



The VINEYARD

Newsletter of The Lockport
United Church of Christ

*Open to God's Spirit,
we reach out in Love to the World
and invite All to journey with us*

An Open and Affirming Congregation



NOVEMBER 2024

*All Saints Remembrance Service
and Dedication of Our New Church*

Sunday, November 3

November 3rd will be a historic day in the life of Lockport UCC! Our morning worship will include a special service of dedication for our new church. We are expecting some special guests for the occasion, and hope that all of our members and friends will be there to help us celebrate!



Since this is All Saints Sunday, we will also be celebrating our Service of Remembrance. This annual service is a time to remember those members we have lost in the past year. We will also be remembering all those whose names have been submitted. All names will be read in worship, and you are invited to light a candle for the altar in their memory.

*Divine Light, Radiant Holy One, Light of all Lights,
we call upon all the saints to be with us.*

*We remember how each one brought a touch of your light
into our world.*

We recall how each one reflected the radiance of your goodness.

We recount their loving deeds and rejoice in their faithfulness.





A Day to Give Thanks

November 24

Thanksgiving Sunday

On November 24 our morning worship will focus on giving thanks to God for the abundant blessings in our lives. One way to do that, is through our

Food Pantry Collection

On That Sunday we will be collecting your donations of non-perishable food. These will be donated to a local food pantry in time to be a blessing for some other folks' Thanksgiving dinners.

Stewardship Sunday

We will also be dedicating our pledges for 2025 in worship that morning. This is another way to show your thanks to God, and share your blessings with others through the work of this church. (Please have your pledge cards returned on or before this Sunday.)

Congregational Meeting

Immediately following our worship service on November 24, we will remain in the sanctuary for a congregational meeting. The Church Council will present the 2025 budget for congregational approval.

The proposed 2025 budget will be sent out to our members in advance of the meeting. This will allow us to keep the meeting short. Please look over the budget before coming to the meeting, and be prepared to ask any questions you may have. Then we will take the vote.

Help Us Keep In Touch

E-mails are a great way for us to get in touch with members when there is a need – snow cancellations, a meeting change, etc. If we don't have yours, please take a moment to send an e-mail note to Cyndy, then we'll have yours on file when we need to be in touch quickly.



THE VINEYARD

A publication of The Lockport
United Church of Christ
80 Main St. - Suite H
Lockport, New York
(716) 433-2545

*The Vineyard is published
ten times a year to keep
members and friends
informed about
programs of the church
and news of its people.*

Submissions Welcome
**Deadline for Next Issue:
November 17, 2024**

HOW TO REACH US

Our Website

lockportucc.com

Church Office

80 Main St. - Suite H

716-433-2545

lockportunited@roadrunner.com

Mailing Address

PO Box 427

Lockport, NY 14095

Pastor

Hope Schwartz

Secretary/Treasurer

Cyndy Corrieri

**If you are Hospitalized or
in need of Pastoral Care**
please contact Pastor Hope
or the Church Office



LIKE US on facebook
~ and Please ~
SHARE our Posts

It will help us reach
a wider audience!

Be Sure We Get Your Mail

It has come to our attention that mail addressed to 80 Main St. may NOT get through to us. If you are sending something to the church through the mail, please be sure to use our post office box:

Lockport UCC

PO Box 427

Lockport, NY 14095



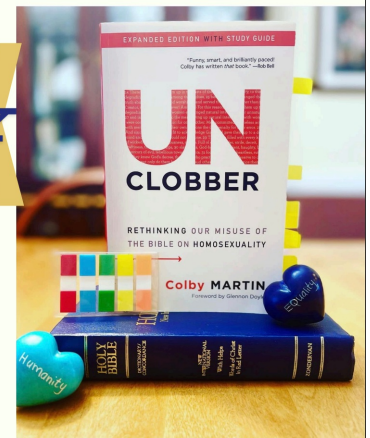
**C
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**BOOK
STUDY**

LOCKPORT UCC
PRESENTS A BOOK
STUDY OF
UNCLOBBER BY
COLBY MARTIN.



**EVERYONE
IS WELCOME**

📍 Lockport UCC,
80 Main St, Ste H in Lockport.

📅 Tuesdays, Nov 12 - Dec 17

🕒 6:30 PM

✉️ pastor.lockportucc@gmail.com

DATE

November 12

November 19

November 26

December 3

December 10

December 17

CHAPTERS

Intro, Prologue, Ch 1

Chapters 2 & 3

Chapters 4 & 5

Chapters 6 & 7

Chapters 8 & 9

Chapter 10 & Epilogue

*If you'd like to join this book study group,
or need more information, please speak to Pastor Hope*

SO
Proud
(OF)
You!

Church, I am so proud of you! I am finding myself overwhelmed by feelings of pride in all of you.

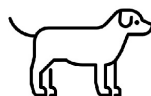
It is a nostalgic feeling for me, as I remember the time that I taught Toby (my perfect puppy) the trick “lay down” for the first time. I was so proud of him that I took a video on my phone to record him achieving this milestone. Gushing with praise and pride, I could not stop telling him what a good boy he was and how smart he was to learn how to do the trick!! You might not be surprised to read this, but Toby was proud of himself too. After he performed the trick for me – his tail started to wag!!

Church, you might be wondering why I am so proud of you?! Let me tell you why! I have been able to witness your excitement and energy in making our new church space a place to call home! From holding a church yard sale to helping pack boxes to unpacking boxes to cleaning up the former space to painting pews to putting up the cross to putting pulpits and desks together to sharing your insights and ideas and so on and so on! It brings me great joy to witness all of you take this step in your spiritual journey together as a church. Although I have had some influence on our new space, I have been more “hands-off” than “hands-on.” It is all of you who are doing the “hands-on” work. And for me to see the progress week after week, month after month, and eventually year after year, I am overwhelmed with feelings of pride in all of you.

Like Toby, are your metaphorical tails wagging in pride at all that you have done, all that you are doing, and all that you will do? If your metaphorical tails are not wagging in pride, you need to know that what you have done is worth taking pride in. Embarking upon a new season of ministry by working to sell our former home to finding our new home is something that should make you all proud of yourselves.

Not only am I proud of you – but so is God!! Together, we are following in the footsteps of our spiritual ancestors who had to follow God into the unknown too. But they made it to the Promised Land, and so have we!! Be proud of the journey. Be proud of what you have done. Be proud of yourselves. Let your metaphorical tails wag!!

*Abundant Blessings,
Pastor Hope*



Annual Stewardship Drive

Letters and pledge cards for our 2025 stewardship drive have gone out in the mail. As always, we ask our members and friends to consider lending their support the life and work of our church.

When your stewardship letter arrives, please think about what the church means for you, as well as the many ministries of our church, and how many lives are touched by our continuing presence in the community.

Once you've made your decision, please return your pledge card on or before November 24.





Tuesday Morning Group

Our Tuesday group continues to meet each week at 10:00 am. This is a casual lay-led group, and newcomers are always welcome. See Nancy Sy if you would like to join them or need more information.

Thursday Bible Study

Our Disciple group meets each Thursday at 5:30 until 7:00 pm. This is also a casual lay-led group who welcomes newcomers at any time. (We will not meet on Thanksgiving, November 28.) If you would like to join us, please let Cyndy know so that we can prepare study materials for you.



Our Church Cemetery

Plots in St. Peter's Cemetery are available for \$800 each. If you would like to purchase plots, just call Dan Holler and he will be happy to help you with that.

Getting Comfortable in Our New Church Home

We have been meeting in our new church building for about two months now, and it's starting to feel quite comfortable there. We have been getting things arranged, and making changes and additions as we find what works best for our needs. This process will take a little while, as we decide what to put on our blank walls, etc.

One example is the children's room. We realized that the small office we started with was not really adequate. So, we have moved the kids space to a larger area where they have more room for their furniture and toys, gets nice sunlight to make it brighter, and gives them room to move around and "be kids". We want everyone to feel welcome and comfortable – even our youngest attenders!

We are anxiously awaiting our new signs for the outside of the building, and our new sound system for the worship space. These should be installed soon!

As for the old church building, we are completely moved out, but have not yet closed on the sale. Everything seems to be in place to do so, except we are waiting for the final approval from the NY State Attorney General. That should be coming through soon, so we expect to be able to close before long.



It's been quite a journey to get to this point, but things are coming together now. We have already discovered that our new location puts us right in the heart of the community. We were able to participate in the Trick or Treat on Main Street event on October 25, which brought about 650+ children and their families to our front door. We have already had some visitors to our Sunday service – perhaps because our new location has generated some notice of our friendly little church?

At this point, there is much to be hopeful about, and our new building space looks as though it may suit us very well as we move into the future for Lockport UCC!



“Without a doubt”
*Reflection on
Ordination Vows*

One of the most memorable moments of my ordination service was the vows (promises) made to all of you and to God. In writing the vows myself, it seems important to reflect on the journey of ordination. The **first vow** made to all of you and to God expressed my conviction of my calling into ordained ministry:

Like **Paul the Apostle**, are you convinced without any doubt that God has called you to be an ordained minister of the church of Jesus Christ, and are you ready with the help of God to enter this ministry and to serve faithfully in it?

My response was one of deep conviction and certainty about my calling. My response of affirmation was: **without a doubt, I am**. There is no doubt in my mind or in my heart or in my soul that God has called me into ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ.

But I was not always as certain as I am about my calling into ministry. As a woman called into ministry, doubts filled my mind as I embarked upon the journey of discernment. Although I knew that there was nothing else that I wanted to do with my life than share all about how God can change our lives, there were many who claimed that a woman could not be called into ordained ministry.

The voices of opposition that were mounted against me caused an existential crisis in my life. I questioned why God would call me into ministry but make me a woman. Facing the biblical and theological arguments against women in ministry led me to know without a doubt that God does call women into ministry. Soon, I discovered that the bible passages used to argue against women in ministry were being misinterpreted and misused to stifle and suppress women!

Amidst the opposition, God opened my eyes to affirmation of my ministerial calling. Over and over again, God sent me persons who witnessed the fruit of my calling into ministry and offered affirmation within my discernment process. Y'all, the proof is in the fruit! This is why it is so important to discern our calling in ministry alongside many others (local churches, mentors, pastors, professors, and the committee on ministry). Endorsement from them throughout the journey empowered and emboldened me to live into the calling that was placed upon my life, long before I ever knew it was possible.

Because of all of this, it is without a doubt that I know God has called me into ordained ministry. Thanks be to God. Amen.

*Abundant Blessings,
Pastor Hope*



On October 27 we were very pleased to welcome
Mike & Christine Derby-Cuadrado
into the fellowship of Lockport UCC
as our newest members!

Mike & Christine, along with their son Manny,
have been part of our church family for
quite awhile already, but this makes it official.

We are so happy you are part of our congregation!



Looking Ahead, the season of Advent will
begin on **December 1**. Our morning
worship service will include the decorating
of our sanctuary tree, as we prepare for
the coming of Christmas. It's always a
special service, so plan to be with us that
Sunday, and for the other Sundays of
Advent!



Christmas Poinsettia Orders

Poinsettias will be available this year to order for memorials. If you would like one or more plants for a memorial, or just to help us cover the cost of decorating the sanctuary, please order by the end of November. There are order forms in the church narthex, or you may simply contact Cyndy by phone, email, or text.

The color choices are
Red, White, Pink

6" pot (5-6 flowers) - \$12.00 each
8" pot (12-15 flowers) - \$25.00 each

Memorials will be printed in the
Christmas Eve bulletin. After that
service, you may take your plant home.



RIP Medical Debt Relief

Please don't forget our ongoing
mission to help alleviate
medical debt for people who
are living with the burden of
crushing debt from medical
bills.

Your donation goes a long way.
This organization is able to buy
\$100 worth of debt for every
dollar donated!

Weekly Vine

In the Weekly Vine, we share
the full sermon from that week,
some highlights from our
service, and also any prayer
concerns or news that comes
up. **If we don't have your
e-mail, you will not receive it
unless you contact us.**

If you would like to receive the
Weekly Vine, just contact
Cyndy and provide your e-mail
address. If you are receiving it
and would rather not, let Cyndy
know that, too.

Reverend *A Title of Endorsement*

What's in a title? Pastor. Reverend. Teacher. Ordination granted me a new title: Reverend. To some people, it's just a title. Nothing more. But to me, it is more than a title. To become Rev. Hope Schwartz means that I have official endorsement by the United Church of Christ.



Endorsement comes only after a long-term vetting process where fitness for ministry and ministerial calling was discerned amongst myself, the local church, and the Committee on Ministry. It may seem insignificant, but to be endorsed by the denomination is an affirmation of my calling into ordained ministry.

You might be surprised to learn that not all churches or denominations support the ordination of women into ministry. It is true, and those churches suffer from the absence of women in ministry. Good news, you cannot go too far without encountering the many women pastors called into service in the UCC.

Even though there are many women in ministry around us, to be ordained requires a "call" to serve in a ministerial setting. This means that ordination comes after the "call" of a person into service. Being called into service as the pastor at Epiphany UCC and Lockport UCC reveals just how important of a role you all had in my special day. Without your voice and vote to call me as your pastor, I could not have been ordained. Of course, there could have been other churches that offered a call to me, but God invited you to be the churches to do it! For this, I am overflowing with gratitude!

Reverend is a new title for me. It is a special title, as it is truly a title of endorsement. But Pastor came first . . . and it is a title that binds us together in covenantal relationship. God has called us into a covenantal relationship through which we all commit to live into our faith together in service to God. Becoming Reverend Hope could not have happened without first becoming Pastor Hope. Ordination only happened because of all of you calling me to serve among you as your pastor.



With a heart overflowing with gratitude, I thank you for calling me to be your pastor. It means is the world to me.

*Abundant Blessings,
Pastor Hope*

Church Devotional Project

Don't forget to send in your devotional for our church devotional project. If you took a "name" for God, or if you still need to choose one, please send in your submission as soon as possible so we can assemble our booklet. (You can email your devotional to Cyndy)



General Fund

Financial Summary

September 23 thru October 20

Income from Pledges & Offerings	2,926.00
Other Income	.00
Total Income	2,926.00
Withdrawn From Investments	10,000.00
Total Expenses	11,056.95

If you have questions about our finances, please contact me. I am always happy to speak with you.

Cyndy Corrieri, Treasurer



Birthdays

13 Larry Henn
17 Jenna Le

Anniversaries

Nov. 22, 1997
Richard & Tammy Dodge

Happy Thanksgiving!

To Our Shut-in Members

Lucinda Hohle

Absolut Care - 4540 Lincoln Dr.
Gasport, NY 14067

Linda Layer - Kevin O'Connor

Mt. View Assisted Living
5465 Upper Mountain Rd.
Lockport, NY 14094

David Payne

Lockport Rehab & Health Care Center
909 Lincoln Avenue - Lockport, NY 14094



Community Dinners

Suspended Until January

We will not be holding our community dinners in November or December due to scheduling issues (Thanksgiving & Christmas). Also our number one cook, Edna, is unavailable while she recovers from a broken ankle. We are planning to resume with dinners as usual, on the 4th Wednesdays, in January.



Reflections on Autumn



Autumn Comes in All Its Fullness

by William L. Wallace

Autumn comes in all its fullness
Harvesting both land and hearts.

Autumn has its birth in Winter
In the stillness where life starts.

Every death brings hope of birthing,
Every birth enfolds life's end,
For the seasons of our living
Mirror patterns nature penned.

Autumn gives us time for choosing
Seeds which bear the richest fruits,
Fragile life which we can nurture
Into just or vain pursuits.

Every death brings hope of birthing,
Every birth enfolds life's end,
For the seasons of our living
Mirror patterns nature penned.

Buried in Autumnal endings
Lies the shoot that bursts the tomb,
For the letting go in Autumn
Sows the seed that births the bloom.

Every death brings hope of birthing,
Every birth enfolds life's end,
For the seasons of our living
Mirror patterns nature penned.

THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION

1. Like the falling of the leaves security in life lies in the process not in the fixed points.
2. Without harvest there can be no seed time. Without death there can be no new life, no new beginning.
3. The splendor of the letting go has within it the seeds of new fulfillment.
4. The falling of the leaves reminds us both of the impermanence of life and the constancy of the cycle.
5. There is a right time for holding and a right time for letting go.

FOCUS FOR ACTION

1. What aspect of my life should I let go of in order that my spirituality might gain more focus and have less clutter?
2. What steps could I take to increase the amount of love and gentleness in my mind?
3. What attitudes could I develop that would begin replacing negative energies with more positive energies?
4. *Meditation Mantra:*
On breathing in say
"I accept God's love"
On breathing out say
"I share God's love"

PRAYER:

O God of the harvest, may we be ever vigilant as to the nature of the seed we sow in our minds lest we reap a harvest of fear, disillusionment and bitterness. Amen.



The Church in Action

United Church of Christ Corner

ucc.org

UCC to offer Election Day Prayer Service and Vigil

On Election Day, Nov. 5, United Church of Christ leaders from across the nation will offer a nonpartisan Election Day Prayer Vigil and Convening. The event will be held from 4-6 p.m. ET via Zoom. You can register at www.ucc.org

The vigil – part of the UCC's Our Faith, Our Vote campaign – will highlight prayers collected from across the UCC, which will be woven together with music and prayers from UCC leaders.

As this historic campaign season concludes, this will be an inclusive space to share the feelings people carry on election day. We will gather as the Church to pray and remember that whatever the outcome of this election, our mission remains unchanged – to build a just world for all. Gather with others to pray for the nation, for our democracy, and for justice and peace to prevail.



The United Church of Christ offers a Daily Devotional that you can subscribe to and receive by email each day. These are short reflections and a prayer written by various writers, and tended by the Stillspeaking Writers' Group of the UCC.

If you are interested in subscribing, just go to www.ucc.org and click on the button to "Subscribe to Daily Devotional" on the home page.

Here's an example of a Daily Devotional, from October 28, written by Quinn G. Caldwell, Chaplain of the Protestant Cooperative Ministry at Cornell University:

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house. – 1 Peter 2:4-5 (NRSV)

Some days I think 90% of the work of the church is helping people right-size themselves in their own estimation.

You are a precious, unique, beloved child of God! Just like the rest of humanity.

God has your name written on the palm of their hand! Right next to everybody else's.

You are made of stardust! So is poop.

Both the former and the latter statements in each of these pairs are true and important, but some of us have heard way more of one than the other from the world, instead of the balanced diet we deserve.

Deciding which message to lean harder on for a given community, or moment, or sermon is the right work of church leaders. It's the work the author of 1 Peter is trying to do with his stones and buildings metaphor. He's had enough of Paul's "the body is made up of many fabulously, amazingly, wonderfully unique parts like you!" metaphor.

You, mined from the same quarry as the capstone of all creation, have a very special place in God's spiritual house: set in a wall 60 feet up where no one will ever see or distinguish you from your peers.

I am a living stone, firm and noble, exactly fulfilling the design of the great Architect of the Universe! Without me, the section of wall in that weird corner in the back next to the mop closet would be significantly weakened.

You truly are wonderful. Truly, so is everyone else.

Prayer

For my unique place at the table, right next to everyone else, thank you. Amen.