCTOBER**
must be submitted to the church office
by **September 15th**. Thank you.

[**Church Calendar**](#)



From the Pastors Desk

"A Sheepdogs Tale"

"1 But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.

2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.

3 For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

18 Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.

19 Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." Isaiah 43:1-3, 18-19

We are coming to the end of the summer that was not.

A week from now, our calendars will read "**SEPTEMBER**", and my head and my heart will once again begin wrestling between what my eyes see and what my heart feels. It did not feel like summer to me – no camping, not much swimming, limited picnics and cookouts – campfires were few and I don't even remember black flies! For a boy from Boonville, that is exceptional!

As I prepared to write this September letter to you, I prayerfully whined to God – "How can we move into September when there wasn't even a summer?" God is faithful. Let me say that again for the folks in the back pew – **GOD IS FAITHFUL!!**

I had not planned to use the above scriptures for this letter, but as I called out to God, this text came to me loud and clear! **"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."** I am excited about what God is getting ready to do in our congregation this fall! I do not know for sure all that God has planned, but I know that it will be good, because God is good, and God loves us.

Please pray about what God is ready to do, and what you are ready to allow God to do in your life this Fall. COVID cannot stop our God, the love of Christ and the movement of Holy Spirit in our church and in our lives! Please let me know if you are interested in in-person, or on-line Bible Study. We have some saints experimenting with Class Meeting model of fellowship – are you being called to join them? I miss participating in "Disciple Bible Study", want to join me? God is doing some new things among us can you not perceive it?

Thank you so much for being faithful in these hard times. Thank you for praying and watching online and giving and loving each other! Please continue to pray and seek God as this new time together breaks forth. It will be different, but I believe that God is not finished with us yet – not by a long shot!

Come and join us online or in person for worship this Sunday morning at 9:00 A.M. for our Heritage worship service featuring our choir and familiar hymns, or at 11:00 A.M. for our new Contemporary worship featuring Nairobi Smith leading worship. We will save you a seat (even if it is on your couch).

Serving Christ with You, Pastor Bill Mudge

CONGREGATIONAL CARE & FAMILY MINISTRIES

September 2020



CHURCH ON THE ISLAND SUMMER 2020

Remaining Sundays: August 30, Rev. B.J. Norrix, preaching; Lisa Kisselstein, musician; September 6: Rev. Jeff Hodge, preaching; Phil Sterling, guest musician; Special Music by Lily and Annabelle Horan

Join us at 8:00 a.m. for our final worship service on the Island, closing out a beautiful season of really good weather and meaningful worship. Please bring your chair and join us. During our pandemic crisis, you are required to wear a mask during worship and will be asked to provide contact tracing information.

I will provide a final report in the October *Visitor*, but as our season comes to a close, I want to thank the faithful and dedicated team for their work in bringing worship to the Island every Sunday: Julia Bliven, Janet Brooks, Tim Evans, Susan Lison, Pam Pannebianco, Jim Sollecito, and Kathy Sollecito-Nickell. They're planning and attention to detail makes a difference and shows every week. I am particularly grateful to Tim and Alex Evans for the great and hard work they do in setting up worship at the amphitheater every Sunday, and to Julia Bliven and Pam Pannebianco who set up and host our welcome table every Sunday.

These have certainly been unusual times, but I believe the Island has provided a much-needed sense of normalcy and inspiration this summer. Thank you to all of you!

Our attendance and offering for 2020:

June 28	36	\$161	August 2	31	\$145.10
July 5	42	\$215	August 9	51	\$148
July 12	45	\$167	August 16	46	\$193
July 19	52	\$313	August 23	49	\$123
July 26	67	\$151		419	\$1,616.10

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Eureka! Book Club

We will be meeting in some form in September (probably by zoom) We will share "What I read during the Pandemic", sharing your favorite reads during time of quarantine. Please bring your chair. If you want to share, we encourage you to: 1. Give a brief description of the book; 2. Why you read it/enjoyed it/shared it; 3. Two or three inspirational highlights to share. We will not share a meal, but it will be an opportunity for us to be together again.

Rev. Jeff Hodge, Congregational Care & Family Ministries



Of Continued Concern:

Rev. Voigt Archer
Harold Crandon
Suzanne Ellis
Helen Falge
Sally Graham
Norma Widmann

Remember Those at Home and at Care Facilities:

*Patricia Berry, Joan Foster, Mildred Long,
Shirley McMahon, Bob & Lois Minnoe*

Diane Allen – Central Park PT
Charles Bordwell – Brookdale Liverpool #53
Gertrude Collins – Loretto-Cunningham #936 ??
Marjorie Dence – McHarrie Pointe #419
Jack Ferguson – Loretto-Cunningham #334
Barbara Johnston – Van Duyn #523
Betty Morrow – Loretto-Cunningham #1015
Ernestine Parry – Syracuse Home #107
Jim Tudman – McHarrie Pointe #401
Patricia Tudman – Syracuse Home #323

Pray for our Service Men & Women:

Holly Abbott, Jeff Coover, Brian Cunningham,
James Scott Gibbs, Jeffrey Lucy,
Dr. Kristen Lucy, Jeffrey Meany,
Brandon Merle, Benjamin Nordmark,
Tyler Reynolds, Peter Slye, Richard Slye

Sympathy to:

Dan Mackin & family on the passing of
his grandfather
Family & friends of Martha Gridley
Family & friends of Peggy Warne
Bill & Tammy Falconer and family
Roger & Janet Falconer and family
on the passing of their father, Ronald Falconer
Norma Widmann and family on the passing of
her son-in-law, Ron Blaisdell
Bob & Carole Sevak and family on the passing of
their son, Eric Sevak

Friends & Neighbors:

*Kathy Thomas, Mary Thomas' granddaughter-in-law
a local nurse volunteering to help in NYC*

Peter Allen, Diane Allen's husband
Don Child, Stephanie Smith's uncle
Brent Ellsworth, Candy Johnson's nephew
Joseph Disotell, friend of Pam Fallesen
Richard Greer, Dave Greer's brother
Marjorie Heck, Shari Mudge's mother
Scott Kent, Diane Eastman's brother
Nola Marotta, friend of Diane Nolan
Scott Maxwell, Rocky Maxwell's brother
Linda Munson, Marsha Plucinik's sister-in-law
Blakely Nowicki (infant), Kisselstein family
Melissa Sullivan Ricotta,
Bonnie & Millard Sullivan's daughter
Judy Scott, friend of the Benton's
Zachary Thomas, Mary Thomas' grandson
Isobella Vecchio, friend of Ron Waterbury
Kristin Hebblethwaite Walter,
Judy Sugar-Giordano's niece
Leona Vallier, cousin of Pam Fallesen

UNYC DIRECTOR OF STEWARDSHIP

Rev. Susan M. Ranous, Deacon of Stewardship

As part of my new appointment as the Director of Stewardship for the Upper New York Conference, I have to have a secondary appointment at a local church since I am an Ordained Deacon. Your Staff Parish Relations Committee agreed that Baldwinsville should be my secondary appointment. As part of that appointment, I've agreed to write a newsletter article every couple of months. Here's my first one!

I love fortune cookies. When I order Chinese food to go, I always order extra cookies. It's worth an extra dollar to sit there, break them apart and munch away while reading "fortunes". I know that fortune tellers, etc., go against the Methodist Book of Discipline, but I have to say the fortunes that I've received aren't taken seriously, at least by me. And, recently, the fortunes aren't really fortunes, but are more like proverbs.

The other day I got this one:



I actually took a picture of it and have it on my phone. I've gone back and read and re-read it a few times, because, well, I was really impressed. It made so much sense to me. I grew up in rural Oxford, New York, and we had a well. When it was really hot in the summer, sometimes the water would get a peculiar smell and taste (known as sulphur water). Many people don't care for it, but I always liked it; it tasted like home. When I moved to Syracuse, I found that "city water" was pretty tasteless!

My parents' well was very deep, so we never ran out of water, no matter how dry or hot the summer. But other people did have to drill a new well. The problem is if they waited until the original well ran dry, it took some time to make arrangements for someone to do the work, to be available, to be scheduled and then to do the extra drilling. As the saying said, when it's dry, it's too late to start drilling, because your thirst isn't going to get quenched for a very long time.

A theology of stewardship and how money is used and raised is the same way.

- If we wait until we've run out of money, what will we do while we're trying to raise new money?
- Will there be donors when everything's dried up?
- If we just spend the money we have, not worrying about the future, what happens when there's an unplanned event and there's nothing left?
- Will that unplanned event "speak" to the people that will give?
- If we don't worry about the future, believing that everything will be cared for, how can we ever be ready for the future?
- The future is going to come, planned for or not. Wouldn't it be easier to plan?

I don't know about you, but I've been very lucky in my life; I've never been really, really thirsty. Sure, there were summer days when a nice cold glass of water tasted good. And I went through more than two large bottles of water a day when I was on a mission trip to Haiti in July! BUT water has always been available to me. I have been lucky. Thirst is a real issue, and drilling a well, while it might be a solution, is a solution that should already be cared for prior to the point where thirst is a problem.

- Isn't it easier to plan?
- Isn't it easier to drill?
- Isn't it easier to care for what God has provided?

Rev. Susan M. Ranous
Deacon of Stewardship

Thanks and Praise

Your thoughts, prayers, cards and concerns are greatly appreciated. They have contributed to my continuing recovery, while putting a smile on my face. Thank you each, dear church family. Norma Widmann

Blessing of the Backpacks

Get ready for the new school year and join us for the annual
“Blessing of the Backpacks!”



All are welcome!

Bring your backpack, or briefcase, to Lysander Park on September 13th
and Pastor Mudge will bless it for the upcoming school year.

Begins at 12:00

Blessing will take place at 12:30

Skippy the ice cream truck will serve ice cream from 1:00 - 1:45 p.m.

Please bring your mask to wear when social distancing is not possible

Hope to see you there!

Joni Ellsworth, Christian Education



09/01 Peter Morgan
Michael Joncas
09/02 Fran Crippen
Marlene Fredette
Jesse Johnson
09/04 Brad Benton
Evelyn Reynolds
Jenna Hunsberger
09/06 Tim Evans

09/10 Sharon Cook
09/11 Paul Dreher-Wiberg
Chuck Anderson
09/12 Jennifer Sterbak
09/13 Gertrude Collins
Jenoyce Wooldridge
Jonathon Price
Rachel Hewitt
09/17 Scott Baldwin
Joan Simmonds
Kevin Zacchia
09/18 Craig Barrett
Erik Bjorn
Allison Hoffman
09/20 Rev. Gordon Knapp
Gary Pacheck

09/21 Zachary Fleury
09/22 Alexandra Switzer
09/23 Valerie Dreher-Caldwell
Judi Dreher-Wiberg
Wayne Gilbert
Amanda Gilbert
Katharine (Ramseyer) Burke
09/24 Lisa Phelps
09/25 Melinda Kenney
09/27 Jonah Kantak
09/28 Betty Morrow
Collin Oppleton
Rob Scott
Janet Joslyn
09/30 Linda Horan

Two Months

If I were asked my favorite months
I'd answer to this test,
It's May and it's September
Standing high above the rest.

Hurray for May, when leaves
Burst forth in lovely shades of green.
Magic is September
When bright colors bless the scene.

Hurray for May when coats are first
Left home upon a hook.
And yet September's first chill
Is quite welcome in my book.

O Yes, some people love it
When bright June bursts out all over.
Some even like the winter months
With snow on branch and clover.

But in my mind, above all months,
The two to best remember
Are the verdant graceful May,
And beautiful September.