



# NEW CREATION NEWS

Nov. ~ Dec. 2025

## St. Peter's United Church of Christ

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### PASTORAL PONDERINGS

November is always a good time to think about stewardship. It may be stewardship of your time, your talents or your finances. Here at St. Peter's we have had some new needs and have seen some different folks participating. There have been different people greeting and opening the doors on Sundays, along with taking the offering, helping with the Sunday School tasks for our younger children, sharing mission moments and even reading the scriptures. One person who often leads worship when I am away also tackled the sermon on a particular Sunday. She is inspirational. I picked the first ten people that I saw on Sunday, October 12, to participate in a short skit around the Parable of the 10 lepers. I have been trying to do something a little different with my sermons, that's fun and I'm getting positive feedback on the whole. Step up and use your gifts to strengthen our church.

We continue to need to give financially, as well. We are paying part of the utilities now but nothing compared to when we owned the building. As we approach the budget vote, it's helpful to remember you care about the work of the Lord. I was speaking with a person who was a member of Trinity UCC, when I pastored there and she was president of the board. We were talking about stewardship the one day and she made me laugh. She said: "One year I said to the congregation that if you are still giving the same amount you gave when you were going through confirmation, you may want to think if that's a faithful decision." I laughed and even shared it with a colleague and she laughed, as well. If food prices are going up, if utilities are going up, if gas for your vehicle is going up, I'm absolutely positive that church expenses are also going up. I hope and pray that's when we recognize increasing our financial giving. We now have Sunday School for our active children and we are purchasing curriculum for them. We haven't needed to do that for years. That's a positive problem, in my eyes.

I hope and pray that you will consider how your stewardship is viewed by God. Come and see what might be new. It's really pretty exciting to think about serving a living God, in this time and place.

Pastor Paula



### FELLOWSHIP HOUR

We will continue to have Fellowship Hour once a month after worship service; on the third Sunday of each month. Coffee and tea will be served.

ALL are WELCOME and we hope you will join us!

\*\*If you would like to help with a future Fellowship Hour, please check the sign-up sheet for open dates.\*\*



### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: \*Please call ahead.

The church office hours are Monday - Thursday from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. The office is closed on Fridays.

### PASTOR OFFICE HOURS: \*Please call ahead.

Rev. Paula will be in the office on Tuesdays from 10:00 am - 12:30 pm and Thursdays from 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm.

### PASTORAL CARE

Rev. Paula Gustafson is available to provide pastoral care for members of St. Peter's congregation. Rev. Paula can be reached by phone at 716-476-9261 or by email at [pastorpaula2021@gmail.com](mailto:pastorpaula2021@gmail.com).

**ENCIRCLING IN OUR PRAYERS...****FOR GOD'S HEALING**

Renae Johnson; Esther Woltz; John Sworen; Chuck and Irene Brooks; Tim and Sue Schrader; Milton and Elenore Keim; Janet Hunt; Audrey Seaman; Dorothy Probst; Esther Heppner; Rod Tolley; Prayers for those lost, injured and traumatized by the mass shootings across the U.S.; Continued prayers for the people of Ukraine, Sudan, and the Middle East.

**FOR GOD'S PRESENCE**

For those in the hospital and with medical problems known only to God and their loved ones.

For all victims of violence.

For all **Gold Star parents** – those who have lost sons or daughters in the military—may God be with them and comfort them in their time of loss.

**FOR THOSE IN SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY:**

Earle C. Heusinger III ★★ ★ Army

Justin Hurlburt ★★ ★ Army National Guard

Jacob Kruwel ★★ ★ Army

Caleb Tolley ★★ ★ Air Force

Holly Tolley ★★ ★ Air Force

Jack Welsh ★★ ★ Marine Corps

*And for all firefighters, EMTs, law enforcement  
& border officers.*

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

You may have noticed a new feature on our website and Facebook posts – we now have a Prayer Requests form on

our Contact Us page at <https://www.st-petersucc.org/contact>. Prayer is a vital part of our Christian and church life, and we would like to pray for your needs - physical, emotional, or spiritual. You do not need to be a member of St. Peter's to ask us to pray for you. Please fill out the form to have your request added to our prayer time. All forms submitted go directly to Pastor Paula, and will remain completely confidential if requested. If you would like to have your request included in the Sunday morning "Prayers of the People" during our 10:00 am worship service, please submit the form **no later than Saturday morning by 10:00 am.**

**SUNDAY MORNING GREETERS**

We are looking for people to be Sunday morning greeters. It is an easy way to help and a great way to meet fellow members of the congregation. If you are interested, please see the sign-up sheet on the table in the sanctuary entrance. Questions can be directed to any one of the more experienced greeters.

St. Peter's UCC....

***Faith, Fellowship and Service***

**Faith** in Christ,

Welcoming **Fellowship**

and Loving **Service**

**St. Peter's Council 2025****DEACONS:**

Linda Richards, President  
Kathy Reandeau, Treasurer  
Christel Kasprzak, Secretary  
Marina Stohr

**ELDERS:**

Paul Gannon, Vice President  
Sue Beier, Financial Secretary  
Karen Buranich  
Sandy Fiegl

**TRUSTEE:**

Brian Welsh

Stay up to date with all of the St. Peter's UCC events by visiting our Website or Facebook page.

Check back often so that you don't miss anything!

Website: [www.st-petersucc.org](http://www.st-petersucc.org)  
Facebook: [St. Peter's United Church of Christ—West Seneca](https://www.facebook.com/StPeterUnitedChurchofChristWestSeneca)





## MISSION MUSINGS

Submitted by  
Kathy Reandeau

*Sharing Christ's love and peace with all!*

It's that time of year when we think most intently and intentionally about mission outreach projects. While I don't have all the details nailed down yet, I can give you some brief outlines of what we will be doing. More information will be provided by email, in the bulletin, and during Sunday morning announcements as we develop a clearer path for how we can share our blessings with others in our community.

**IMMEDIATE NEED FOR BABY ITEMS:** A family we help experienced severe flooding and lost everything. They are expecting a baby boy November 11 and are in desperate need of any and all baby items, including clothing/onesies, swaddles, bassinet, bassinet sheets, pack-and-play, swing/bouncer, burp pads, bath robe, diapers, bottles, etc.

**THANKSGIVING:** I don't have a specific list of family or Plymouth Crossroads needs yet, but start keeping an eye out for deals on Thanksgiving meal items. We will be collecting items through November 23 for distribution in time for the holiday.



**CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE:** I plan to put this up November 30 while we are decorating the church for the Advent season. Gift deadline will be Sunday, December 21 for distribution in time for Christmas.

One way we can expand our outreach is with two of the groups we had speak with us during worship:

- **Churches in Action (CIA):** They have helped settle 48 families, and need items to help stock future homes, such as mixing bowls, casserole dishes, pots and pans, bedding, towels, and cleaning supplies. They also sell shopping bags at Christmas in the Country, Nov. 6-9, as a fundraiser, and are looking for volunteers for 3-hour shifts. Text/call Sue Rich at 716-912-1495 to sign up!
- **Family Promise of WNY:** Items they need to help support homeless families through the holidays include gift cards (Amazon, Walmart, Target, and Tops), plates, bowls, cups, mugs, silverware, knives, cutting board, dish towels, pot holders, baking dishes, toaster, coffee maker, Tupperware, broom, laundry basket, towels/washcloths, shower curtain, bath mat, cleaning supplies (bucket, sponges,

disinfectant sprays, Lysol wipes, etc.), kitchen garbage can and bags, simple tool kit, etc.

### SIERRA LEONE/JERICO ROAD GLOBAL OUTREACH:

Jericho Road recently held their annual "Bridging The Gap" fundraiser, and announced that they plan to expand global outreach efforts to Burma! Phebian Abdulai continues leading the medical mission at the Adama Martha Memorial Community Health Center in Sierra Leone to avoid preventable medical tragedies, despite uncertainties in funding and medical supplies. We can support Phebian's work by donating money through the bi-monthly envelopes and gently-used clothing to the clothing shed. Thanks to your support, mothers who once faced childbirth alone now have trained providers, clean clinics, and real hope. But the mission isn't over. In Sierra Leone, a mother still dies every two hours due to lack of access to care. Even the smallest donation makes a big difference:

- \$25 provides a sterile C-section
- \$10 funds emergency ambulance transport
- \$5 supports a safe birth

Learn more at <https://www.jrchc.org> under the global work tab.

**PLYMOUTH CROSSROADS:** Plymouth's mission is to provide a safe, supportive, home-like environment for at-risk youth. Their program focuses on housing stability, mentorship, job readiness, and educational support—serving young men who have aged out of foster care or faced other significant life challenges. They recently received a terrific response to a call out for bicycles to help the young men with their transportation needs. We will include them in our Thanksgiving and Christmas plans. Visit [www.plymouthcrossroads.org](http://www.plymouthcrossroads.org) for more info.

**CLOTHING SHED:** The clothing shed collects and redistributes gently-used clothing to organizations and people all over the world, and it continues to receive a great deal of donations every week. We use funds raised to support Phebian Abdulai's work in Sierra Leone. **DO NOT** put any household items, pillows, electronics, toys or books in the shed!



## COUNCIL CORNER

Your Church Council hopes everyone had a wonderful autumn. We pray you will keep love in your hearts and share it with others during the upcoming months as we transition into the colder winter season. We experienced a preview of the cold in October when we walked into church to find the heat was not working. But we had warmth in our hearts, and were all thankful that it came on by the end of the service!

It has been quite a fall, as we continued to grow together as a church family, and reached out to our local community. We went to another Bisons baseball game, continued the tradition of St. Peter's Eaters as we ate and laughed together at our Dinner at Dao, welcomed two angels in Christ in baptism, joined in fun game nights, heard about Family Promise of WNY from our guest speaker, participated in World Communion Sunday, and learned to become better defensive drivers at our fun and educational Safe Driver Academy. We had a few classes in our attempt to return to a Sunday School environment for the children, and hope to be able to expand on these in the future so our children have a place to feel warm and welcomed in the spirit of Christ. We also sponsored another boisterous and fun Meat Raffle which raised over \$1500 for the church. THANK YOU to everyone who helped make these events possible, and participated with your full support and enthusiasm. There is indeed a sweet, sweet spirit in this place, and we know that it's the spirit of the Lord!

We continue to look for new, exciting and different ideas to build St. Peter's as a vibrant, growing church. Pastor Paula has tried different ways of increasing participation during our worship services, including a body-stretching "Heads, shoulders, knees and toes" rendition and a different look at the parable of the ten lepers. In November we hope to have a table full of supporters at the Plymouth Crossroads Bills Viewing Party fundraiser. And then we move right into the holiday season, with our trimming of the tree and soup/chili luncheon to begin our Advent observance. Please let us know if any children will be attending this event, so we can plan an activity for them. We have two opportunities to appreciate the musical talents of Strike The Rock – on December 12 at the Donovan Post and December 14 at our traditional Christmas concert. We also ask your continued support for our mission community outreach projects at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Some ideas, plans and dreams for our future have come out of our visioning process, where we meet in an informal manner to brainstorm ways to come together as a group, and introduce St. Peter's to our community. If you would like to participate in the visioning process, join

our next meeting on Monday, January 12 at 6:00 p.m. Be prepared to share ideas about ways to focus on our strengths of worship, music, faith, community, wellness, mission, and fun.

Deacons and Council are working on our 2026 budget, and hope to receive your support at our annual budget meeting on December 7 after worship. Based on the offerings received in 2025, we hope to project a small increase for next year, but we count on your donations every week to meet the budget, maintain our operational spending needs, and continue to implement plans for growth. If you have fallen behind on giving, please try to catch up, either in-person through the weekly collection or by using the online opportunity on our website.

Please remind your family and friends about our prayer request page on the website. These requests are completely confidential and go directly to Pastor Paula. If you would like them shared during the Prayers of the People on Sunday morning, however, please have the request in by Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. Another activity we resurrected is sending cards to those in need of our thoughts. This might be someone we haven't seen in church recently, someone who is ill, or someone going through a rough period. We will announce the intention in church and ask everyone to take a minute to sign the card to let the recipient know they are being thought of in prayer. If you would like to institute a card request, see Pastor Paula or one of the council members.

The next Council meetings are scheduled for November 17, December 15, and January 19, beginning at 6:30 p.m. May God's peace and blessings be with you all for Thanksgiving and throughout the Christmas season as we observe the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!



## BOOK BITS

### **5 Reasons Christians Should be Known for Sacrificial Generosity** (taken from SecureGive blog by Art Rainer)

This is traditionally the time when we think about our stewardship commitment for the coming year. One book which may help in making this personal decision is, *Money, Possessions, and Eternity*, by Randy Alcorn. He wrote, "Christians are God's delivery people, through whom he does his giving to a needy world." One characteristic that identifies a person as a Christian might be sacrificial generosity. This occurs when something personally desired and beneficial is given up. In a "me first" society, the idea of sacrificial generosity runs against the grain, but why should Christians be known

for their sacrificial generosity? Here are five Biblical reasons:

**The lack of ownership:** The Bible teaches that we are not owners. God is the Creator, so He is the rightful owner. Everything that exists belongs to God, from the sun, moon, and stars to our checking accounts, mutual funds, and life insurance policies. In the Parable of the Talents, the master handed over his money to the servants; however, there is never a transfer of ownership. Possession does not equal ownership. The master simply entrusted them with his resources. This principle should move us, not to remain closed fist ed with possessions, but to have open hands, ready to give as God directs. Christians should be characterized by sacrificial generosity because, ultimately, everything belongs to God.

**The gospel:** Paul's gospel says Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. This is the good news that changes everything about our past, present, and future, and makes sense of sacrificial generosity. Paul goes on to say, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith." Without the gospel, without the resurrection, hoarding and personal gain make sense, but we sacrificially give because God sacrificially gave and overcame death. Christians should be characterized by sacrificial generosity because they understand the gospel.

**The grace:** Grace is the undeserved favor of God. The gospel demonstrates the magnitude of God's grace in His Son, taking on the punishment of our sin, making a way for us to have a right relationship with God. While we look to the cross for ultimate grace, God's grace surrounds us every day, all the time. There are few better tangible demonstrations of grace than sacrificial generosity, to give away that which we want so that another person can have. Christians should be characterized by sacrificial giving because they have been a recipient of God's lavish grace.

**The mission:** Jesus' final words to the disciples were, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." God's mission is to have disciples from every tribe, tongue, and nation, and He allows us to participate in this mission. Sacrificial generosity is one of the ways the gospel reaches the ears of our neighbors and those around the world. Christians should be characterized by sacrificial giving because they are a part of God's global mission.

**The eternal rewards:** Jesus says, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin

destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." According to Jesus, our generosity is not a loss; it is an investment. We give because our eyes are set on eternity. Christians should be characterized by sacrificial generosity because they are storing up for themselves eternal rewards.

Share with us about the books you enjoy, and tell us how they lift up your spiritual life.



### SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR OUR LITTLE ANGELS

We are thrilled that a number of children have been coming to church regularly, and want them to get as much as possible from their church time. In order to offer something more to their level, Council wants to try holding mini-Sunday School sessions during the sermon. We will begin with the second and fourth Sunday of each month, and hope to expand as time goes on. We need at least two people to volunteer to help out during each session. The classes will be held in the glass vestibule area, and would consist of activities, crafts, and brief lessons. Please let Sandy Fiegl or one of the council members know if you would like to volunteer.



### SERMON THOUGHTS FOR AUTUMN DAYS



We are called as Jesus was, to be open to opportunities to take care of those around us, no matter whether it seems "right."

Healing comes whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Our value in God's eyes is not based solely on our wealth. We can participate in a loving kindness blessings practice, where we find one or more people to extend loving kindness to, including ourselves and even those we don't get along with.

God asks us to reach out and help others - "take up my cross and follow me." We must stand firm in Biblical truth, lead a "let God" life, and practice sacrificial generosity.

Rev. Lynn Morgan joined us and shared about the "lost and found" stories, including that of the lost sheep, as well as the Old Testament story of God repenting of the evil he intended to do. These stories focused on the sadness of being outside of God's purview and the joy of coming home - or "welcome baaack," as the sheep would say.

It is important to stay connected, and care for one another and yourself. We are loved by a God who goes

above and beyond. God's love draws us close to each other, allows us to take care of ourselves, and invites us to know the love only He can give.

For World Communion Sunday we celebrated our unity in Christ with churches around the world. Though we are many, we are one in communion - "I am, because We are." From 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, we also learned that the church is like one body made of many different parts, each important and needed.

One parable teaches about ten lepers who were healed, but only one came back to Jesus and acknowledged His gift. Members of the congregation read suggestions of what someone might do after being healed, such as taking a trip, spending time with family, or buying a home. Only one said, "When I got healed, I dedicated myself to study the scriptures and be filled with praise and thanksgiving to God." We are not well until we go and do what Christ is asking of us.

### DINNER AT DAO

We enjoy spending time together outside of our Sunday services, so our St. Peter's Eaters ventured out for a night of fellowship, friendship and fun at Dao Sushi & Grill Japanese Steak House! We sat at the hibachi table while two chefs performed feats of culinary skills right in front of us, complete with sizzling fires, and tested our ability to catch the vegetables tossed our way. The restaurant was full of a joyous din as birthdays were celebrated with drum and tambourine, and everyone joined in the festivities.



### CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

We celebrated the baptism of two beautiful little angels in September - Deacon and Jameson. The sacrament of baptism is an outward and visible sign of the grace of God. Through baptism a person is joined with the universal church, the body of Christ. In baptism, God works in us the power of forgiveness, the renewal of the spirit, and the knowledge of the call to be God's people always. Baptism with water and the Holy Spirit is the sign and seal of our common discipleship. Since baptism is God's gift, the Holy Spirit is called to be upon the water and those being baptized. The act of baptism also marks the beginning of a new life of discipleship with Christ, the human response to that gift. Water is an essential element of baptism. Water is a prominent symbol of cleansing and life in the Bible—the water of creation, the great flood, the liberation of Israel through the sea, the water of Mary's womb, the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, the woman at the well, and Jesus' washing of the feet of the disciples. That is why water is visibly present in the service. All who were present in church that day to witness and celebrate this sacrament promised our love, support and care to the two boys being baptized. Afterwards, we all gathered in the fellowship hall to share the joy of the day with one another. Thank you to all who made this day possible, and may God continue to bless the lives of Deacon and Jameson.





We had an educational day learning about a serious topic in a fun way. Thanks to Safe Driver Academy for leading us through tips, laws and reminders of safe driving habits to make us all safer on the roads! It was a helpful way to spend the day with each other. Looking forward to our next chance to share interesting and informative topics with our community!



### GUEST SPEAKER

For the last Sunday in September, Strike The Rock sang "Wayfaring Stranger." Our guest speaker that day shared information with us about how we can offer our compassion and love to those poor wayfaring families, who are just traveling through this world of woe. On any given night in Erie County, nearly 200 families are without a place to call home. Jenn Kegler is the Youth Programs & Outreach Manager for Family Promise of WNY, an organization that works alongside families facing homelessness to provide housing solutions and tailored support so they can stay together and find their pathway home. They seek to build a community that invests in the strength of families so that every child can have a safe and dignified home. FPWNY provides support services such as shelter diversion, assistance with temporary housing, financial literacy, mental healthcare, safety, eviction prevention and stabilization, and more. Brochures from the organization are available on the table in the glass vestibule.



### ANNUAL MEAT RAFFLE UPDATE

We had a noisy energy-filled blast at our October Meat Raffle fundraiser! Tickets were held high, coolers were filled with quality meat from Camillo's Sloan Super Market, and the St. Peter's crew was in high spirits as always. Thanks to Jenn McAndrew from Plymouth Crossroads and her crew of able helpers, our nimble runners, the fleet-fingered counting team, those who welcomed, our 50-50 ticket seller, those who served, those who cleaned up Friday, and everyone who stayed after church on Sunday to do the final take-down of tables and chairs. Thanks to Marty Connor for the donation of the bucket of Scrub Daddy sponges to serve as our door prize raffle. Great job by Dan and Linda Richards as co-chairs! We raised over \$1500 in the most fun way possible.



**SONG NOTES:** During the September worship service with the Family Promise of WNY speaker, Strike the Rock came up with the perfect song in "Wayfaring Stranger." This is a well-known American folk and gospel song about a plaintive soul on the journey through life. As with most folk songs, many variations of the lyrics exist, and many singers have linked the song to times of hardship and notable experiences in their lives.

The song's origin is uncertain, but it likely dates to the early 19th century, with some sources tracing it back to the late 18th century. According to the book, [The Makers of the Sacred Harp](#) (Music in American Life), by David Warren Steel and Richard H. Hulan, the lyrics were published in 1858 in Joseph Bever's Christian Songster, which was a collection of popular hymns and spiritual

songs of the time.

The song's roots are intertwined with the experiences of Scots-Irish immigrants, Black spirituals, and Appalachian revivals, appearing in various forms throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The song likely emerged from the oral tradition in the southern Appalachians, though its exact beginnings are debated. Some have suggested a connection to ancient songs like "The Dowie Dens of Yarrow," brought by Scots-Irish immigrants," while others have speculated it came from the German hymn, "Ich bin ein Gast auf Erden" ("A Pilgrim Here I Wander"). During the Civil War, the lyrics were known as the "Libby Prison Hymn" after being inscribed by a dying Union soldier in Libby Prison, a warehouse converted to a notorious Confederate prison in Richmond, Virginia known for its adverse conditions and high death rate. "Wayfaring Stranger" has seen multiple rediscoveries, famously by Burl Ives in the 1940s, Joan Baez in the 1960s, Emmylou Harris in the 1980s, and Johnny Cash in the 2000s

*"I'm just a poor wayfaring stranger, I'm trav'ling through this world below; There is no sickness, toil, nor danger, In that bright world to which I go. I'm going there to see my father, I'm going there no more to roam; I'm just a going over Jordan, I'm just a going over home."*

Dear God,

We are thankful you speak to us through popular music that inspires. You spoke through John Lennon when he asked us to "Give Peace a Chance;" Bob Marley when he called for "One Love;" Queen Latifah when she declared "U.N.I.T.Y.;" Carole King when she said, "You've Got a Friend;" Hal David and Burt Bacharach who wrote, "What the World Needs Now (Is Love, Sweet Love)," and you lovingly shared in Psalm 73:3, ERV, "Let there be peace and justice throughout the land." Remind us daily of your lyrics that call us to open our hearts and follow in your ways. Amen.

Tell us what a song means to you, or you might even go online to learn about its history or find the exact words that touch you the most. Let's sing out our praises of St. Peter's music!



Neighbors in Need

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

By Kathy Reandeau

The Neighbors in Need offering (NIN) is received in October as part of World Communion Sunday. It supports a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. The money collected through the Neighbors in Need offering is shared, with two-thirds benefiting the justice and

witness ministries of the UCC, including grants awarded for direct service and advocacy initiatives of local congregations and partners. One-third of the offering benefits the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM).

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul encourages the church to "carry each other's burdens." This seems to be a clear enough encouragement. Why then, does he also say just a few verses later, "for each one should carry their own load?" This scripture highlights a dynamic many of us face when we help others or receive help. There's a difference between helping someone and taking over for them. Inversely, it can be both challenging and a source of comfort to receive care. Giving and receiving, with autonomy, is an integral part of justice ministries.

When the United Church of Christ collects the Neighbors in Need offering, we work to honor this complexity. The money collected supports the work of the UCC's Washington D.C. Office for Public Policy and Advocacy. The advocacy done in this office can be on behalf of churches, but most of the time, it involves partnership with congregations and church members across the nation. The work is shared through collective advocacy, with and for one another. Contributing to this offering allows us to share one another's burdens.

One example can be found in [Hands on Hartford](#), a long-time NIN grant recipient. The Connecticut organization, founded more than 50 years ago by City Center churches, uses your gifts to support The Faces of Homelessness Speakers' Bureau. People with former or current homelessness experience share their stories with the public to raise awareness about homelessness, hunger and other poverty issues in a very personal way. The program employs a formerly homeless person as part-time project co-coordinator and currently has seven active speakers who share their stories at schools, colleges, local employers, and with faith communities. The speakers develop leadership skills and stability in their own lives as they help inspire action toward economic justice. In the last four years, Faces of Homelessness has racked up 131 presentations and raised awareness significantly.

"The grants have had a huge impact, on hundreds of people who heard their powerful stories and on a dozen formerly homeless folks who have realized stability in their own lives," said Barbara Shaw, the organization's executive director. She referenced single mothers who have overcome challenges of being homeless with children and one individual who lived outdoors for years, now housed and participating.

Thank you for your gifts as we work together, sharing our burdens to support our Neighbors in Need.



On the first Sunday in October, St. Peter's joined with congregations globally in celebrating World Communion Sunday. This is a day for Christians to celebrate their unity in Christ by sharing in communion, supporting ministries globally through offerings, and reflecting on the diverse yet connected nature of the universal Church. It is a day when Christians around the world gather for the sacrament of holy communion, recognizing that despite cultural and geographic differences, they are one body in Christ. The day encourages churches to reach out and model the diversity of God's children, fostering a sense of inclusion and interconnectedness. Churches share the cup and bread, symbolizing the shared experience of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection across all nations. Communion is a sacred meal that unites Christians across every culture and community. On World Communion Sunday, we remember that when we share the bread and cup, we are joining with believers around the world at Christ's table. May the Blessing of God, our Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit, be upon us all, on communion Sundays and every day. Amen.

(<https://www.facebook.com/WestSenecaCommunityFoodPantry>): Serving over 230 West Seneca households/month, the Pantry offers free food to qualified West Seneca residents, including people who attend West Seneca schools and churches. It is supported by community donations, grants from New York State, the Oishei Foundation, the Evans Devereux Foundation and purchases from Feed More WNY (formerly the Food Bank of WNY). Food products are also provided from churches, civic organizations, businesses and school children's food drives. The pantry operates Tuesdays 9am-1pm, second Saturdays 9am-12pm, and by appointment for emergencies. They need the following items for November distribution: Canned Corn, Stuffing mix, Cranberry Sauce, Rice, Gravy, Canned Yams, Pie Filling, Pie Crusts, Turkey or Chicken broth. Drop off items in a 24-hour drop-off door located up the steps, near the main entrance, behind St. David's church adjacent to the Seneca St. entrance parking lot of the Southgate plaza.

#### • Friends of Night People

(<https://www.facebook.com/friendsofnightpeople>):

FONP's Mission is to heighten public understanding of poverty & homelessness, and provide basic & essential support services. As temperatures are about to fall and we are going to have cold nights, they are in urgent need of winter coats, blankets, and gloves. Donations can be dropped off at 394 Hudson St any day until 7pm.



display  
by  
Donna  
Albert



display  
by  
Linda  
Richards

#### STRIKE THE ROCK IS HITTING THE ROAD!

We know that Strike The Rock is composed of many talented musicians, and are thrilled they share their gifts with us so willingly during our worship services. We look forward to hearing their spiritual sounds of the season at our Christmas concert on Sunday, December 14 at 7:00 p.m. Now they will also be "going on the road," and giving the rest of our community a chance to hear them in person. On Friday, December 12, they will be performing in a more relaxed environment at the Francis J. Donovan American Legion Post 1626, 3210 Genesee Street in Cheektowaga. The post is open to the public, and offers live music every Friday evening. Strike The Rock begins at 7:00 p.m., but come early and enjoy a fish fry, Polish platter, beef on weck, or other delights from Polish Villa 2U, serving from 4-8pm. "The Foxhole," the post's new and improved libation station, will be open during the performance. Guests are allowed to use the empty lots to the left of the post for parking, after those businesses close. Let the church office know if you would like to go, but do not want to drive, and we will try to set up a car pool.

#### FAITH IN ACTION

In this section we share information about faith in action at St. Peter's, in our community, and around the world. Following are some examples of what a few people with big dreams can accomplish:

- **West Seneca Food Pantry**

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

|          |    |                  |
|----------|----|------------------|
| NOVEMBER | 10 | Emma Heppner     |
|          | 14 | Pam Rost         |
|          | 17 | Jeffrey Mikula   |
|          | 20 | Paul Dimmig      |
|          | 26 | Susan Mikula     |
| DECEMBER | 3  | Henry Heppner    |
|          | 28 | Mary Jane Krantz |

## ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

|          |    |                            |
|----------|----|----------------------------|
| NOVEMBER | 28 | Carl Paul & Deborah Dimmig |
| DECEMBER | 30 | Dave & Gloria Elersic      |

Join us every Sunday at 10:00 am  
for in-person worship service.  
All are welcome.



Billboard  
by  
Karen  
Buranich



Game Night – November 21 at 7:00 pm

Decorate Sanctuary – November 30 after worship

Budget Meeting – December 7 after worship

Christmas Concert – December 14 at 7:00 pm

Christmas Eve Service – December 24 at 7:00 pm



St. Peter's United Church of Christ  
presents

# A CHRISTMAS CONCERT

featuring  
**Strike The Rock**  
directed by Mark Kasprzak

**December 14, 2025  
7:00 p.m.**

Free Admission  
1475 Orchard Park Road, West Seneca

For the health and safety of all our beloved members of the congregation, please remember that if you are feeling ill you should stay home, rest, and join us for worship through our Facebook Live feed.