

Newsletter of the Orchard Park Presbyterian Church

July/August 2026 Issue

# The Grapevine



**JOIN US FOR SUMMER WORSHIP**

SUNDAYS, 9:30AM

JUNE 28 - SEPTEMBER 6

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*All Are Welcome*  
**AT CHRIST'S TABLE**

# July/August 2026

## Pastor Search Progress Report



As we reach the conclusion of the Rev. Dr. Tom Yorty's brief but valued service as OPPC's Temporary Pastor, we now prepare to enter what promises to be a formative and potentially exciting phase in the evolution of our Church's identity.

At our Congregational Meeting on Sunday, June 14, Pastor Yorty shared a communication from the Presbytery of WNY that offered a fresh and more positively focused assessment of the progress and prospects of our congregation's search for new Pastoral leadership - one that we should embrace as both complimentary and encouraging.

The Presbytery noted that due to current nationwide trends within our denomination and its clergy force, upwards of 25% of whom are presently moving toward retirement, the available pool of candidates for Intentional Interim Pastor positions such as OPPC has been seeking to fill has diminished dramatically.

The *good* news, however, came in the assessment the Presbytery's letter simultaneously shared that, based on the comparatively greater energy and sense of purpose that clearly infuse our congregation even as we stand at this crossroads in our spiritual journey, we have been urged to proceed at our earliest opportunity with forming a fully empowered Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) and move ahead with the process of seeking and considering prospects for a new called and installed leader for Orchard Park Presbyterian Church.

In that spirit, we would invite any member of OPPC who might be willing to serve on that future PNC to contact Christine Cotton in the church office at [christine@oppchurch.org](mailto:christine@oppchurch.org) to express their interest in being considered.

In the meantime, the Presbytery - fully honoring its commitment to remain steadfastly at our side through the completion of this transition - continues to work closely with us to ensure that we have appropriate leadership for our worship-related activities and an on-call Pastoral response should emergency situations arise while also providing administrative guidance for our staff.

And to additionally support our congregation both programmatically and personally, our Intentional Interim Pastor Search Committee is also continuing its efforts to secure OPPC access to additional resources with expertise in key areas such as Christian Education and Pastoral Care to further enhance our ability to meet our members' individual needs and facilitate preparations for this September's resumption of our full schedule of Church activities.

In all, you may be confident that it is most definitely a time to be hopeful about our Church's future and to have faith in the promise of the new possibilities that new beginnings bring.

Congratulations to the  
March-Nagowski Family  
on the baptism of  
**Mariana March Nagowski**  
on June 3, 2026.

### *Sympathy is extended to...*

The Long Family on the death of  
**Louise Long (Lou)** on June 4.

The March-Nagowski Family on the  
death of Catherine's mother,  
**Lorna March**, on June 18.

Wendy Wallace on the  
death of her father,  
**Sandy Wallace**, on June 22.



# In this Issue

## Worship & Congregational Life

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- Baptism of Mariana March Nagowski
- Welcome Back Sunday Announcement

## Mission

- Come Join Us at the Genesis Center
- South Davis Food Drive
- Sandwich Sunday
- Welcome Back Food Drive

## Community Life & Updates

- Recognition of Karen Szopinski of Mother's Day Out
- Tom Yorty's Last Service with OPPC
- Pray, Rake, Eat Recap
- Congratulations to our Seniors
- Taste of Orchard Park
- PJs and Pizza
- September Book Group, *The Correspondent*



# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATING SENIORS!



JACOB DIETZ      MIKE EUGENE      JULIA KNODEL      BELLA PALLANTE      ELLA YUSICK

As we celebrate this important milestone, we give thanks for the ways these young people have grown in faith, friendship, and service during their time at OPPC. From Sunday School and youth activities to Confirmation and worship, we have been blessed to watch them learn, lead, and grow. As they begin new adventures, may they carry with them the love of this faith community and the assurance that God goes with them wherever the road leads next.

PLEASE JOIN US IN CONGRATULATING THE CLASS OF 2026 AND KEEPING THEM IN YOUR PRAYERS.

# MISSION MATTERS

## South Davis Helps Stock the Box

A huge thank you to the students, families, and staff of **South Davis Elementary** for their generous food drive benefiting the Blessing Box pantry. Their efforts collected an incredible amount of food, helping to restock shelves and ensure that our pantry remains available to neighbors in need.

Church members **Deb Galloway, Barbara Ridge, and Claudia Rodems** helped sort, organize, and stock the donations, transforming a room full of grocery bags into shelves filled with pantry staples for the community.

Since its inception nearly a decade ago, the Blessing Box has provided food and household essentials to members of our community.



We are grateful for partners like South Davis who continue to support this important ministry through their generosity and compassion.



**Hunger Doesn't  
Stop in the Summer**  
Come Help Feed Our  
Community!

**Adult volunteers are needed for:**

- meal service at The Genesis Center
- 3rd Friday of each month
- 3:45–6:00 PM

**Summer  
Volunteer Dates**

July 17

August 21

**Interested in Helping?**

Contact Dolores Battle, chair of the Mission Ministry team at [battlede03@gmail.com](mailto:battlede03@gmail.com). For more information about The Genesis Center, visit [www.thegenesiscenter.us](http://www.thegenesiscenter.us)

*Sandwich Sunday*

Upcoming  
**SANDWICH SUNDAYS**  
are **JULY 19 & AUGUST 16**

Sandwich Sundays are the third Sunday of every month. Bring individually wrapped sandwich(s) to worship with you and the Mission Ministry Team Volunteers deliver them to St. Luke's Mission of Mercy for folks who are hungry. Thanks to Barb Olandt for staffing and Deb Galloway delivering the 75 sandwiches for June.

# In Grateful Appreciation of Tom Yorty's Service, Caring and Friendship

## A Letter from Pastor Tom Yorty

I am still basking in the glow of last Sunday (which seems, strangely, like ages ago, given the new world I entered when I drove away from 28 Clark St.) Nearly all the way home, memories of our time together and thoughts about your bright future coursed through my mind.

Mike Cid's coy ploy luring me to the lectern, feigning confusion with the order of the service, opened into a moment I will never forget as he invited elders and any to come forward and stand with me as he, Al Sager, Lynn Morgan and Doug Carpenter made such kind and generous remarks for our time together and presented me with wonderful gifts and mementos.

I have, by the way, already consulted with Seth, owner of Serious Cycles, re: bike trails in a local state forest. When I introduced myself as the guy in whose honor a \$300 balance was established by Orchard Park Presbyterian Church, he extended a warm welcome and said he looked forward to my first visit to the store — which will be today ;-).

As I mentioned to some of you, I feel that the opportunity for me to serve as your Temporary Pastor was a true "calling" as the work we did resulted in such positive energy and new direction after the difficult circumstances you faced and weathered as a church family. One of my conclusions, which I mentioned in the sermon last week but warrants mentioning again, is my observation that through that stormy time you forgot how special, attractive and gifted you are as a congregation — right now, full stop, hands down! I say that not to inflate your self-perception but to encourage you to think big, live boldly and use the abundance of gifts God has given you.

I will watch from our perch here on Kestrel Heights in Owl's Nest, The Pine-hills, eastern Massachusetts. Go for it friends! And thank you for so warmly welcoming me from day one and the bonds of love and friendship that grew from our shared journey as followers of Jesus.

In Christ's Service,

*Tom*



A Few Touching Images from Tom's Final Worship Service on Sunday, June 14th and a Personal Message from Him to Everyone in the OPPC Faith Community

## Worship Notes

This summer at OPPC invites us into a season of shared leadership, vibrant worship, and renewed connection. **From June 28 to September 6, we will gather for a single 9:30 a.m. worship service** each Sunday, giving us the gift of worshiping side by side as one church family.

On **July 5**, we will mark America's 250th birthday with a special service of hymns and scripture readings – a time to reflect on God's faithfulness across generations and to lift up prayers for peace, justice, and unity in our nation.

In the weeks that follow, our worship will be led by a wonderful mix of OPPC elders and guest pastors as we begin the search for our next installed pastor. Their willingness to step forward is a sign of the Spirit's steady presence in our midst and a reminder of the many gifts God has placed within this congregation. **May our worship together this summer strengthen us, encourage us, and prepare us for the new chapter ahead.**

**See you in church!**

Come celebrate with Family Promise of WNY at our



### Summer Homecoming Picnic

Saturday, July 25th  
12:00pm - 2:00pm  
75 Hickory Street  
Buffalo, NY 14204



FREE and fun for the whole family!!

Food Truck | Face Painting  
Bounce House | Ice Cream | Water Games!

### Directory Changes

For any directory changes, please contact Christine Cotton in the front office at [Christine@oppchurch.org](mailto:Christine@oppchurch.org) or 716-662-9348.



Bring your tools and come join the crew.

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Wilson.

### TUESDAYS WITH TOOLS


Tuesdays, 9am—Noon

### Presbyterian Women Bible Study

On **Saturday, August 29**, OPPC will be hosting the **Presbyterian Women of WNY** as they present an introduction to the bible study for 2026-2027. The topic of the study is:

**“United in Christ: Bound to Each Other”**

The meeting will be held in **The Meeting Place** from 10am to 12pm. Refreshments will be served. Reservations are appreciated and can be made by calling Sue Sager. All women are welcome.




### MISSION WORKSHOP

We would like to invite anyone who sews, knits, or crochets to join us on **Wednesdays from 10 am until noon in The Meeting Place**. We are a casual group - just come when you can!

We make items to donate to many local charities and would love to have you join us!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>June 28</b> 9:30a Worship</p>	<p><b>June 29</b></p>	<p><b>June 30</b> 9a TWT 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 1</b> 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 2</b> 11a Staff Meeting-CR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 3</b> 10a Yoga-IIR 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 4</b> <b>Independence Day</b></p>
<p><b>July 5</b> 9:30a Worship</p>	<p><b>July 6</b> <i>Independence Day Weekend—Office Closed</i></p>	<p><b>July 7</b> 9a TWT 1p Communications Committee-CR 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 8</b> 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 9</b> 11a Staff Meeting-CR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 10</b> 10a Yoga-IIR 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 11</b></p>
<p><b>July 12</b> 9:30a Worship with Communion</p>	<p><b>July 13</b></p>	<p><b>July 14</b> 9a TWT 6p Yoga-IIR 6:30p A&amp;F MT-CR 7p Worship MT-TMP</p>	<p><b>July 15</b> 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 16</b> 11a Staff Meeting-CR 7:30p Personnel Committee-CR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 17</b> 3:45p Genesis Center 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 18</b></p>
<p><b>July 19</b> <i>Sandwich Sunday</i> 9:30a Worship</p>	<p><b>July 20</b></p>	<p><b>July 21</b> 9a TWT 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 22</b> 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR 6p Taste of Orchard Park</p>	<p><b>July 23</b> 11a Staff Meeting-CR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 24</b> 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 25</b> Family Promise Picnic—Hickory Street 6p Parent’s Night Out PJs and Pizza</p>
<p><b>July 26</b> 9:30a Worship</p>	<p><b>July 27</b></p>	<p><b>July 28</b> 9a TWT 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 29</b> 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 30</b> 11a Staff Meeting-CR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR</p>	<p><b>July 31</b> 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR</p>	<p><b>August 1</b></p>

**Location Legend: S –Sanctuary; RR—Reception Room; CH—Choir Room; GR—Green Room  
CR—Conference Room; IIR—Irene Irving Room; FH—Fellowship Hall; UC—Undercroft;  
MG—Memorial Garden; PW—Presbyterian Women; TMP—The Meeting Place; EC—Ed Wing Classroom**

Our calendar sometimes has changes after the GV goes to print, stay up-to-date by viewing the complete [calendar](#) on the church website.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>August 2</u> 9:30a Worship	<u>August 3</u> 7p Co-Op Board-TMP	<u>August 4</u> 9a TWT 6p Yoga-IIR	<u>August 5</u> 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR	<u>August 6</u> 11a Staff Meeting-CR 6p Quaker Quilters BOD-RR 7p Quaker Quilters-RR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR	<u>August 7</u> 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR	<u>August 8</u>
<u>August 9</u> 9:30a Worship	<u>August 10</u> 7p MDO Board-MDO	<u>August 11</u> 9a TWT 6p Yoga-IIR 6:30p A&F MT-CR 7p MDO Board-MDO	<u>August 12</u> 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR	<u>August 13</u> 11a Staff Meeting-CR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR	<u>August 14</u> 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR	<u>August 15</u>
<u>August 16</u> <i>Sandwich Sunday</i> 9:30a Worship	<u>August 17</u> 6:30p Deacons-TMP	<u>August 18</u> 9a TWT 6p Yoga-IIR	<u>August 19</u> 9a Grapevine Deadline 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR	<u>August 20</u> 11a Staff Meeting-CR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR	<u>August 21</u> 3:45p Genesis Center 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR	<u>August 22</u>
<u>August 23</u> 9:30a Worship	<u>August 24</u> 7p Session-TMP	<u>August 25</u> 9a TWT 6p Yoga-IIR	<u>August 26</u> 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR	<u>August 27</u> 11a Staff Meeting-CR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR	<u>August 28</u> 10a Grapevine Mailing-CR 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR	<u>August 29</u> 10a Presbyterian Women's Bible Study-TMP
<u>August 30</u> 9:30a Worship	<u>August 31</u>	<u>September 1</u> 9a TWT 6p Yoga-IIR	<u>September 2</u> 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 10a Friendship Circle-IIR 6p Yoga-IIR	<u>September 3</u> 11a Staff Meeting-CR 6p Quaker Quilters BOD-RR 7p Quaker Quilters-RR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR	<u>September 4</u> 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR	<u>September 5</u>

Location Legend: S –Sanctuary; RR—Reception Room; CH—Choir Room; GR—Green Room  
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 MG—Memorial Garden; PW—Presbyterian Women; TMP—The Meeting Place; EC—Ed Wing Classroom



*Pray  
Rake  
Eat*

**We Gathered on May 31st for Pray-Rake-Eat Spring '26 and Everyone Really Worked Hard. So Then Why Does It Look Like They Were Having Lots of Fun? (Imagine What You've Missed.)**



**The Three Dustkateers**  
*All for one and one for all cleaned up!*



**Our Inside Operatives**

**It's Good Having Friends in High Places**  
*It takes highly-skilled people to stay on top of the technical challenges of keeping OPPC connected to the community and all of us with each other.*



**Couples Cleaning Therapy**  
*Teamwork really does make the dream work!*



**A Grounds "Keeper"**

**Making the P-R-E Cut Takes Mad Skills**  
*We exhaustively beat the proverbial bushes and found members willing to invest the time and talent necessary to keep OPPC's campus in tip-top shape.*



**Is There a Dr. in the House Kitchen?!**  
*A little TLC for our First Aid resources.*



**These Guys Were Benched... But in a Good Way**  
*It certainly is handy to have handy people handy.*



**Sitting on Top of the World**  
*That's where the "Littles" that our church family cherishes so dearly were, playing joyfully while the rest of us adultly worked equally joyfully.*



**OPPC's Outdoor Corps**

**The Right Tool (or Tools) for the Job**  
*A seasoned P-R-E pro will never go out into the field without being completely prepared for any challenge that might unexpectedly "crop up."*



**Food, Family and Fun for Everyone**  
*Post-worship fellowship fosters faithful friendships!*



**Feeding the Faithful**

**All Fired Up (Finally) and Ready to Roast**  
*As folks finished with the biannual cleanup of our church grounds, grill preparation was well under way to satisfy their hard-earned hunger.*



**All-Purpose MVP Bats Cleanup**  
*The Kitchen is always a P-R-E hot spot!*



**Release the Mulch Mobilization Man!**  
*Dedicated Dan-driven dirt delivery at your service.*



### Help Us Tell Our Story!

Our church is full of life, and we don't want to miss a single moment. Whether it's a smile in the Reception Room, a group volunteering, or a candid moment at a committee meeting – **we want to see what you see!**

**How to Share your photos and stories:** Scan the QR code to upload photos directly from your phone. Thank you for helping us share the light of our community!



The Church Office will be closed  
on **Monday, July 6**  
for Independence Day  
and **Monday, September 7**  
for Labor Day.

Questions, call Christine Cotton,  
Office Manager at 716-662-3948

The **Deadline for the September Grapevine** is  
Wednesday, August 19 at 9am. Please  
send any submissions to Xanda at  
[xanda@oppchurch.org](mailto:xanda@oppchurch.org).  
To receive the Grapevine  
by email, contact Xanda  
at the same email address.

*Congratulations  
and thank you to  
Karen Szopinski  
who retired from  
Mother's Day Out  
after 28 years!*



# Introducing OPPC's New PARENTS NIGHT OUT

**Saturday,  
July 25th  
6:00-9:00 p.m.**

**Pizza, Snacks & Beverages  
Plus Expanded Games & Crafts!**

**OPEN FREE  
to OPPC  
Kids Ages  
4 & Up!**

# PJs & PIZZA MOVIE Party

Your Kids Are Invited  
to Come in Their PJs  
With Their Blankets,  
Pillows, Slippers and  
Their Favorite Stuffed  
Pals for a Fun Evening

**WATCHING**



And While **We** Make Sure They're Having Tons of *Kid* Fun,  
*You* Get to Go Off and Have Some Well-Deserved  
*Grownup* Fun – Compliments of Your Friends on OPPC's  
Hospitality-Fellowship and Christian Ed Ministry Teams!  
(And We're Doing This Again in August, So Watch for Details!)

**Space Is Limited, So Please RSVP by 7/21  
By Contacting the OPPC Church Office at  
716-662-9348 or christine@oppchurch.org.**

## OPPC Book Group Presents

*The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans

Tuesday, September 15 @ 7pm in the Irene Irving Room

After our summer break, we will read one of the books so many folks are talking about. *The Correspondent* has won many awards and the movie version will star Jane Fonda, who purchased the rights. So what is it about?

Every morning, Sybil Van Antwerp sits at her writing desk to send letters. At age 73, she avoids emails, texts or phone calls. Unbeknownst to her family, her vision is declining, and as she drove home one night, she totaled her car. Worried she might be pressured to live in a retirement home, she keeps quiet and maintains her correspondence with friends, family, and authors whose books she enjoyed. Then there are the unsent letters. Who are they for?

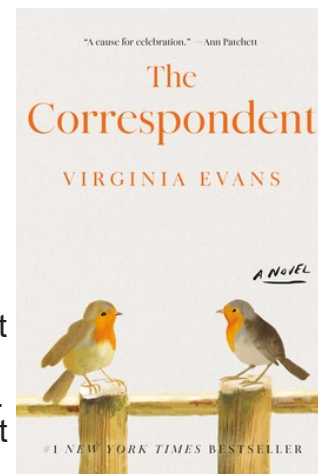
Mother, grandmother, wife, divorcee, and distinguished lawyer, Sybil has led a very full life. A kind neighbor brings her baked goods and she briefly takes in a friend's young son, helping him weather a rough patch. She seeks advice from her brother, her daughter, Fiona, and her lifelong friend Rosalie. She travels a bit. However, the transformative power of the written word forces her to examine her life and confront a painful past, finding forgiveness.

"Shows us it's never too late to teach an old dog new tricks if she's willing to learn from her past and move forward." Vanessa Cronin, editor. "This novel is a complete and utter joy." Ann Napolitano, author.

Please join us as we slow down with Sybil, reconnecting with the people she loves.

**October 20:** *The House on the Cerulean Sea* by T.J. Klune

Note: Many books left over from OPPC's rummage sale were donated to the 2026 American Association of University Women (AAUW) sale. Barb Olandt reported that this year's sale was very successful and resulted in \$140,000 in scholarships.



## Join us for Welcome Back Sunday

September 13, 8:30am & 10:30am

Welcome Back Breakfast @ 9:30am

Welcome Back Food Drive  
to support our Blessing Box!

Pick up a donation bag on Welcome Back Sunday  
and **return it by Sunday, September 27!**

Thank you for helping stock the Blessing Box and  
support neighbors in our community.

Peanut Butter & Jelly  
Canned tuna and chicken  
Canned fruit (No Canned Veggies)  
Fruit or Pudding cups  
Cereal  
Snack Bars  
Pasta  
Pasta sauce  
Hearty soups  
(NO Cream soups or Broths)



**Orchard Park Presbyterian Church**  
4369 South Buffalo Street  
Orchard Park, NY 14127-2611

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*A thriving faith  
community engaged in  
compassionate service.*



**Come visit us at the TASTE OF ORCHARD PARK!**

**July 22 • 5–9 PM**

**FREE  
PARKING**

**At OPPC!**

**Come visit our table!**

**Pick up a bottle of water, grab some OPPC swag, and say hello.  
We'd love to meet our neighbors and share that  
all are welcome at Christ's Table.**

**Interested in helping? Contact Wil Weiss.**