



The Grapevine



In celebration,
service,
worship,
&
community...

Here Together



A Message from the Pastor



Dear Friends,

As I consider that this will be my last *Grapevine* article, I am saddened and grateful at the same time for having had the opportunity to get to know you and to have carried the baton for a portion of a race that you will conclude with a laurel wreath upon the figurative head of this wonderful church family. I am sad to be saying goodbye and grateful that you are a treasured part of my pastoral ministry and personal story.

As I have said to more than a few committees and individuals, I am confident that the best is yet to come for you as a congregation. God never abandons us but walks with us, sometimes carries us in the journey. You've been through a lot in the past year, but the process of healing, recovery and restoration has clearly begun. The session, at its June 1 meeting, will receive the report of the ad hoc mission planning team, comprised of 8 elders including your Clerk of Session, Al Sager, and chairs of key committees identified in the 2024 Strategic Plan as representing four areas of priority for congregational growth. The purpose of the planning team was to refresh and renew the Strategic Plan to equip OPPC to be ready for Welcome Back Sunday, September 13. There is work to be done to continue educational programs and both mission and membership outreach. The plan spells out goals for the respective committees to consider and to develop with action steps and timelines.

Fall is a time when people in general, and families with young children in particular, often search for a faith community to join with. A very interesting report from a *New York Times* podcast that featured the religion editor of the *Times* explored a recent, 5-year running trend: the decline in organized religion of all faiths and on both sides of the political aisle has abated. It's too early to make predictions or call this a "revival" but people who formerly identified as non-religious or spiritual but not "religious" are no longer the fastest growing group of those surveyed about religious faith. More and more people are seeking a community—after Covid—and asking the question what does life, *my life*, mean.

It has long been documented that the main attraction to faith communities is the people—good sermons, pleasing music, relevant outreach, programs for children are important; but it is the people of particular faith communities who attract and keep new members. OPPC is all aces when it comes to "the people." You are warm, accepting of all, engaging, and genuine and you occupy a prized physical location and structure in the Village of Orchard Park. Therefore, my advice to you upon my brief sojourn here is to continue to "be you," to *do the work* of Christian fellowship and ministry and keep the faith. Good things, great things are in store my friends. It will be fun to watch from my "perch," in Owls Nest, The Pinehills, Plymouth, Massachusetts!

With deep gratitude and all good wishes,

Tom

Celebrating the baptism of
Evren James Kucuker
May 24, 2026

Congratulations to the
Kucuker & Trampert Family!

Sunday, May 3,
we were honored
to dedicate our
beautiful
Memorial Garden
in loving appreciation of
Alma Coleman Scully.

May all who come here seeking
fellowship, find welcome.

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Mission

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 Sandwich Sunday



Community Life & Updates

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 Dedication of the Memorial Garden
 Happy 106th Birthday, Jean Rupp!
 Broadway Night and Quarter Notes
 Friendship Circle Spring Luncheon
 Book Group: *Harlem Rhapsody*
 Taste of Orchard Park



Sympathy is extended to....

*Amy and Doug Carpenter and family on the loss of Amy's father, Jerry Lucachik.
 Meredith and Jim Wilson and family on the loss of Meredith's sister, Adrienne Vidler.*

Worship Notes

As we enter the month of June, our worship life at OPPC continues to be shaped by gratitude, transition, and hope for the season ahead. Together, we are reflecting on where we have been, celebrating the people who have guided and sustained our community, and discerning where God may be leading us next.

On Sunday, **June 14**, we will gather for a **single 10:30 a.m. service**, followed by our **annual congregational meeting**. This day also marks the **final Sunday with the Rev. Tom Yorty**. Over the past three months, Tom has offered steady leadership and a calming presence during a time of significant transition for OPPC, and we look forward to expressing our gratitude for his ministry among us. The search for our intentional interim pastor continues, and we remain hopeful and prayerful as that process unfolds.

As we move toward the summer months, may our worship together help us stay attentive to God's guiding Spirit — strengthening us, grounding us, and preparing us for the new chapter that lies ahead. Beginning in July and continuing through August, OPPC will move to a single summer worship service at 9:30am, offering us another opportunity to worship together as one community.

See you in church!



Intentional Interim Pastor Search Committee Progress Report

We are continuing to meet regularly in person as well as remotely via Zoom as we faithfully focus on identifying and evaluating clergy who could step forward to serve our congregation following the June 14 conclusion of Rev. Tom Yorty's assignment as our Temporary Pastor.

Understanding the importance of selecting someone who is well-suited to the challenge of providing the steady leadership OPPC will need going forward, the committee is taking great care to consider both the pastoral experience and gifts as well as the interpersonal skills of all prospects.

And in our diligence to optimally expand our access to the most promising candidates, we are actively collaborating with pastoral personnel networks and other areas' Presbyteries to identify clergy whose abilities, interest and availability are in line with OPPC's values, needs and expectations.

We've noted with great pleasure how well received Pastor Tom has been during his all-too-short time with us, and appreciate the positive, healing effect his presence has had on our congregation. In that spirit, please be assured that we remain committed to finding someone who will similarly bring those qualities of kindness, supportiveness and accessibility to the important job of helping our faith community successfully navigate the next phase of its spiritual journey.

Garden Committee



The Property Ministry Team is seeking members who would like to assist in the general planning and upkeep of our beautiful garden areas.

Please reach out to dan@oppchurch.org if interested.

Thank you, Jessica!

With gratitude, OPPC says thank you to Jessica Merry for her faithful service as Business Manager from January 2022 through May 2026.

Jess supported the life and ministry of our church in countless behind-the-scenes ways, and we are thankful for the care and dedication she brought to our community. We wish her every blessing in the next chapter ahead.

We are also pleased to welcome Maria as our new Business Manager and look forward to the gifts and experience she brings to the OPPC staff.

Welcome, Maria!



Maria Tulowitzki joined the OPPC staff in the spring of 2026. Prior to her current role, she was actively involved in the Mother's Day Out program, where she served as Treasurer and later as Board President.

With over 15 years of extensive accounting experience, Maria brings strong financial expertise to her position. As Business Manager, she oversees the church's day-to-day bookkeeping operations, maintains financial and business records, and collaborates closely with the Administration and Finance (A&F) team to manage all financial aspects of the church. Maria and her family live in Orchard Park.

To reach Maria, email her at businessadm@oppchurch.org



Sandwich Sundays are the third Sundays of every month. Bring an 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 delivering the 58 sandwiches for May. **Next SANDWICH SUNDAY is JUNE 21.**

MISSION MATTERS



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

June 26

July 17

August 21

Interested in Helping?

Contact Dolores Battle, chair of the Mission Ministry team before June 22. For more information about The Genesis Center, visit www.thegenesiscenter.us



PEOPLE!! Oh my goodness! What a glorious send off you gifted me with on Sunday, May 17!

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for showing up to say goodbye and celebrate all the amazing ways we have demonstrated God's love for all God's people. It truly does take a lot of folks to do ministry and over the last 31 years I have worked with 61 staff members; at least 100 outside organizations; and hundreds of volunteers from OPPC and beyond. Twenty-five week-long Workcamps, plus dozens of Souper Bowl Service Blitz's, MLK Jr. Days of Service and Beach Sweeps. Twenty-five Confirmation Classes and years worth of monthly meals served at Friends of Night and The Genesis Center.

Many thanks for all the cards, notes and letters you've sent, the flowers and gorgeous vase, the Duffield Camperships (YAY!!), beautiful service music, meaningful sermon and let's talk about those COOKIES - Bakers & Decorators alike - you exceeded my wildest dreams!!

I leave you with what became my mantra as I served alongside the Littles, Bigs and adults of all ages, entitled *Christ Has No Body* by Teresa of Avila, who was a 16th century Carmelite nun in Spain best known as a mystic, reformer, and writer who experienced divine visions.

*“Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet
with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands,
with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.”*

Much Love,



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>May 31 Pray, Rake, Eat</p> <p>9:30a Worship 10:30a Pray, Rake, Eat 3p Girl Scouts-UC</p>	<p>June 1</p> <p>7p Session-TMP</p>	<p>June 2</p> <p>9a TWT</p>	<p>June 3</p> <p>10a Staff Retreat 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 11a Friendship Circle Spring Luncheon-RR 6p Yoga-IIR 7p Choir Rehearsal-CH 7p Worship MT-CR</p>	<p>June 4</p> <p>2:15p Orchard Heights Service 6p Quaker Quilters BOD-RR 7p Quaker Quilters-RR 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR</p>	<p>June 5</p> <p>5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR</p>	<p>June 6</p>
<p>June 7</p> <p>8:30a Worship 10:30a Worship 3p Girl Scouts-UC 3:30p Miss Sarah Piano Recital-S</p>	<p>June 8</p> <p>6:15p Blessing Box Team Meeting-CR 7p Christian Ed MT-TMP 7p Mission MT-CR</p>	<p>June 9</p> <p>9a TWT 1p Communications Committee Meet-CR 6:30p A&F MT-CR 7p Membership MT-TMP</p>	<p>June 10</p> <p>10a Staff Meeting 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR 7p Choir Rehearsal-CH</p>	<p>June 11</p> <p>3p Fox Run Service 7p Acapella Group-S 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR</p>	<p>June 12</p> <p>10a Yoga-IIR 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR</p>	<p>June 13</p>
<p>June 14 Congregational Meeting</p> <p>10:30a Worship-S</p>	<p>June 15</p> <p>6:30p Deacons-TMP</p>	<p>June 16</p> <p>9a TWT 7p Acapella Group-S 7p Book Group-IIR</p>	<p>June 17</p> <p>10a Staff Meeting 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p>June 18</p> <p>6p Wilsons-TMP 7:30p AI-Anon-IIR</p>	<p>June 19 Juneteenth-Office Closed</p> <p>5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR</p>	<p>June 20</p>
<p>June 21 Sandwich Sunday</p> <p>8:30a Worship 10:30a Worship</p>	<p>June 22</p> <p>7p Session-TMP</p>	<p>June 23 Grapevine Deadline Election Polling Place-RR/TMP</p> <p>9a TWT</p>	<p>June 24</p> <p>10a Staff Meeting 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p>June 25</p> <p>7:30p AI-Anon-IIR</p>	<p>June 26</p> <p>10a Grapevine Mailing-CR 10a Yoga-IIR 3:30p Genesis Center 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR</p>	<p>June 27</p>
<p>June 28</p> <p>8:30a Worship 10:30a Worship</p>	<p>June 29</p>	<p>June 30</p> <p>9a TWT</p>	<p>July 1</p> <p>10a Staff Meeting 10a Mission Workshop-TMP 6p Yoga-IIR</p>	<p>July 2</p> <p>7:30p AI-Anon-IIR</p>	<p>July 3</p> <p>10a Yoga-IIR 5:30p Alcoholics Anonymous-IIR</p>	<p>July 4 Independence Day</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.



BROADWAY NIGHT

On Wednesday, May 20, our sanctuary was transformed into a Broadway theater thanks to a wonderful set designed and built by **Jim Wilson and the Tuesdays with Tools gang** as well as many talented musicians from our church choirs and neighboring churches.



The variety show was directed by **Barry and Heather Dietsch**. The 175 in attendance enjoyed a feel-good evening of excellent entertainment by our bell choir, our choir with guests, and several solo acts and ensembles. Many thanks to Steve Desmond for photographing and preserving this memorable evening.

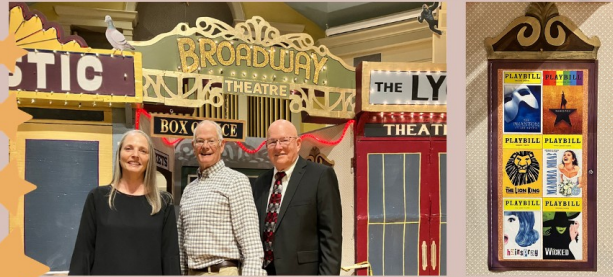
Over \$1,000 was raised to benefit Family Promise of Western New York.



Quarter Notes

As the choirs are wrapping up their spring season, Barry and Heather will be looking for solos and ensembles to enhance the Sunday services while the choirs break for the summer. The bell choir has finished their season with the Broadway Night performance and the Sanctuary choir will be singing through Father's Day, June 21, 2026. Singers and instrumentalists are encouraged to talk to Barry or Heather about offering their talents in summer worship beginning July 5. We look forward to a joyful summer season of music and worship.

Behind the Scenes of Broadway Night!



Broadway Night came to life thanks to the creative vision of Jim Wilson and the hard work of the Tuesdays with Tools crew, who built the set.

The Church Office will be closed on **Friday, June 19** for Juneteenth and **Monday, July 6** for Independence Day.

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

TUESDAYS WITH TOOLS

Tuesdays
9am—Noon

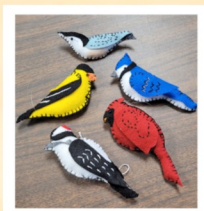
Bring your tools and come join the crew. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Wilson.



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!



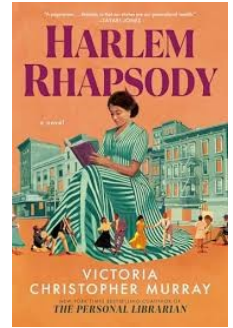
Happy
106th
Birthday,
Jean!



Mission Workshop members and friends recently celebrated **Jean Rupp's 106th birthday**. We give thanks for Jean and the joy she continues to bring each day.

OPPC Book Group Presents

Harlem Rhapsody by Victoria Christopher Murray
 Tuesday, June 16 @ 7pm in the Irene Irving Room



Victoria Christopher Murray, coauthor of a book group favorite *The Personal Librarian* with Marie Benedict as well as *The First Ladies*, brings another remarkable woman of history to life in *Harlem Rhapsody*.

When researching women during the Harlem Renaissance, Murray found there weren't many, but Jessie Redmon Fauset stood out. She was the young editor of *The Crisis*, a literary magazine of the NAACP in the 1920s. She mentored and championed young writers and poets such as Langston Hughes and Countee Cullen, helping shape the voices of a generation.

But Jessie's own story is just as compelling. From celebrating women's suffrage at an amendment party with her stepmother to navigating an on-again, off-again affair with W.E.B. DuBois, Fauset lived at the center of a transformative cultural moment while building an extraordinary career of her own.

Acclaimed, ambitious, brilliant, and largely overlooked by history, Jessie Redmon Fauset is the kind of woman historical fiction was made to rediscover. Please join us and bring friends!

July and August: no meetings

Tuesday, September 15: *The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans



Friendship Circle will meet for a spring luncheon on **Wednesday, June 3** at 11:00am in the Reception Room.

Please bring a dish to share. For more information, call Barbara Roberts or Sue Sager.

The Deadline for the July/August Grapevine is

Tuesday June 23, at 9am. Please send any submissions to Xanda at xanda@oppchurch.org.

If you would like to receive the Grapevine by email, please reach out to Xanda at the same email address.



July 22

OPPC will be joining other OP businesses for the **Taste of Orchard Park!**

We will be stepping out into our immediate community and showing them who we are!

Interested in volunteering?

Send an email to

Wil Weiss at wilweiss616@gmail.com

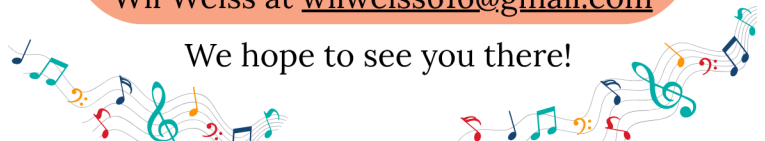
We hope to see you there!



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!





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.*



Annual Meeting

Join us following worship
as we gather for our
annual meeting after one
service at 10:30am.

June 14



Summer Worship

Beginning July 5,
worship moves to one
summer service
at 9:30am.

July 5



Taste of Orchard Park

Find OPPC at the
Taste of Orchard Park
this summer!

July 22