



Summer 2026

UNITY NEWSLETTER

1500 Western Ave, Albany, NY 12203

518.464.2648

Dear Friends of Unity Lutheran,

I love the summer sunshine! Long days, warm weather, things growing. Over the last few years, I have learned to enjoy gardening. I find it satisfying to watch plants grow and flower or fruit. Especially when it is my hands which have planted and watered and watched over.

Each year at this time we begin a season of growth. Not just in the garden and flower beds, but also in worship. The season of Pentecost begins and lasts us through the whole growing season, past the last harvest, and right up until our Thanksgiving celebration. The color of the altar is green to symbolize this growth. Some theologians call this season the ordinary time. In this ordinary time our thematic focus shifts away from the major events of Christ's death and resurrection and onto the daily Christian life. We look to God's word to lead and guide our days now. How we act towards God. How we act towards ourselves. How we act towards one another. These are the themes of this season. It is meant to be a season of growth.

Just over 5 years ago, before many of our current members joined us, we gathered as a newly formed congregation to brainstorm how we want to be as a church body. We asked questions like, what are the needs of the community around us? How can we best be known to people who might not have encountered Jesus yet? In what ways do we want to define ourselves as Christian individuals and also as a Christian community? As a result of the answers, we came up with a guiding statement. We are growing as God's disciples, compassionately connecting our neighbors to Jesus. Half a decade ago we wanted to be individuals who are known for our continued growth. As a congregation, we have done just that. The Lord has seen fit to bless our ministry with growth through baptisms, new members, new programs, and new opportunities to fellowship. I am humbled to see God's hand growing our church. But how about you, as an individual? How has your life seen growth?

In the past years, has your love for Christ grown? Are you spending more time in prayer? More time studying His word? More Sundays in worship that without? Have you looked for more opportunities to serve your neighbors? I can see the growth in our congregation. Can you see the growth in your own life of faith?

As we transition to this season of growth, I encourage you to reflect on your own life. Are there areas which need pruning? Things which need fertilizing? In my garden at home I've found that it very quickly becomes cluttered and needs to be thinned out. Is this true of your life too? These are tangible and measurable ways which you can assess your life as a follower of Jesus. In this ordinary time, may you be known as someone who is growing as God's disciple. As you do, it will become a priority to compassionately connect your neighbors to Jesus. May this be what you are known for and who you truly are.

Your Brother In Christ
Pastor Jim Dorner





Hello everyone!

Can everyone feel it? Kids playing outside, barbeques grilling, pools opening... Summer is just around the corner! It has been a lot of fun these last few days and weeks as kids are able to finally play whiffle ball, ride bikes, play wall-ball and just hang out in the shade. Yesterday we were even able to have a picnic outside and enjoyed popsicles and freeze pops. This has been a fun, energetic, and exciting time as we all reflect on what we learned this year and look to transition to a well-deserved break. Thank you to everyone who helped our program throughout this school year. Without your donations of time, energy, food, clothes, toys, and other various items this program would not be able to function in the same capacity.

As a quick update, we have also recently hired a new employee on our staff. Ms. Elise joined me, Pastor Jim, and Ms. Noelle last month. Please welcome Ms. Elise to the program and say hi if you see her working around the facilities.

And finally, we are officially one month until the end of the school year. As we transition to the summer please keep your eyes out for summer toys, water toys, water clothes, towels, or anything else that could enhance the children's experience this summer. Your donations and generosity are a major help to the success of the program. Thank you again for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Jack Verhayden

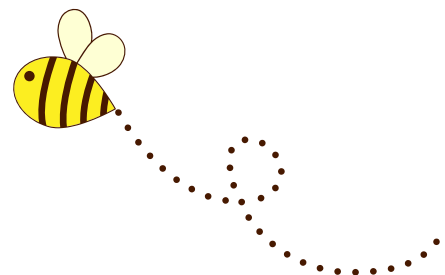
Afterschool Program Director



Plans are for our outdoor worship to be held on July July 26 and August 16th. Pot Luck will be held after our worship. Note that the pot luck luncheons for those months will be on the fourth Sunday of July and August. Of course, the outdoor service is "weather permitting"!



At a congregational meeting, the congregation unanimously agreed to purchase the parsonage on Parkwood Street, where the Dorner family lives. The home had been owned by a company within the Atlantic District. The paperwork is underway, and we expect to take ownership of the Parkwood Street property soon.





Many thanks to Sue Meyer, Helen Willis and Debbie Boomhower who cooked a homemade dinner, a delicious salad and a selection of desserts for our last dinner of the 2025-26 season. Thank you to everyone who helped prepare a meal, a side dish, salad or a dessert or delivered meals to the shelter this past year. It's such an easy thing to do, yet means so much to the men who depend on the shelter for a meal and warm place to spend the cold months. Thank you!



No matter what the circumstances, grief is a painful, confusing process. A GriefShare group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. At this 13-week support group program, you'll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what's "normal" in grief. The group will meet on Monday evenings, from August 31 - November 30th. Since there are no neat, orderly stages of grief, you'll learn helpful ways of coping with grief, in all its unpredictability—and gain solid support each step of the way. For more details, and to find and register for a group, visit griefshare.org. to register or contact Sue Meyer 508-5177994 or rs.meyer@comcast.net.

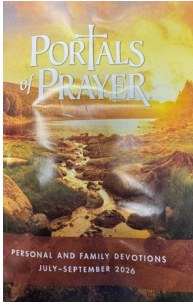


For nearly two years now Jack Verhayden has served as Director of our program

In many ways he has excelled as the students who get off the bus are always eager to play games with him. June 19th will be Jack's last day with us as he has decided to move to Florida to be nearer to his family. We wish him nothing but joy and contentment in this next chapter of his life.

We are thrilled to announce that we have hired his successor, Ms. Alaina Pitt. Alaina is not new to Unity as she has already worked in our after-school program as a teacher for a year. She is familiar with what we do and our mission. At the end of this summer Alaina will graduate with a degree in Early Childhood Education. We are excited to have her energy to guide our program and serve the families we partner with. Her first day will be June 8th to ensure a smooth transition from one director to another. Stop in and introduce yourself anytime. Please pray for both Jack and Alaina as they make their transitions.





Portals of Prayer for July – September will be available in the Narthex. Both large and pocket size are available. Take one and maybe share one with a friend.



The Unity Women's Group is planning a *Prayer Circle*. Information sheets will be coming out soon. The group has many other plans in action. Please join at the next meeting. The calendar for the Women's group is:

Saturday, June 20

10am Unity Women's Group meeting

Saturday, October 24

10-1 Unity Community Day

Saturday, December 5,

10-2 Holly Fair

FOR EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON



Baptized on May 17th was Lainey Elizabeth Springer, daughter of

John and Alexandra Springer. She was baptized by her great uncle, Deacon Ed Kleinke. We pray God's blessing on Lainey and her family.

GAIL MACINTOSH, a lifelong member of St. Matthew and former director of their Day Care Center, was called to her eternal life on May 17th. We pray for God's comfort on all those who mourn her passing.

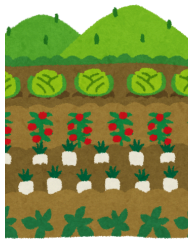
Planning **COUNCIL**

Board Meetings

Monday, 6pm on these dates -
June 1, Sep 14, Oct 5, Nov 2,
Dec 7

SUMMER CAMP

Our After School Program will run a Day Camp during the summer months. Spread the word to family and friends! Different weeks have different themes for the children and they can come for one or for all of the sessions.



We have great news about our Church Garden. In April, we revitalized all the veggie beds with the addition of fresh soil and nutrients. Then we began planting: tomatoes, summer squash, sweet peppers and onions. In the first few days of June, we will plant seeds for beans, peas and beets. We are so grateful to Bill Boomhower for the watering system that he installed last year with a convenient timer that he continues to monitor and adjust according to changing needs, also to Buz Barclay and Suzanne Brockley for helping to tend to the garden's soil care, planting and weeding. Harvest should be plentiful this year. If you are interested, please speak with one of us to find out how you can help maintain our garden.



**TALENT SHOW
&
ERIC PETER CONCERT
AUGUST 16th**

Weather permitting, we will worship outside this day and then head inside for a concert with Eric Peter. He has graciously offered his sound system for anyone to plug into if they want to showcase their skills as well. We would love to hear you sing, do a dance, or tell a joke. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the narthex. This will be a regular monthly potluck with a twist. We would love to have the whole church attend. Bring friends too!



PRAYER CIRCLE

Many people have requested a prayer circle. We would share the names of those in need of prayer. Plans are being made so that we may implement this and have communication with those interested. An information sheet will be available soon. It is important that we pray for one another at all times.



Wild Ones at Unity!

For the past few years, we have been blessed to have Wild Ones lead us installing a natural plant garden. It is blossoming now so come see it. Last year they laid a mulch foundation for a row of service berries that will grow into a natural barrier between a section of our property and Western Ave. This year they will install the plants. Your help is needed!!! Mark your calendars for these days and come join us in tending the garden and keeping it beautiful. Work gloves and weeding tools are needed. Speak to Pastor Jim with any questions.

Work Days

Monday, June 8 th 6-8PM

Monday, June 15 th 6-8PM

Monday, June 22 nd 6-8PM

Service Berry Installation

Saturday, June 27 th 9:30AM, with refreshments at 10:30AM



JUNE

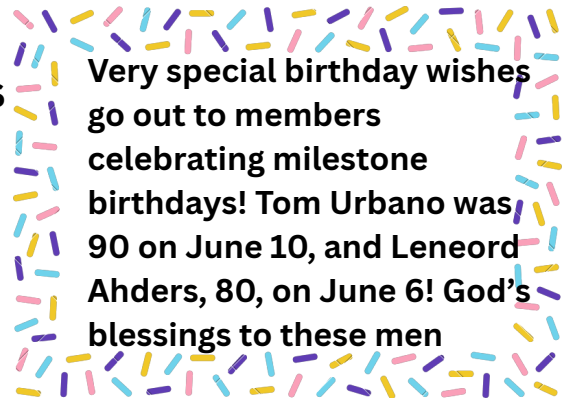
- 4. GILLIAN FLYNN
- 5. DANIEL LONG
- 6. SUSAN MEYER
LEONARD AHDERS
- 10. TOM URBANO
- 11. BUZ BARCLAY
- 15. TARYN EMELIE MCCOY
- 18. OPHELIA AMEGASHIE
- 20. HELEN WILLIS
SEAN O'KEEFE
- 22. DANIEL MCCOY
- 28. DENNIS WHEELER

JULY

- 1. STEVE BRICKMAN
- 3. JOHN CHEVALIER
- 11. TOM CALAMARAS
- 12. PATRICK SHELDON
- 14. TOM CALAMARAS
- 21. ISLA GRAY BERGHELA
- 22. NATHAN ALEXANDER
NATNAEL GEBREYES
MARGARET CHEVALIER
- 23. JOAN BEAUDOIN
- 24. DANIELLE CALAMARAS
- 26. MATTHEW EARL
- 28. ANDREW VAN ACKER
- 29. RUTH SIMMONS
DEACON ED KLEINKE

AUGUST

- 4. THALIA KOMENE-USHE
- 7. HAGEN FOLEY
- 13. ERIC PETER
- 20. JIM MACZEK
- 22. EGAN BERGHELA
- 23. CINDY ESTERBY
- 27. LORI SEIM
- 28. SHERYL BAUM



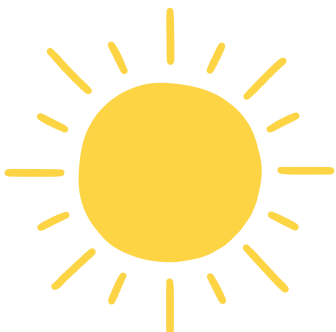
Very special birthday wishes go out to members celebrating milestone birthdays! Tom Urbano was 90 on June 10, and Leneord Ahders, 80, on June 6! God's blessings to these men



Our Unity Newsletter has taken on a new look. It is necessary to use a new software to produce our monthly information. (And not easy for the "old dog...") So this is the beginning of my "learning process". It has gone from totally frustrating to almost fun- Until I hit a stumbling block.

This might not be the final layout for our monthly newsletter... there might be a few changes and I'm sure several mistakes. Just be patient with the editor. Have a great summer!

DJK



Date	Flowers	Service Steward	Reader	altar	Coffee Hour
6/7	James Welter in memory of mother Anna	Nathan Alexander			
6/14	Len Ahders - for 80th birthday and loving friends at Unity	Mark Simmons		Alida Boshea	Ophelia Amegashie
6/21	Linda O'Keefe - Sean's Birthday	Nick Alexander		Ruth & Mark Simmons	POT LUCK
6/28	Kleinke Family in memory of daughter Shea Marie	Jamie Welter			Debbie Boomhower
7/5	Len Ahders - parents Wm. and Mary, brothers, George, Bill Fred, and sister Mary	Tom Calamaras			
7/12	Linda O'Keefe for Daniels 4 th birthday	Debbie Boomhower			
7/19	Alexanders for Nathan's birthday	Steve Brickman			
7/26	Lori Seim in memory of mother, Wilma	Nick Alexander			Pot Luck
8/2		James Welter			Judy Zamurs & Barbara Kunkel
8/9	Pam and Leo Lupien - 49 th Wedding Anniversary	Nick Alexander			
8/16	Barbara Kunkel - 60 th Wedding Anniversary	Linda O'Keefe			POT LUCK AND TALENT SHOW
8/23	Esterby/Fantos families in memory of Jane Charftier	Bill Boomhower			
8/30	Alida Boshea in memory of her Mom	Lori Seim			