

First United Methodist Church of Horseheads

1034 West Broad Street, Horseheads, NY 14845

607-739-1943 [Office@horseheadsumc.org](mailto:Office@horseheadsumc.org) [www.hhdsumc.org](http://www.hhdsumc.org)

Newsletter February 2025

*“Working Together with All to Connect to God’s Love”*

Pastor’s Page

I see lots of activity in our church and I hope that when you read these newsletters, you read them all the way through. We have much to thank God for, and many events to invite people to. Have you ever been in an exercise class where you were taught the importance of slow, regular, full breaths? We breathe in and out all the time but most of our breathing is shallow, not completely using the capacity of our lungs. Not only that, but we also often spend more time breathing in than out, and simply balancing that rhythm can reduce our stress, increase healthy circulation and give more energy to the muscles and internal organs. Likewise, if we breathe out too much without equal intake, we run the risk of fainting (see Isaiah 40:30,31)!

Using the analogy of a church as the body of Christ (Romans 12), we must monitor and observe our breaths in and out. When we breathe in, we focus on *what we need to sustain ourselves*. When we breathe out, we focus on *what we are doing outside our own needs* to serve God in the face of our community. Breathe in the worship, the classes, the fellowship dinners and the prayers directed toward our needs and wants. Breathe out the giving of tangibles (food, clothing, shelter, warmth, medical care), and of intangibles (prayers, listening, caring, sharing Christ, forgiving, loving and serving). We take in spiritual fruits from God such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). Then, when our spirit is full, we breath out to everyone around us the very same spiritual qualities from God through us, and to others. There has to be a balance to our work: inward to fill us and outward to fill others.

Now is *not the time* to hold our breath or take in more than we give out. It is unhealthy for us, and it robs the world. The Psalms of the Bible are the hymnal of ancient Israel. Many Psalms were written with instructions so they could be led by “choirmasters” in a certain way. One of these instructions is to “pause here.” In most of our translations it reads: “Selah.” Some say it might mean, “*breathe!*” Psalm 32 tells the singers to *pause and consider* (breathe) 3 times. Musicians know that of key importance in song is the placement and use of silence.

**Psalm 32:7**

***“You are a hiding-place for me;  
you preserve me from trouble;***

***you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. Selah.”***

Our church needs to take a breath. We have “paused to consider” the meaning of our church purpose and align it with our activity. This is what we are doing in the church council and throughout our many ministries. We have set these goals based on our ministry audit in the Fall. Pray for guidance. I have edited this list for length.

1. Revise mission and vision statements to be simpler and more focused.
2. Change focus of Church Council from reporting to strategic ministry planning & evaluation.
3. Improve internal and external communication, connecting better with community.
4. Continue and expand programming with other United Methodist churches near us.
5. Develop a plan to reach people with no religious affiliation & those who have left church life.
6. Review the current worship service, evaluate, and address lowered attendance and increase variety of style, format, times and locations for worship.

***Together, let us Breathe In. Breathe Out. Pause and Consider. Selah.***

**On February 3, Pastor McDowell is starting an in- person prayer group Mondays at 10:00 a.m. in our Wesley Room. We will list the requests which have come in through the previous week and lift them up to God together. Each meeting will end on or before 10:50 a.m.**

**Thank You from the Staff!** We, the paid staff at this church thank you for your generous Christmas Gift for each of us. We appreciate the opportunity to work here serving the Lord together! Pastor Jeff, parish visitor Cindy, organist David, nursery worker Sarah, office administrator Sandy, and custodian Jamie.

### **PARISH VISITOR/CINDY ELLIS**

February means we are getting closer to spring! Of course we have many more days of winter weather. While we wait, let us keep our church family in our prayers. We pray for Dan Flatt, and family, Karen and Galer Perreault, Betsy Hull and Andrea Haradon, Larry, Walter and Alan Madison, Gerry Austin (and MaryJane), Dick Brigger, Dick Davies, Marion Avery, Denise Hamilton. At home folks we remember Hope Mayhew, Betty Hess, Letha Padgett, Barb & Don Sommers, Nancy Whitaker, Carl Schnautz, Gladys Kucher, Kevan Carichner, Tom Peck, Carol Erway, Lucille Panosian, Mary Mack, Bonnie Flashphaler, Dan Ryan, Mary and Harold Smith, Bob Blackall, Evelyn Catlin, Anne Bargesser. We pray for recovery for Ann Mortimer following her heart procedure. We keep our friends who are in Sunny Florida in our prayers – getting refreshed to return to us with renewed energy. There are many in our congregation with family and friends who are having medical issues, etc. We keep them in our prayers.

Another way to remember our church family is to add your name to the Prayer Chain Email list. Contact Dick Williams to get on the list. at [rl\\_ljwilli@yahoo.com](mailto:rl_ljwilli@yahoo.com). May you feel God's nearness each day.

### **Dish to Pass Dinner (Weather Permitting)**

Would you like to get together for a meal and movie? Faith Builders Team is planning a just that for February 12 at 5:30. Dessert, drinks, and set up will be provided by the team. With dessert, we can enjoy the movie *Fly Away Home* (a heartwarming movie about a girl, her father, and of all things, goose eggs). Plan to join us for friends, food, and film.

**MISSIONS:** Have you thought about going on a mission trip? Border Buddies ministries is having a trip going to Honduras on July 10<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, led by Sid Spencer. You can contact Sid at [sspencer@stny.rr.com](mailto:sspencer@stny.rr.com). While in Honduras you would be working on the expansion of the Arturo Quesada School, going to the squatter's village in Comayagua, interacting with children and going on a field trip.

### **EXERCISING, GAMES, AND A NEW WOMEN'S MINISTRY WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY:**

1. Every Wednesday at 10 am. 20-minute stretching exercises for seniors in the Wesley room.



2. Every Friday noon - 2. Game time in the large conference room. Euchre and board games available. Bring a friend, bring a snack to share and or bring your favorite game. Coffee and tea are provided.

3. [New Women's ministry weekly Bible study beginning Wed. Jan. 29 at 11am in the Wesley room. Encouraging One Another is the theme.](#)

For all of the above, contact Louise at 607-739-1954

**STEWARDSHIP, FROM TREASURER DICK WILLIAMS:** 2024 was a good year for our church financially. Total revenue was \$345K, up from last year and ahead of our plan. Giving was up 7% from 2023. Spending at \$330K was down from last year and below our plan, thanks in large part to timing and billing issues from NYSEG in 2023. In addition to our operating expenses, we provided an additional \$21K direct funding of mission and ministry activities. Well done and thanks to all for your generous support of your time, talent and treasure.

**UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH:** Out next circle meeting is Wednesday: February 19, Noon in large conference room. Program – to be announced. Bring your own lunch - beverage and dessert provided.

On Sunday, January 26, the women lead the worship service. We included information on how and where we spent our money.

ALL WOMEN OF THE CHURCH AND FRIENDS ARE INVITED TO OUR GATHERINGS ANYTIME

We continue to gather items for the Homeless in Chemung County. A box is under the United Women in Faith bulletin board by the kitchen door for your gift. We invite everyone to add to the items for the Homeless. During the cold winter

weather, people can use socks, hats. See the list of items on bulletin board by the kitchen. Thank you for helping God's children who can use our gifts throughout the year.

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE.** We are updating our membership records and are trying to locate the following members of our congregation. Our current information isn't correct. If you know any of these people and have their address or phone number, will you contact the church office (607-739-1943)? Sheila Brown, Donald & Sharon Beigun, Sandy & Christine Bussard, Amy D'Angelo, Sandra & William Felthousen, Dianna Kitzmann, Michael Leonard, Rebecca & David Romig, Elizabeth Vondercheck, MaryJane & David Walton and Diane & Eric Pratt. Thank you for your help.



### The Bulletin. Cards. The dishes.

Have you ever looked at the weekly bulletin and wondered how in the world it is put together in just one week? Who stores, sorts out the preprinted bulletins that are used? Who adds the announcements? Who selects/puts in orders for the cards we need in the lobby? Putting the bulletin together takes more than just a few minutes or even a few hours a week to do. Waiting for the Pastor to send his paperwork, waiting for the music and the announcements to be emailed sometimes can be a bit hard. And when the information does not get to her until late, it does not get done until Friday night or even Saturday.

There is a lot to copy, paste, and always, the last-minute changes that need to be added, deleted, or fixed. Then off to copy the finished bulletin and scratch your head when the printer does not do what you want it to do. After it is finished, copied, folded, and stuffed, it needs to be counted and delivered and emailed to the choir, the Pastor, the church secretary, the production staff, the liturgist podium and the pulpit. But before delivering it, she has to stuff each 130 bulletins with the announcement page! It is then emailed to the website coordinator and to Jamie Olcott who gets it on the screens for the service on Sundays. With all that, think about Easter and Christmas when more than a couple weeks and special bulletins need to be done in one week!



While this person waits for the information and the printing, the time is spent to do another job no one really knows about. Did you have a cup of coffee after the service, or through the week and just put your cup in the sink? Do you ever wonder who may be one of those who do the dishes or even puts them in the dirty dish racks if they are found sitting in the sink? Before this person leaves the building, cards are put out for those who need a get-well, sympathy, and/or thinking of you. You see these cards to sign in the lobby. Do you know who the volunteer is who puts a lot of their personal time in to make sure you have a bulletin each time you come to a Church Service? Did you know all this is what happens to get you the bulletin each week?

### MUSINGS FROM YOUR LIBRARY

It is possible for Biblical fiction to be intriguing, adventuresome, romantic, whimsical, grace-filled, sad, and joyful all at once! YES, in the hands of author, Tessa Afshar, it is exactly that! We have Afshar's MOST RECENT intriguing mystery novel, **The Queen's Cook** in our library. Ready to read! Thank you, Rita Colvin for this special donation gift! We now have four Tessa Afshar's novels in our collection. Tessa Afshar cleverly brings historical figures and situations to life.



**The Queen's Cook** centers around the Royal Kitchen. After suffering an abused and sad childhood, Roxannah gains a position in Queen Esther's kitchens. She discovers her dream job is fraught with palace intrigue! Not only must she overcome the prejudice and adversity as she ascends the ranks of the royal kitchen, but she must partner with the royal physician in a race to save the life of a princess. This is definitely a "Can't put it down" kind of book! Take a look on our library table and see what you think. Partner this book with a warm comfy chair and a hot cup of your favorite drink! A great way to spend a snowy afternoon or evening.

Take time and search out our library! Sit, relax, look around and read as long as you wish. All books are available to borrow! Directions for borrowing books are posted on the table. It is always open and welcoming! Questions or Comments just email us: [mflatt1631@gmail.com](mailto:mflatt1631@gmail.com)

**Karren's Clothing Cupboard** signup sheet is in the entrance to the narthex for January and February. Think about joining us. you never work alone.

We currently are in pretty good shape for clothing except for sweatpants. Larger sizes are always useful, but any size comes in handy. Thank you for all your support.



Lets all wish Josie Knapp a very happy 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday on February 5<sup>th</sup>!

**Stephen Ministry:** Do you ever feel like God is calling you to reach people where they are at? Do you have a heart for those that are hurting, sick, lonely or just going through a rough time in their life? Join us for classes that will help you reach out to those in need of a listening ear, confidentiality, spirit filled Christian care.

Or maybe, just maybe, you are one of those people in need of a weekly Christian caregiver. Please talk to Pastor Jeff in person, or by email: [pastorjeffmcd@yahoo.com](mailto:pastorjeffmcd@yahoo.com)

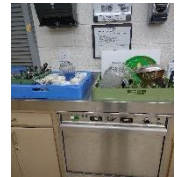


**Calling all youth.** We hope to once a month have a youth meeting working on service projects, playing games and just having fun relaxing and hanging out. If you have an interest in this, please let the church office know. This is for 7th grade and up. Community service time can count toward scout and school requirements.



Our Bulletin Volunteer is Gayle Swank! Gayle started doing the bulletin in December of 2018. On Thursday evenings or Friday afternoons, she begins working on this for Sunday. During the holidays, she has extra work with the Lily, Living Endowment and Poinsettia lists that need to be typed. Christmas time she gets out two weeks of bulletins done in one week. For Christmas Eve Service, Easter Sunrise, add in another bulletin for those weeks!

Gayle donated her own computer, set up space in the workroom to have a place to work so she would not be tying up the secretary's computer. If she is going out of town, she takes a computer with her, does the bulletin, sends it to the secretary for printing. Since it sometimes takes a long time to print, Gayle goes to the kitchen and does dishes from the previous Sunday. (Lots of coffee cups). The bulletin is a time-consuming job and Gayle does a great job trying to coordinate all the information for you on Sunday Mornings. Please give Gayle a big smile of thanks when you see her!



**FROM RETIRED PASTOR FRED AND LINDA KELSEY:** Being in our mid-eighties, we had been evaluating several such places for a few years. We submitted an application in early spring anticipating we would be on a waiting list for a year or two. Much to our surprise, within weeks, we received a call that the perfect apartment was available. After much soul searching, we decided it would be better to move now rather than later.

The whirlwind of activity and painful decisions began with downsizing everything to fit in our new apartment and coming up with a substantial entrance fee. We experienced deep poignant feelings as we watched 63 years of accumulated furniture and mementos that were a part of our lives go out the door in an estate sale. Then the heart wrenching sight of the Junk King Truck, full of our remaining beloved goods taken away for disposal. Now that the hard part is over, we have a very nice apartment. Our new address is Windsor Park Drive, Apt. C205, Carol Stream, IL 60188.

(This is just parts of the letter. If you wish to read the whole letter, please find it on the office windowsill.

### CALIFORNIA-PACIFIC CONFERENCE BISHOP CALLS FOR PRAYER AMID WILDFIRES

PASADENA, Calif. — As strong winds fuel wildfires in the Los Angeles area, California-Pacific Conference Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank is calling for prayer for the affected communities as well as firefighters, medical and support personnel.

The conference has learned that Altadena United Methodist Church's building was lost to fire. In the meantime, United Methodist churches across the area are providing shelter to people who evacuated. Firefighters are battling multiple fires that have led to the deaths of at least two people and the evacuation of more than 80,000. Donate to the UMCOR U.S. disaster response at [umcmmission.org/advance-project/901670/](http://umcmmission.org/advance-project/901670/)



The church has walkers, crutches and wheelchairs located in the lobby coatracks if you need to borrow one. Please get a Borrow equipment form from the church office. These are free to use if and when you need a little extra help.



Come take selfies at our Valentine themed backdrop in the lobby.

CHURCH COMMITTEE	Meeting Day	Place to Meet	Time of Meeting
Bells	Saturdays	Choir Room	TBD
Bible Study	When announced	Wesley Room	
Choir	Saturdays	Choir Room	3 P.M.
Christian Education			
Church Council	4th Wednesday	Large Meeting Room	6:30 P.M.
Communion Team	Last weekend of month	K/SAC/SA/N	TBA
Decorating Team	When needed	Narthex	TBA
Faith Builders	1st Tuesday	Conference Room	6:30 P.M.
INVESTMENT	Thursday when needed	Large Conf. Rm.	7:15 P.M.
JAWS	Saturdays	All areas	8:00 A.M.
Living Endowment	Thursdays	Large Conf. Rm.	7:00 P.M.
Missions	3rd Wednesday	Large Conf. Rm.	2:00 P.M.
Outreach	1st Thursday	Large Conf. Rm.	7:00 P.M.
Quilt Ministry	3rd Monday	Fellowship Hall	9:00 A.M.
Staff Parish	3rd Wednesday	Large Conf. Rm.	6:30 P.M.
Stephen Ministry	Every other Wed.	Rm. 12	5:30 P.M.
Stewardship	4th Tuesday	Rm. 11	7:00 P.M.
Trustees	2nd Tuesday	Rm. 11	7:00 P.M.
United Women in Faith	3rd Wednesday	Large Conf. Rm.	noon
Worship	3rd Tuesday	Sm. Conf. Rm.	1:00 P.M.

## George Lee Scholarship Award, 2024-2025

Thank you so much for your generosity! I have dreamed of going to college since I was 4. I don't have support from my family, so you contributed to making this dream possible for me. I transferred schools after my first school closed. My experience at Houghton has transformed my life in one semester. I have been called to a life of service and hospitality. My hope is to open a home for people in need, to receive rest, and physical, emotional, and spiritual nourishment. Houghton has taught me so much about what Christian hospitality looks like and why it matters. Houghton has also given me opportunities to put these hopes into creation through the 32:16 scholars program which addresses exploring rural poverty in Allegany county. You have helped make these dreams possible. Thank you! Raychel Yost.



The GBHEM  
Scholarship  
Portal Is Now  
Open

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) scholarship [application portal](#) is open for United Methodist students seeking scholarships for undergraduate and graduate study at colleges, universities and seminaries in the United States. Potential scholarships awarded range from \$500 to \$1,200, on average.

In 2024, GBHEM awarded more than 2,100 scholarships, valued at nearly \$3.7 million, to undergraduate and graduate students at 509 U.S. schools. This financial aid helped students of all backgrounds pursue their dreams and education to serve as the next generation of leaders.

The Scholarships Office administers more than 70 [scholarship programs](#) with one general application. Students may submit one application per year, which will be screened for the appropriate scholarship program.

Scholarship programs are divided into three categories:

- [General Scholarships](#)
- [HBCU Scholarships](#)
- [Ministry as a Career Scholarships](#)

The deadline to complete the application is **Monday, March 31, 2025**. Email [umscholar@gbhem.org](mailto:umscholar@gbhem.org) for more information.



**Food Pantry Needs for February, March and April.**

Pineapple, Instant Potatoes, Corn Bread, & Cream Corn.