

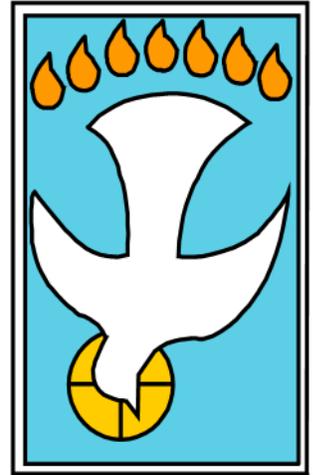
# “THE SPIRIT”

September 2021

Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit

57 Hurlbut Street ~ Albany, NY 12209 ~ 518-463-6224  
email: [holyspiritbany@nycap.rr.com](mailto:holyspiritbany@nycap.rr.com) ~ web: [www.holyspiritbany.com](http://www.holyspiritbany.com)

Laura Wayman, Editor



*God's purpose for Holy Spirit is to guide  
the Community to Christ with support and love*

## MARKS OF DISCIPLESHIP

### 1. DAILY PRAYER

- A. Prayer list in weekly devotional — please pray daily
- B. Personal prayer (needs/thanks/conflict) during worship
- C. “Christ in Our Home” daily devotionals

### 2. WORSHIP

- A. Sunday worship at 10:00 AM via Zoom and indoor at Holy Spirit
- B. Evening Prayer Service via Zoom - **September 2, 7, 14, 21 & 28**

### 3. BIBLE READING

- A. Individual daily reading
- B. Mid-week Message
- C. Koinonia - **September 13 & 27**

### 4. SERVICE

- A. Service needs for LCHS include: Altar Care & Greeters
- B. Individual spiritual gift counseling available from Patti Henry

### 5. SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP

- A. Fellowship Hour - immediately after worship via Zoom
- B. Faith, News & Brews - **September 1**
- C. Yarn & Needles via Zoom - **September 20**

### 6. GIVING

- A. Donna in Ghana
- B. CACC Emergency Overflow Shelter - **Cleaning Supplies**
- C. St. James Food Pantry
- D. Families of Delaware Avenue fire

# SEPTEMBER

Birthdays

- 02** Gwendolyn Shutter
- 06** Erika Chapman
- 13** Greg Tennermann
- 17** Makenzie Shimkus
- 23** Casey Wayman
- 24** Komal Shaheen
- 26** Kurt Warnstadt
- 27** Bonnie Broden  
Penelope Parry
- 29** Katrina Capuano

# SEPTEMBER

Anniversaries

- 11** Rick & Claire Vandenberg
- 15** Walter & Kathy Ross  
John & Katrina Capuano, Jr.
- 16** Shannon & Jill Kilkelly
- 17** Carmen & Jennifer Corazzini
- 20** Loren & Bridget Place



- for our "at home" members
- for Donna Rohrmiller (our missionary in Ghana)
- for Campus Ministry at UAlbany
- for our sister Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe
- for all those in service of our country

# SEPTEMBER

Sunday worship is via Zoom and indoor at Holy Spirit in **September**

Faith, News and Brews meets on Wednesday, **September 1**

Evening Prayer service via Zoom will be held on *Thursday*, **September 2**, and *Tuesdays*, **September 7, 14, 21 and 28**

Rev. Donna Rohrmiller is our guest preacher on Sunday, **September 5**

A special Church Council meeting will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, **September 8**

Choir Rehearsals resume on Thursday, **September 9**

Rev. Betty Krafft leads us in worship on Sunday, **September 12**

Koinonia meets via Zoom on Mondays, **September 13 & 27**

Holy Spirit is at the Farmers Market on Tuesdays, **September 14 & 28**

Church Council meets via Zoom on Wednesday, **September 15**

Yarn & Needles meets via Zoom on Monday, **September 20**

Book Club meets on Tuesday, **September 21**

Social Ministry Committee meets on Tuesday, **September 28**

In **September** we are collecting cleaning supplies for the CACC Emergency Overflow Shelter @ First Lutheran

Dear Family of the Holy Spirit:

How are you these days? For many among us, the last couple of weeks have been especially tough; sometimes it feels like there isn't much left. In fact, as clouds of another CoVid-winter seem to form on the horizon, something has been crawling out of me that sounds more like: "Arrgh! I am so done with you, you @!&%!! virus!"

Of course, the virus doesn't care one bit but that doesn't mean less anger. In fact, it can produce an avalanche of questions which in turn pull me into other questions. What will it take to kick that thing off the planet? Can't we all just focus on that? Why not pull together and at least render the virus so impotent that all of us, including all the children who are beginning school, can go about living and learning and having some fun? What's the main issue? Why not come together on this one thing ... planet-wide?

In those moments there is nothing that refocuses me better than a simple pastoral care check-in call, even if it is only over the phone. I am not saying this because I am a pastor. Your gifts and talents and the uniqueness of your spirit that I get to see and hear — oh, how you can make such a difference! I am so grateful for you and for God letting us go through this time together, and for the fact that the pandemic does not define who we are and what we are about! It never will.

This newsletter is packed with exciting news about our future. Check out the detailed **plan for Holy Spirit's next three years**. Jot down your thoughts and questions, what sings to your heart and what nudges you, and share it! I look forward to our conversations about the plan and about how each of us, so uniquely gifted by God, is part of that journey. There is so much to discover, to enjoy and share and explore together! See you at the Townhall Meeting we will have later in the month!

Our Council President Kori Tomelden did all the hard work for the plan, listening, gathering, and writing up ideas and approaches with great love and vision, and then revising it all with gracious tenacity so that we can have a detailed map for our journey and engagement in and with the community of our Delaware neighbourhood.

This newsletter also includes a pastoral note on the **rite of confirmation** following a way-too convoluted letter that I had sent to the families of confirmation-age youth in early June. I look forward to hearing from you on that note as well. There are some things we simply cannot do and should not do the way we have done them before. There are also things we have never done before that can bring much joy and beckon us to come and go forward. As I so often say these days, let us hold things lightly. By "holding lightly" I do not mean less determination and commitment but a trusting willingness to be open and vulnerable, to let the One who holds us, take our hand and guide us. Let us **pray together**:

O God,  
you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending,  
by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown.  
Give us faith to go out with good courage,  
not knowing where we go,  
but only that your hand is leading us  
and your love supporting us,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

God bless you.

Pastor Rahel Hahn

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## **Holy Spirit 3-Year Plan**

### ***Introduction***

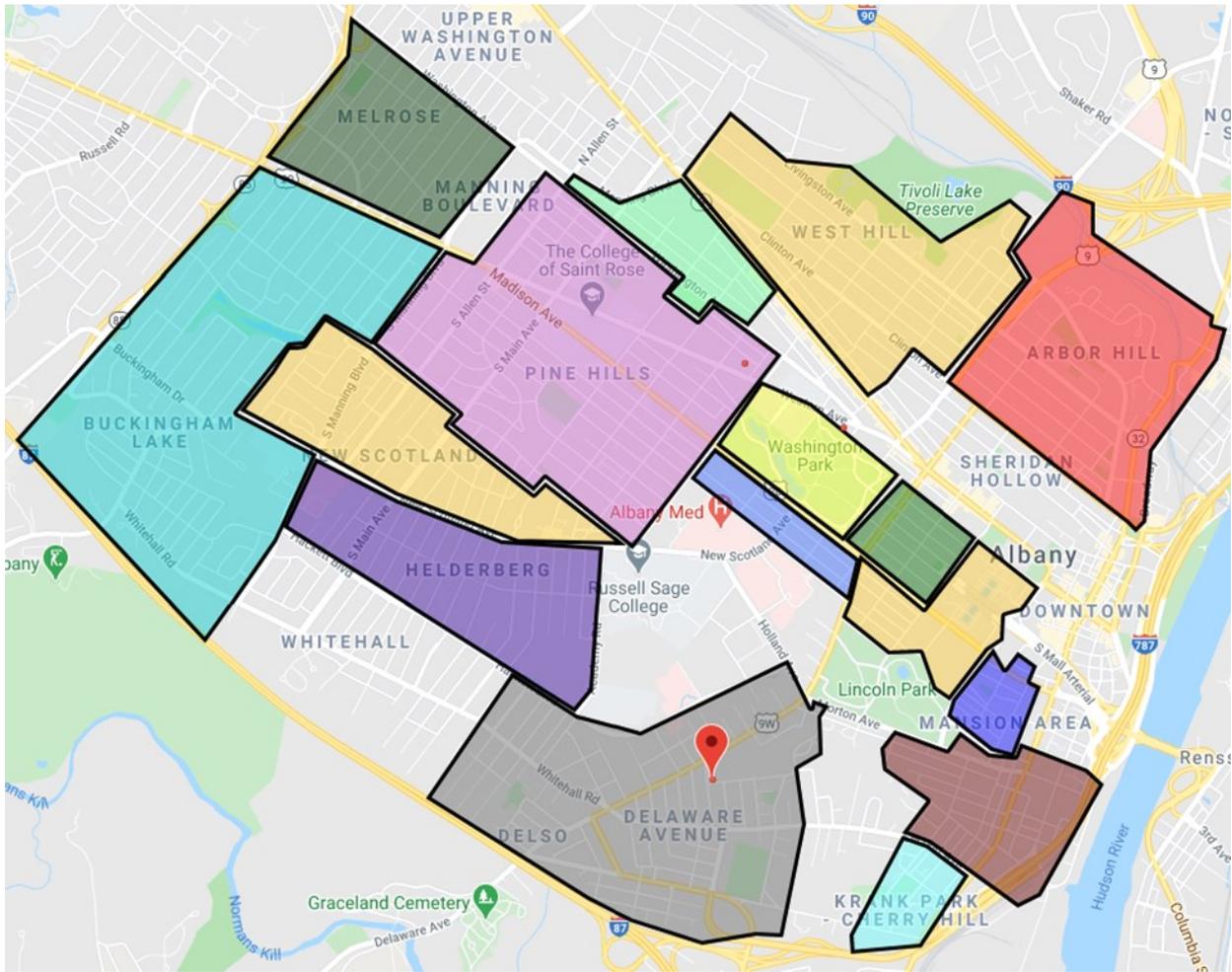
Coming out of COVID we seek to connect in new ways, to form meaningful and long-lasting relationships as part of the larger community and with our community. As we emerge from practices of social isolation and social separation, we will address in creative new ways what many have longed for for a long time.

We envision doing this through a multi-faceted, multi-project, multi-tiered engagement campaign with ministries that can involve all members of the congregation on these levels: family engagement, community engagement, and diversity engagement.

Our geographic location places us directly in the historic South End of Albany within the Delaware Avenue Neighborhood of Albany (see map below), in short distance to a public school and a public library branch (also the site of a seasonal farmer's market). While we are centrally located within the neighborhood, and have facilitated outreach-friendly programs in the past, we lack a deeper, more meaningful connection and relationship with the community at large. The majority of our members live more than three miles away. We are aware that locational disconnect can be symptomatic of a host of issues as evidenced by many ELCA congregations in urban areas.

Following the Census data update for 2021, the Delaware Avenue Neighborhood has now been identified as the most diverse in the city of Albany.

Therefore, rather than trying to just return to our (familiar or at least perceived as familiar) pre-COVID ways of being community of faith in this place and time, we want to move forward in new ways, ways that involve the surrounding community, ways to be a blessing and be blessed, ways that will integrate our congregation more meaningfully and more faithfully into the real fabric of the community with hearts of service and love.



## ***Problem Statement***

We serve a very big neighborhood that is very diverse on several levels, i.e. not just in ethnicity and culture, but also in socioeconomic status. For example, if you were to walk toward Whitehall Road -- yes there are sidewalks and people walk here! --, you would encounter an historically white, middle class neighborhood. On the other hand, if you walk below Delaware Avenue towards Second Avenue, you quickly encounter direct poverty.

In our immediate surrounding area, people generally live in poverty or just above the poverty level and therefore do not meet the income requirements for SNAP benefits or WIC. Even before COVID, the unemployment rate in and around the neighborhood has been high, resulting in further poverty.

The majority of the congregation commutes and does not reflect the ethnic, cultural, or economic reality of our neighborhood and the larger community of which we are a part, and not only because we happen to have a church building with a parking lot there.

Coming out of COVID, we view this challenge of how we are connected with our neighborhood not as a weakness but as an opportunity to become God's new creation in this context.

Coming out of COVID we seek to connect in new ways, to form meaningful and long-lasting relationships as part of the larger community and with our community. As we emerge from practices of social isolation and social separation, we will address in creative new ways what many have longed for for a long time.

During COVID, we have discovered and implemented Zoom with much success in our ministry work to open doors across the country and as far as Ghana and Pakistan for worship opportunities. We intend to continue to use these newly found technological gifts that we have found through COVID. With this still in place, we are also in a position to reach nationally and internationally with our work.

### ***Project Objectives***

To bridge the community to the church and the church to the community through multiple programs such as a comfort pantry providing personal hygiene items, neighborhood picnics, food fairs, craft festivals, literacy on the lawn, and other such initiatives and as gradually as social distancing allows. Monies raised from craft festivals or the Farmer's Market initiatives (see below) will go back into the community through donations to programs like Equinox, Meals on Wheels, feeding the homeless, and supporting the Veterans hospital (also nearby).

We are aware that this "Coming out of COVID and into Community" will mean profound changes in congregational culture, customs and habits, changes that will be engaged with intentional congregation-wide practices instead of being allocated to individual committee work. Thus, ministry projects traditionally relegated to (and thereby limited to) a particular committee such as a social ministry or evangelism committee, will be opened up for input from a variety of perspectives, including those of our external project partners (see below) and also internal cross-fertilization.

For example, we have an active Yarn and Needles ministry which defies images of "little old ladies" with crochet hooks and knitting needles. This group can easily become a part of the Farmer's Market or other outreach incentives (see below), and not just the by-product, but also, and more importantly, by sheer presence.

Everyone at Holy Spirit has a gift or two to share with the community and by sharing that gift, they also and in turn become a student of the community; in creating and cultivating connections in the various settings, we practice what being a real part of the community is all about. That is, we will shift from task-based outreach where we are simply collecting items and dropping them off to their various recipients to truly changing the culture of the congregation and cultivating real relationships and real partnerships.

Our project partners include, but are not limited to: Delaware Area Neighborhood Association, Albany Public Library (Delaware Avenue Branch), Delaware Avenue Community School located at 43 Bertha Street (across the street from our church), the Friendship Garden\* located on Hurlbut Street (next door to our church), in addition to other faith groups in the neighborhood, Albany Fire Department, Albany Police Department, the Boys and Girls Club at 21 Delaware Avenue, the Veteran's Hospital located on Holland Avenue, the Holy Spirit cemetery in Glenmont, local businesses in

the neighborhood, and a family farm located outside of the city with extensive acreage. Additional project partners, identified at the first council retreat on 8/10/2021 and refined at the second council retreat on 8/17/2021:

- **Malcolm Bird - ENL Classes**
- Heather Benno - Immigration Attorney/Immigrant Justice Solutions
- Sergio Addams - Candidate for Albany Common Council (7th Ward)
- Cathy Fahey - Albany Common Council (7th Ward)
- John T. McDonald - Assemblyman (District 108)
- Paul Tonko - US House Representative
- Kathy Sheehan - Albany Mayor
- Albany Academies

Faith Groups in the neighborhood:

- Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church
- St. Francis of Assisi Parish
- New Hope Ministries
- Sister Benson
- Journey United Church of Christ
- Engage Albany
- Third Reformed Church
- Morningstar Baptist
- St. George's
- St. Paul's Episcopal on Hackett Blvd.

Local Businesses:

- Andy's Italian Deli
- Cardona's
- Emack and Bolio
- Prinzo's Bakery
- Ye Olde Sports Bar
- Dominican Hair Salon
- La Familia Barber Shop
- Shelia's Liquor Store
- KFC/Taco Bell
- Delaware Supply Company
- New World Bistro
- The Cheese Traveler
- Sweet Basil
- Stewart's Shops
- La Empanada Llama
- Spectrum Movie Theatre
- Bridgeford Hardware
- TownePlace Suites
- McDonald's
- Elbo Room Bar
- Guido's

\*The Friendship Garden is currently being used by the Delaware Avenue Community School, and is also undergoing the process of becoming an urban garden resource. The garden space was built on land that was donated by Holy Spirit over 20 years ago. We have already held several joint projects in the Friendship Garden. Letters have been drafted (and will be revised) to deliver to both residents and businesses to outline the project plan and to invite the community to an informational meeting.

A congregational townhall session will also be planned after the Project Plan has been sent out via email or snail mail.

Congregational buy-in, input, and participation is vital to the success of this project plan.

## ***Project Design***

We envision a tiered roll-out of a variety of ministry projects involving a multi-phased development that will scaffold together and build continued involvement from our congregation and project partners. As our projects get regularly evaluated for sustainability, they can become on-going ministries that feed into each other to support the evolving cultural changes within the church with the celebration of the process as we go rather than just an anticipated result and end, (i.e. a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset).

### **First Phase (Year 1 -- 2021 through 2022)**

During the first phase (which, incidentally, is the first phase of Coming out of COVID into Community), we will focus our communication with our project partners to determine current and anticipated community needs and also to begin dialogue on the greater vision of how we can all work together. Projects to implement during this first phase also include the creation of our project team (known, going forward, as the Compass Committee), email list, social media channels, and other communication outlets.

We will start with our own physical location to begin diversity engagement by investing in multi-cultural materials for our Sunday school students and other decorations to facilitate learning more about diversity engagement in general. We will also begin to create multi-language information material to be used at the Farmer's Market simply to supplement our primary purpose of building connections and cultivating relationships. Our primary focus will always be on outreach and building genuine relationships and not on "churching" reflects our guiding principles.

Soft programs to include during this phase will include: Farmer's Market booth activities, Literacy on the Lawn, Crafting with Intention and Connection, and other programs that can be implemented safely within COVID guidelines.

Our first phase of outreach will use the Farmer's Market located at the Delaware Avenue Library as our primary project. We will have a bi-weekly booth that will provide a space to showcase crafts, baked goods, vegetables from our congregation alongside family friendly activities (such as seasonal crafts and demonstrations of

“how to” including the skills and knowledge of local immigrants). By opening the door for members of the congregation to connect meaningfully with the surrounding community through conversation, we can truly learn about our neighbors.

During this first phase, we will also begin our “Literacy on the Lawn” initiative as a second project alongside a lending library which we hope will evolve into a gently loved bookstore. We will partner with the Delaware Branch of the Albany Public Library to bring multicultural storytime to our greenspace and within the library as needed. We will engage members of our congregation to come in as mystery readers and also incorporate our fledgling relationship with the Delaware Community School across the street to provide opportunities to students both during the school year and during the summer. Additional program incentives will include and build on our relationship with the Friendship Garden next door to provide outdoor space for writing opportunities for youth and adults.

Another initiative to begin during the first phase is Crafting with Intention and Connection, our third project. Whether this ministry project takes place on the lawn/green space next to the church building, within the Friendship garden, or at the Farmer’s Market, crafting helps us not only to tell stories but to share stories and then disseminate new stories learned. Through these crafting opportunities, we can share culture and the diversity of cultural languages. The teacher, oftentimes, becomes the student.

Coming out of COVID we seek to connect in new ways, to form meaningful and long-lasting relationships as part of the larger community and with our community. As we emerge from practices of social isolation and social separation, we will address in creative new ways what many have longed for for a long time.

We envision doing this through a multi-faceted, multi-project, multi-tiered engagement campaign with ministries that can involve all members of the congregation on these levels: family engagement, community engagement, and diversity engagement.

### **Phase One Action Items:**

**Identify:** Committee(s) that are most appropriate for this phase

Evangelism, Social Ministry, Christian Education, Parish Life

**Identify:** Congregational members that have strengths for this phase

Artists, bakers, home-cooks

### **Second Phase (Year 2 -- 2022 through 2023)**

During the second phase of outreach, we will focus on the food insecurity work as the primary project to put in place. This phase will scaffold from the work that was done in Phase 1 and will involve bringing our community together through neighborhood picnics, community meals, and food fairs when it is safe to do so, all of which provide an opportunity to get to know one another around one thing that we all have in common: food. It offers an opportunity to open dialogue and discussion about favorite dishes, each other’s language, childhood memories associated with that food, or to

prepare a meal together. Future opportunities will involve learning about meal preparation, nutrition, and growing food.

### **Phase Two Action Items:**

**Identify:** Committee(s) that are most appropriate for this phase

**Identify:** Congregational members that have strengths for this phase

### **Third Phase (Year 3 -- 2023 through 2024)**

During the third phase of outreach, the primary ministry project to put in place will be music ministry: to share music, learn about music, and to experience music from all cultures (especially those represented in the neighborhood) outside of the context of the worship life of Holy Spirit. While some discussion may occur around sacred music of world religions (including Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, B'Nai, Sikh), we will also involve discussion and engagement of secular music, such as traditional songs and multicultural instruments. This will not only involve our congregation members with those gifts but also our congregation's electronic equipment. Our congregation is very musically oriented and cherishes music greatly. We have a tiny but mighty choir, two organists, a choir director, and many talented musicians and vocalists.

During the third phase of outreach, our second ministry project to put in place will be a life-skills mentoring program. While we have recognized that there will be an on-going need for tutoring and academic mentoring programs in the community, we find that a life-skills mentoring program would be highly beneficial and cross generational boundaries; for example, an older individual could show a young person how to tie a necktie, sew on a button, or change a tire.

We will implement a personal hygiene pantry during the third phase. There are several active food pantries available to the community and while we also contribute to those, we would like to establish a personal hygiene pantry for needs often not recognized for example, providing sanitary napkins and other personal products, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, and other items not covered under assistance programs like SNAP or WIC.

Throughout these phases we will seek the involvement of local businesses and project partners, especially those that are BIPOC and/or female owned. This not only strengthens the businesses, and therefore the surrounding neighborhood, but also fosters a sustainable and growth oriented community that lifts up all residents. We envision this, not just through cost-share opportunities, but also through highlighting local businesses and their contributions to the neighborhood as they reflect the multicultural fabric of the neighborhood. Many of our businesses are family-owned and have a rich history which we would be honored to highlight.

### **Phase Three Action Items:**

**Identify:** Committee(s) that are most appropriate for this phase

**Identify:** Congregational members that have strengths for this phase

## ***Project Evaluation***

Ongoing review will be conducted through an appointed neighborhood team (Compass Committee) that will consist of: Holy Spirit congregation members and neighborhood contacts (ex. DANA members, Delaware Avenue Community School staff, parents, students, local law enforcement, local business owners, residents) to advise, evaluate, and implement the various projects identified. This voluntary team will meet regularly on a schedule as determined by team members and will have an appointed: team chairperson (x2 - one from Holy Spirit, one from the neighborhood), team secretary, team treasurer, and volunteer coordinator. The following appointed leadership roles (chairpersons and volunteer coordinator) will serve for the minimum of 3 years as the first three phases of the project are rolled out. Meetings will be conducted over Zoom until it is safer to meet in-person. The committee will consist of volunteer members of the Holy Spirit congregation and the neighborhood with the majority of the committee composed of neighborhood residents.

Compass Committee Leadership Roles:

- Co-Chairperson: (Neighborhood)
- Co-Chairperson: Kori Tomelden (LCHS)
- Team Secretary
- Team Treasurer (if needed)
- Volunteer Coordinator

Committee Members:

We will look for the following milestones and markers to determine whether or not the project is on track:

- We will document our conversations and interactions from the Farmer's Market booth, attendance at food fairs, craft fairs, etc. as a means of tracking connections and relationships that have been formed
- Track feedback in community-based publications and gathering such as the DANA newsletter and DANA meetings
- Inventory will be tracked as far as donations of items coming in (ex. Food items, personal hygiene items, etc.)
- Financial recordkeeping will be maintained weekly to indicate the distribution of funds.
- We will stay up-to-date on the latest guidelines per CDC, New York State, and ELCA.
- Volunteer sheets will be maintained
- Track what percentage of the congregation gets involved with what ministry projects
- We will provide tangible pieces of collaborative art work (examples to include: community weaving projects, tablecloths with handwritten messages, murals) that can then travel to different community locations as well in very visible places of our own church building and space.
- Mapping our encounters: the world we learn about and the ripples of impact that we create.

## ***Future Funding***

Future funding sources include: fundraisers by project partners and the Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit, Thrivent grants, capital campaigns, as well as local and statewide grant services that are not affiliated with the ELCA.



## YARN & NEEDLES AND KOINONIA



Koinonia will gather via Zoom on Mondays, **September 13 & 27** at 6:30 PM, and Yarn & Needles will gather at 6:30 PM on Monday, **September 20**, using the following information.

### Attend via Computer:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85730257632?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85730257632?pwd=LzFLaU9RTDF1T1VwK1NiNFpYRkVxQT09)  
[pwd=LzFLaU9RTDF1T1VwK1NiNFpYRkVxQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85730257632?pwd=LzFLaU9RTDF1T1VwK1NiNFpYRkVxQT09)

Meeting ID: 857 3025 7632  
Passcode: 490235

### Attend via Smart Phone: One tap mobile

+19294362866,,85730257632#,,,,,0#,,490235# US (New York)

### Attend via Regular Phone: IMPORTANT! DON'T FORGET THE #

Dial: 1 (929) 436-2866

Meeting ID: 857 3025 7632 #

Participant ID: #

Passcode: 490235

To mute or unmute, press \*6.

(Not calling from NY? Find your local number:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85730257632?pwd=LzFLaU9RTDF1T1VwK1NiNFpYRkVxQT09>)



Thank You to everyone who has donated to the Bedding Bank. Your donations of 26 sets of sheets, 6 blankets and 6 comforters were given to the United State Committee for Refuges (USCRI) this week. This past weekend (August 28-29) **8 new families** arrived in our area. They

are so very appreciative of our donations and continuing support. Thank you!



Thank you to everyone who donated school supplies this summer. **We collected well over 1,000 items without counting individual items in packages or sets (i.e. we received 935 paper plates in 4 packages, 96 pencils in a box of 8 sets)!**

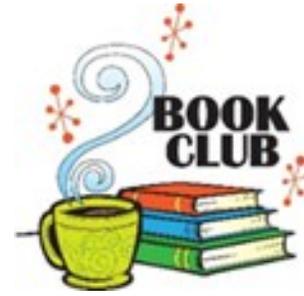
We received donations from members of our congregation, friends, and Albany Lutheran Cluster church: **First Lutheran**. We had many donations from new and old neighborhood friends who brought their items to our Farmers Market stall every other Tuesday.

The students and teachers of the Delaware Community School appreciate the support. Thank You so very much!

Just a reminder: On Tuesday, **September 28** we will have a Social Ministry Meeting.



Help is needed to put up a peg board in the closet at the bottom of the stairs to the parking lot AND/OR to get the weed-eater started. If you can assist with either job — please contact Barb Turner: 518-438-0865.



**IN SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER** the Cluster is collecting cleaning supplies for the CACC Emergency Overflow Shelter. You may drop off your donations Monday-Thursday from 9 AM - 1PM or bring them to worship on Sundays and add them to our collection bin in the Overflow Room.

**NEW:** This year items can also be ordered via the following Amazon Wishlist link and mailed directly to CACC at: 646 State Street, Albany, NY 12203.

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1OQLLG19TC49R?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1OQLLG19TC49R?ref=wl_share)

Whichever way you choose to donate, the following items are needed:

- Disinfecting Floor Cleaner (ie. PineSol)
- Bleach
- Disinfecting Spray (ie. Lysol Spray)
- Disinfecting Wipes
- SOLID Air Freshener
- Toilet Cleaner & Toilet Bowl Brushes
- Disinfecting Sink and Shower Cleaner
- Shower Cleaning Brushes
- Scrubby Sponges (for sinks, walls, urinals, etc.)
- Household Brooms

The Holy Spirit Book Club will gather at the home of Deb Baranowski on Tuesday, **September 21** at 6:30 PM. The book to be read in advance is "The Art Forger" by B.A. Shapiro. If you would like to join the discussion via Zoom, please contact Karen Hasenbein.

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## **FAITHFUL LEARNING AND TEACHING TOGETHER (FLATT)**

These courses are open to all and will meet via Zoom.

After signing up for the workshop, book group or multi-week course you will receive a Zoom link.

**SIGN UP HERE:**

<https://forms.gle/L8BqLqKsLo8h4ix56>

## **Pericope Groups**

Interested in connecting with others in conversation about the lectionary texts each week? This kind of group may deepen your personal worship experience as well as aid in your sermon preparation.

Pastor Kochanski will set the groups based on best days and times for folks AND identify a facilitator for each group. She will also help as needed to get the groups up and running by providing a suggested format for the sessions and any other support.

The identified facilitator will set up the Zoom room and keep the group informed about meeting times & dates, relate to synod staff as needed, etc.

**SIGN UP HERE:**

<https://forms.gle/CsCLdGw4RpkPYErMA>

**Bible Study  
and Artful Reflection:**

Wisdom Literature

8 Sessions

**Fridays:** 9:30-10:45 AM

**September 10, 17, 24**

**October 1, 8, 15**

**November 5**

Led by: Pastor Lori Kochanski

**SIGN UP HERE:**

<https://forms.gle/L8BqLqKsLo8h4ix56>

About the Course: Engage in intentional Bible Study with others from across the synod and beyond. Using the Yale Bible Study material, artful expression and conversation we will study Wisdom Literature. This class will require some work outside of the session, probably about 2 hours a week, so that you are prepared for the class conversation.

**Course Outline:**

Week 1: What is Wisdom Literature?

Week 2: Proverbial Wisdom

Week 3: Wisdom and Creation

Week 4: Wisdom and Women

Week 5: Ecclesiastes

Week 6: Job Prologues

Week 7: Job Dialogues

Week 8: Job and the Speeches from the Whirlwind

**Zoom Book Group: Outside  
the Lines: How Embracing  
Queerness Will Transform  
Your Faith by Mihee Kim-Kort**

Wednesday, September 29, 2021

1PM-2PM

conversation facilitated by

Pastor Lori Kochanski

**Sign Up Here:**

<https://forms.gle/L8BqLqKsLo8h4ix56>

**About the Author and Book...**

*"Mihee Kim-Kort is a Presbyterian minister, agitator, speaker, writer, and slinger of hopeful stories about faith and church."* (<https://www.mkimkort.com/>)

*Outside the Lines: How Embracing Queerness Will Transform Your Faith*  
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2018.

**Purchase the book:**

<https://bookshop.org/books/outside-the-lines-how-embracing-queerness-will-transform-your-faith/9781506408965>

**About the book group:**

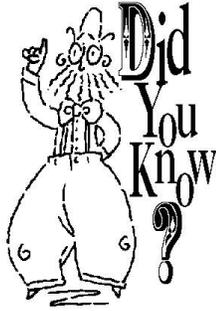
When we gather we will discuss the book and how it meets us where we are in our faith practice. It will be important to read the book prior to the conversation. You will receive a Zoom Link for the session after you sign up using the link below.

**Sign Up Here:**

<https://forms.gle/L8BqLqKsLo8h4ix56>



**September 12**



Property Committee recently did a cleaning of old items from the church.

We have such a generous and loving congregation! We receive many wonderful and useful things and do not want to discourage donations.

However, now that we have the not-needed items cleared out, it would be appreciated, before making a donation of material items, that you check with the committee chair to be sure the item will be used (for example, we have dozens of cans of Sterno which is rarely used).

Thank you for your generosity and help so we don't accumulate things that could be useful to others.

~ Property Committee

## FAITH, NEWS & BREWS

Join us on the **1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday** of the month at the Delaware Supply Company from 6:30-8PM to discuss news and topics that are on people's minds. We approach issues as Christians and see how God is in the middle of the issue along with possible answers. Our next gathering is Wednesday, **October 6**.



## Tuesday Evening Prayer Service

### NEW NIGHT & TIME FOR THURSDAY EVENING PRAYER SERVICE

Join us for prayer from 6-6:30 PM on **TUESDAYS** — beginning on Tuesday, September 7. via Zoom. This is the same evening prayer service, but the day of the week has been changed to accommodate the return of Thursday night Choir Rehearsals. Please use this information to attend:

#### Attend via Computer:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82867565754?pwd=dUFxSkJUZWJxNVBwZFdEdVRiZi9KZz09>

Meeting ID: 828 6756 5754  
Passcode: 031983

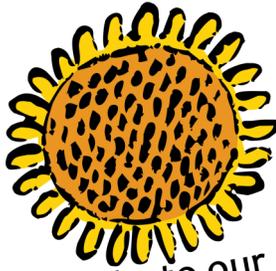
#### Attend via Smart Phone: One tap mobile

+19294362866,,82867565754#,,,,,0#,,031983# US (New York)

#### Attend via Phone: IMPORTANT! DON'T FORGET THE #

**Dial:** 1 (929) 436-2866  
**Meeting ID:** 828 6756 5754  
**Participant ID:** #  
**Password:** 031983#

**To mute or unmute, press \*6**



Thanks to our  
Farmers Market  
VOLUNTEERS!

**@ Market on August 3**

Jakob Danner  
Scott Danner  
Rev. Rahel Hahn  
Kori Tomelden  
Patti Henry

**Market Goods Providers**

Janet Behning  
Rev. Rahel Hahn  
Patti Henry  
NancyQuay Milner  
Kori Tomelden  
Laura Wayman

**Market Canopy Provider**

Karin Maag-Tanchak

**@ Market on August 17**

Jakob Danner  
Scott Danner  
Patti Henry

**Market Goods Providers**

Janet Behning

Rev. Rahel Hahn  
Diane Hasenbein  
NancyQuay Milner  
Kori Tomelden  
Laura Wayman

**Market Canopy Provider**

Karin Maag-Tanchak

**@ Market on August 31**

Jakob Danner  
Scott Danner  
Rev. Rahel Hahn  
Loren Place

**Market Goods Providers**

Janet Behning  
Rev. Rahel Hahn  
Karin Maag-Tanchak  
NancyQuay Milner  
Laura Wayman

**Market Canopy Provider**

Karin Maag-Tanchak

**VOLUNTEER @ THE  
FARMER'S MARKET!**

On **Tuesdays** behind the Delaware Library and help sell items from 4-5:30PM or 5:30-7PM on **September 14 & 28** to benefit the Delaware Avenue fire victims. Please email [holyspiritalbany@nycap.rr.com](mailto:holyspiritalbany@nycap.rr.com) or call the church office at 518-463-6224 or to sign up for a shift!

## What is ... Confirmation? What does it mean?

Many of us have heard that question “What is this?” in confirmation class as Martin Luther raised it so much in writing about the Christian faith. So let’s start there: What really is confirmation?

During the summer I wrote a letter to confirmation-age youth and their families about that question. The *meaning* of confirmation was probably not on the front burner for the recipients and the letter really was not written well. But I felt such a great need to address the issue. To quote from the letter: “as we went through the pandemic, I am sure you wondered what would happen to confirmation, and when you then heard that both Kori, in her role as Chair of Christian Education, as well as I, your Pastor, decided not to add Zoom classes to an already zoomed-out school schedule, you probably felt some relief but also some concern: What would become of your confirmation?” After many conversations on the meaning and the future of confirmation and after much turmoil within, I would like to offer you the following.

First, I recommend that all our confirmation-age youth who feel ready, be confirmed on Reformation Sunday, October 31, and I invite you if you want to be confirmed, to let me know.

Now, a reader might think: “But what about classes? Did they do ‘em all?” In the past, confirmation came with classes. These classes would typically lead up to that singular event, confirmation, the culmination point of a program of study completed, much like a graduation from school.

For theological, spiritual, pastoral, and practical reasons I strongly encourage that we depart from that past practice. I propose that we reform confirmation by returning to its source and that we simply turn things around. I believe Martin Luther would welcome that change. But please note: this reformation (of confirmation) is not simply necessitated by CoVid even though the pause created by the pandemic has certainly helped me to focus on the root-issues that have troubled confirmation for quite some time.

Decades ago, confirmation was part of a church culture. That said, when asked to share memories of their confirmation days, faith teachings apparently did not figure prominently in people’s memories. At the time, long before social media, confirmation was also a traditionally used and culturally accepted social outlet that offered a religious come-of-age passage much like school did. Confirmation “classes” became associated with school-type learning and, by implication, with the idea of reaching a graduation point. While no one would talk about “graduating from church,” reality often seemed to confirm it (no pun intended). Even our green hymnal, the LBW, which sought to underscore God’s action in baptism, upheld the notion that confirmation followed a “completion of a program of study” (LBW p.198). Our current raspberry-colored hymnal, the ELW, steers away from such language and focuses on the various times when an “Affirmation of Baptism” may be particularly appropriate.

So, what if confirmation did not come at the end? What if it were not seen as an end point following the “completion” of “classes”? After all, Lutherans consider confirmation simply an affirmation of baptism. We do not call confirmation an affirmation of faith (!) and there is a difference. Neither is it affirmation of knowledge gained through classes. Why not? What would Martin Luther say about the distinction between an affirmation of faith and an affirmation of baptism?

Confirmation is a historically necessitated outgrowth of infant baptism. It is a rite without its own theology. Our grace-based theology and the practice of infant baptism play a crucial role here. Other denominations may embrace a theology that is more decision-based or work-based or reward-based. Indeed, many denominations would associate confirmation-type rituals more with human decisions, that is, with declarations made for God. Not so Martin Luther and our confessional heritage. We turn that around: We affirm baptism as God’s declaration for us. Grace comes first. Baptism is a means of God’s grace given freely. By God.

Lutherans celebrate baptism as God’s grace-based declaration of love for us before we can even say peeps. Our baptismal theology states makes it super clear that God’s grace comes first and is sheer gift. The divine “Yes” is complete and unconditional and active in our now-of-life on account of Jesus Christ. Baptism is therefore also not just a moment in time; it is not “done” and “over” at a particular point, namely when the ceremony is “done.” Rather, it marks the beginning of our baptismal journey and, in a way, it is only completed when we die.

During this life-long baptismal journey a regular and frequent practice of affirmations of our baptism is a good thing, no matter how old or new or young or aged-out one might feel in matters faith and spirit. In our liturgy confirmation is affirmation of baptism. That’s it. That’s all. It is not a faith-check or something to be checked off on a religious list of things to do.

Affirmations of Baptism are typically public and communal. The community affirms: We stand together with you. When your faith goes south or when questions overwhelm you, we affirm you in your baptism. Baptized you are. God’s beloved child you are. Instead of worrying or agonizing over whether you have enough faith (!) for an affirmation now, after completing a program, and making it on yourself by yourself, let us express the community’s trust in God, be church, and practice that affirmation of baptism by affirming one another in baptism. Yes, one another! That includes those who, like all baptized siblings, carry questions and doubts in their baptismal journey.

When God launches us in baptism into membership in Christ’s body, we join a communal, intergenerational baptismal journey always already underway. Our travelling together comes with all sorts of questions, including those that Luther addressed in his day: What is ... the Creed? ... The Lord’s Prayer? ... The 10 Commandments? ... The Sacraments? But neither his questions nor his answers are part of a specific “church culture language” to be learned. Nor do they exclude questions that knock on our door. The issue is not how Martin Luther would talk about social media in his church-culture language but how he would use social media.

Living out our baptism is a life-long process of faith (re-)formation with many challenges and faith-losses along the way. What a gift it is that we can learn to pursue topics and questions open-heartedly and without the shame of having missed an earlier catechism class! And what if those among us whose hearts may resonate on a given topic gathered to pursue it together and supported each other in it? Why not share in short term, topic-based learning in a multi-generational way to nourish relationships across the board?

Let us return to the source of confirmation, the sacrament of Holy Baptism and the gift it is and gives as a life-long journey. And let us do so as church, as community of faith standing together and affirming one another in the journey.

I envision this kind of learning parallel to the development of a youth group that truly empowers youth leadership and the pursuit of youth-specific concerns and interests. Our 3-year plan offers many opportunities in that regard, opportunities that can serve as a basis and launch pad for great engagement and creation.

All that said, please let me know if you feel ready for confirmation this October and wish to discuss it further. And — **confirmed or not confirmed or perhaps confirmed a long time ago**, — please let me know topics, questions, themes, and faith concerns that you would like to share and pursue in community now (or later). Thank you.

Pastor Rahel Hahn  
30 August 2021



## **LETTER FROM DEPARTING BISHOP JOHN S. MACHOLZ**

August 31, 2021

Siblings in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from the One who makes all things new, Jesus Christ our crucified, risen and ascended Lord.

There is a story that surfaces from time to time around the Macholz family. It indicates that when I was but a child and people asked me what I was going to be when I grew up I had a very specific response. My answer was always the same: "I'm going to be a preacher, a puncher or a painter." I do have a slight recollection of saying that once or twice but not to the extent that others might recall.

Evidently the puncher and painter part didn't work out, so I defaulted to the preacher aspect of the aspirations. I do know this, that since a very young age I always wanted to be a pastor. The phrase regarding my choices may have been a way to deflect the pressure I may have felt to follow in my dad's footsteps but clearly it didn't deflect it enough.

For the past forty-one years that hope has been lived out for me, for Lin and for our family. For the past seven years it has been my privilege to serve as Bishop of the Upstate New York Synod, a call I never truly pursued but was somehow convinced by the Spirit to be open to along the way. Ministry and this call have offered an amazing journey for me to experience the direction of that same Spirit and the grace of our God in Christ's death and resurrection which has sustained me.

As my days in this office come to a close, I want to simply say "Thank You!" Thank you for your support, patience, encouragement, correctives along the way, prayers offered and friendships extended. You and those and more have been incredibly amazing and life-giving for us.

I will miss this call and all of whom have been a part of it whether up close or from a distance. You have walked with our family through joys and sorrows and some of the darkest moments of our lives, sustaining and supporting us with words of encouragement and countless prayers offered. There are not words, that I am aware of, that can fully express my feelings and deep gratitude for your participation in this grand time of living as a community of beloved disciples of Christ so I will say simply THANK YOU for your partnership on the way. We are Church Together, none of us carry out this ministry alone but united, we can find our way forward.

As the days come to a close and I offer great thanksgivings for your accompaniment I ask your prayers for Bishop Lee M. Miller, II who will take up this mantle and run with it. Lee and I have spent some time over the past five or six weeks working together on transitional issues, answering questions, sharing concerns and working to hopefully give him solid footing on which to begin.

Please hold him, Heather and Griffin in your prayers in the coming years. Include him in the prayers of the people as you worship each week on Sunday mornings and at other times, add him to your daily prayer, extend a word of encouragement along the way. The Office of the Bishop is a challenging call at best and those who serve are appreciative of all the support that can be mustered. Offer it to him as he begins.

As I have said to Bishop Miller, I will be stepping away from ministry for about six months, creating a space for him to move in quickly and without the interruption of the former bishop. It is necessary in any transition, as you know, that the former pastor must decrease so that the incoming pastor can find her footing, develop his own style and create their own direction. I will be stepping away from most social media as well to help create that space.

With that in mind, until our paths cross somewhere down the road receive these words of benediction, words that have become dear to my heart over the years, words that call us to ministry and bless us on the way.

Go out into the world in peace.  
Have courage.  
Hold to what is good.  
Return no one evil for evil.  
Strengthen the faint-hearted,  
Support the weak,  
Help the suffering and  
Honor all people and love and serve the Lord rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.  
And the blessing of Almighty God, Father + Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and always. Amen.

In Christ's Peace,

The Rev. John S. Macholz  
Bishop, Upstate New York Synod

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## **LETTER FROM NEW BISHOP LEE MILLER II**

September 1, 2021

Dear Siblings in Christ,

"This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!" (Ps. 118:24)

These words from an ancient psalmist are how I've greeted the communities I've served every Lord's Day. "This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice!" It is a statement of faith and a proclamation, a witness to God's love active in the world.

Some days these words sound foreign; as when I have used them to greet an assembly gathered to commend a beloved one into God's eternal care; or on the day after 9/11, or in the midst of a pandemic.

But these words are no less true, even when the "earth should change, [and] the mountains shake in the heart of the sea" (Ps. 46:2).

God is with us. God has been with us all along. The Divine continues to walk with us, alongside us, feeding us (that's what all of these "bread" Sundays have been about after all) and leading us forward, together.

I am privileged, humbled, excited, and just a bit fearful, as we begin this call together as church and servant-bishop. I look forward to learning about God's love made present in the world from you. I look forward to growing with you, activated by the one who has created us in an image of loving-kindness, and set free to do the liberating work of the gospel.

I know that the pandemic has been exhausting in many and various ways. This can't be overstated. I believe as God's people, saved and transformed by the sacrificial love of Christ and his death on the cross, we are raised up to new life,

to be the church for such a time as this. I also believe, that as we come through the pandemic together, we do so with heightened needs for community and connections, for relationship and real purpose in being together. Our intentions have been focused and we are collaborating in new ways for the sake of our siblings. This is an incredible time to be the church!

I look forward to connecting with you this Fall as we begin our ministry together and renew our relationships throughout our synod, which is Christ' church, together. Join me at your local conference Fall Assembly where we'll have some time to meet and listen to one another. Join me as well in praying for all God's people, for our communities throughout the Upstate New York Synod, our ELCA, the Lutheran World Federation, and for all people in need everywhere.

Thank you for your partnership in the Gospel. Thanks be to God for the ways that love activates us in the world to do justice and share in the joy of Christ!

"This is the day that the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it!"

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Lee Miller II  
Bishop, Upstate New York Synod

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## **GOODIES & SEASONAL ITEMS NEEDED FOR FARMER'S MARKET**

Holy Spirit is raising funds for the families who lost everything in the Delaware Avenue fire on June 17, 2021 by selling sweet and savory foods\* and seasonal craft items at the Farmers Market on Tuesdays: **September 14 & 28**

Please individually wrap food donations and include a list of the ingredients. Drop donations off at Holy Spirit from 9 AM -1 PM on any of the above Tuesdays (or bring them to worship on the prior Sunday). You may also bring your donations to the Farmers Market at 4 PM and stay to shop!

*Monetary gifts are very welcome! Make checks payable to: **Delaware Avenue Fire Victims Fund.***

100% of donations benefit these families!