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PILGRIM NEWS



Addicted to MINISTRY

1 Corinthians 16:15

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PILGRIM HOLINESS CHURCH OF NEW YORK, INC.



Camp Meeting Through Fresh Eyes



“God will show up at Camp this summer. Not because we deserve it, but because He is God, and He is faithful.”

What does Camp Meeting mean to you?

To some, it means spiritual enrichment — a rare week set apart to hear from God. To others, it is the fellowship, the catching up with old friends, the laughter around the snack shop. And if we are being honest, for some, it is simply checking a box, fulfilling a requirement, enduring the heat while an evangelist drones on.

But then there are the fresh eyes.

I was at Victory Grove Campground with my grandchildren on June 1st. They wandered among the old cabins with wide eyes and said, “Pap Pap, this is really neat. I want to come to your camp.” Something in me stirred. What they saw was not obligation. They saw wonder.

And that is the difference, isn’t it?

Most of the time, we get out of Church — or Camp — exactly what we bring into it. Come with a checklist, leave empty. But come with an open heart, and even the droning-on preacher becomes a vessel. It is never really about the preacher. It is about your posture before God.

In *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, Mr. Beaver delivers this electrifying news to the children: “*Aslan is on the move.*” Every child heard the same words, yet each one felt something different. Peter felt a surge of courage. Susan noticed a sweet fragrance, as if spring had arrived. Lucy’s heart leapt with joy. But Edmund — already entertaining darkness in his heart — felt only dread.

The message had not changed. Only the hearts receiving it were different.

Dare I say it? Aslan — Christ — is on the move in our Conference. He will show up at Camp this summer. Not because we deserve it, but because He is God, and He is faithful. May we pray that saints are encouraged, that sinners find forgiveness, that believers are sanctified wholly. What a moment for God to do something great among us.

I leave you with words written by former Conference President Rev. John Peabody. May they become your prayer:

I believe God wants to do something special at Camp this year. He wants to bless us with all spiritual blessings! He wants someone to experience forgiveness for all their sins. He wants to save someone from all their sins! He wants to entirely sanctify someone from the sinful nature! Maybe someone will be called into Christian service! Let us pray and seek God for a mighty move of His Spirit in us and through us, and among us!

Come expecting. Come open. Why? Aslan — Christ — is on the move!

DR. JOHN A. WHITAKER was elected Conference President of the Pilgrim Holiness Church of New York, Inc., in the 102nd Annual Conference on July 11, 2023. He is also the editor of the *Pilgrim News*.



Conference President's Travel

March 2026: I attended the Outreach and Bus Convention and spoke in a breakout session. Visited these churches for their Annual Church Visits in March: Wilke-Barre, Kingston, and Schenectady. Did the Kingston Annual Meeting on March 7th. Held a Revival at Schenectady on March 10-15. Spoke during the revival at the Central Zone Youth Rally on March 13th. Chaired an in-person Council Meeting at Montrose. Chaired the Conference Ministerial Convention at Montrose, PA. We had a good convention.

April 2026: I attended several committee meetings. I flew to North Carolina for Sis. Patricia Case's funeral. My wife and I packed for our trip to Gatlinburg IHC. We represented the Conference at Gatlinburg IHC. I held

Archdale's Annual Meeting and Church Visit. I held these Annual Meetings: Linesville, Strattanville, Rocky Grove, and Venus. I chaired a two-day Planning Retreat. I attended the viewing and funeral of Sis. Wanda Knapp.

May 2026: My wife and I attended Sis. Nancy Shumway's Funeral. I participated in the Victory Grove Camp Work Week. I attended several committee meetings. I chaired a Zoom Council Meeting. I held these churches' annual meetings: Lake Placid, Brushton, Marcy, Canandaigua, Tunkhannock, Bloomingdale, Massena, Middleburg, Schenectady, Millville, Fostoria, and Glen Iron. We visited our church in Millville. We attended the Central Zone Youth Rally at Northville. I attended my last UBC Graduation as Academic Dean.

Looking Ahead...

JULY 2026

- 6:** Examining Board will meet @ 9 AM
Conference Committees will meet @ 2 PM
Annual Conference convenes @ 6 PM
(Please note the earlier start time due to a special reception at the conclusion of the service.)
- 7:** Annual Conference all day

13-19: Pine Ridge Camp

17-26: Adirondack Family Camp

AUGUST 2026

- 7:** Conference-wide Day of Prayer and Fasting

2026 Pilgrim Holiness Camps

Victory Grove Camp

June 25-July 5, 2026

Evangelists: Rev. David Fulton & Rev. Clair Sams

Song Evangelist: Aaron Lambeth Family

Youth Evangelist: Rev. Tim Forsee

Children Worker: Marlaina Sherman

Pine Ridge Camp

July 13-19, 2026

Evangelists: Rev. John Peabody & Rev. Harry Plank

Song Evangelist: Duane & Valerie Quesenberry

Children's Evangelists: Rev. Jonathan & Tami Fall

Adirondack Camp

July 17-26, 2026

Evangelists: Rev. Michael Mason & Rev. Wesley McDonald

Song Evangelist: Luther & Olivia Cole

Children's Workers: Sam & Jackie Nelson

Youth Workers: Dan & Vickie Bubb

Youth Camp

July 27-30, 2026

Evangelist: Rev. Paul Stetler

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3-YEAR THEME REVITALIZATION

Restoring God's Vision for our Church

REBUILDING THE WALLS

Realigning God's Vision for Our Church

Year Two

Conference Theme Framework

These four focus areas follow the natural flow of Nehemiah's wall-rebuilding project — from assessment through mobilization, construction, and protection — providing a biblical framework for systematic church renewal. Each area includes three subthemes and three to four concrete action points that a church can implement to help the theme become a reality. I will include only the four focus areas and each month's subtheme in this introduction. I will lay out the full theme at the Annual Conference. I will include the action points in the introduction of the Conference Theme at the Annual Conference. In each issue of the Pilgrim News, I will list these again to keep them in front of you.

Area 1: Surveying the Ruins: Assessing What Needs to Be Rebuilt

Taking inventory of broken systems, damaged relationships, and areas where the church has drifted from its foundation, following Nehemiah's example of walking the walls.

Area 2: Gathering the Workers: Mobilizing Every Member for the Task

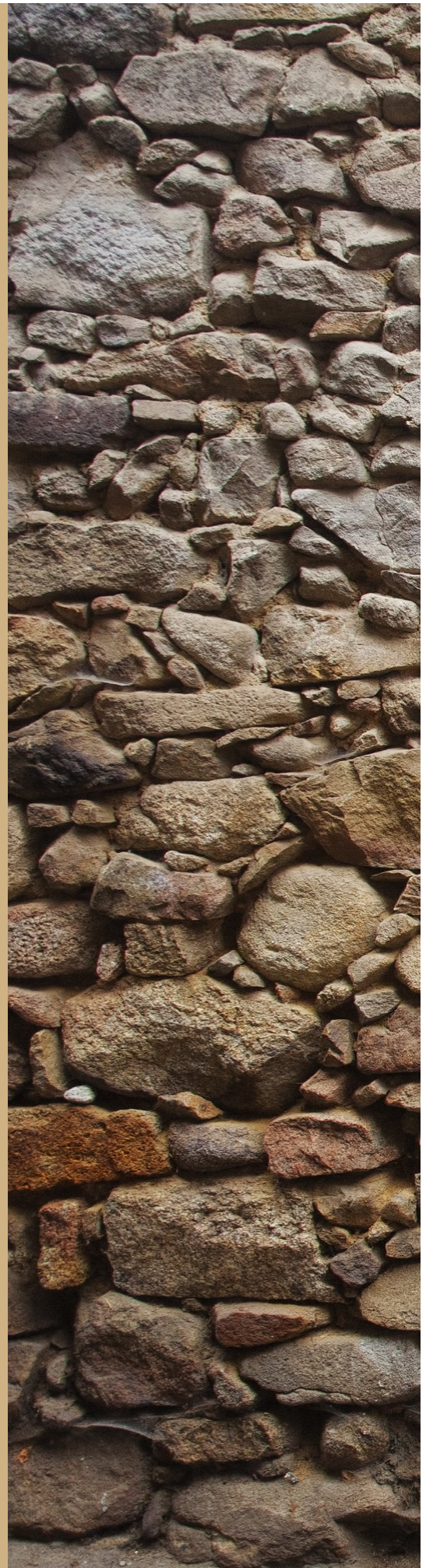
Calling all church members to participate in the rebuilding process, discover gifts and talents, and create teams committed to restoration and growth.

Area 3: Laying Strong Foundations: Establishing Biblical Principles and Practices

Reconstructing the church's core systems, worship, discipleship, and leadership structures on solid scriptural ground that will support future growth.

Area 4: Defending Against Opposition: Overcoming Obstacles and Resistance

Addressing internal and external challenges to revitalization, maintaining unity during change, and persevering through setbacks with faith and determination.



A Sunday School Curriculum Reviewed



**REV.
TREVOR MILLS**

*Sunday School
Promotional Secretary*

Holiness Bible Studies for Adult Christians is a quarterly publication produced by the Wesleyan Nazarene Church. The publication is written and edited by Rev. Brent Woodard, though other contributors sometimes contribute. Whereas many holiness Sunday School quarterlies rotate through the same subjects every seven years, Rev. Woodard mostly offers new material that has never been read before. In preparation for this review, three booklets were read from cover to cover, with short notes taken along the way.

Like most S.S. students' booklets in our movement, "Holiness Bible Studies" has a title for each lesson and a "Golden Text" at the top of the page, which is a central scripture verse on the lesson's main idea. If there is any critique, it is that the "Golden Text" does not always come from the primary scripture reading. For instance, if a scripture reading is Psalm 9, the "Golden Text" might be Nehemiah 8:10. To some, this may be viewed as a lack of cohesion, while others would probably not see this as an issue at all.

What stands out most about "Holiness Bible Studies" is that in every case, the lessons are built upon the foundation of the Bible. The publisher strikes a tremendous balance between topical and expository styles. In a nutshell, a topical teaching style addresses a single topic by drawing on scriptures from throughout the Bible. An expository style brings out a central theme by going verse by verse through a chapter or passage of scripture. As implied by the publication's name, "Holiness Bible Studies," regardless of the topic of each S.S. lesson, themes of holiness permeate most sessions. Students could, one estimates, be generally familiarized with sound theology in a year's worth of teaching from this curriculum.

Each booklet is approximately 70 to 80 pages long. One found that each lesson is long enough to give the teacher a firm start, but short enough to prompt further study readily. For comparison, some other S.S. quarterlies are so long and detailed that teachers fall into the trap of merely reading the lesson to their classes.

Throughout the lessons, scriptures are easily identified because the type is in italics. Furthermore, Rev. Woodard does an excellent job of saturating the lessons with additional scriptures to look up. Each topic includes an introduction that is usually two para-

graphs long. Next, the editor does an incredible job of putting together outlines and lists. As a sample, consider the outline about Daniel 5 below:

1. The King's Banquet
2. God's Handwriting
3. Daniel Summoned
4. Daniel's Response
 - a. Responds as a true man of God
 - b. Reveals the king's problem
 - c. Recounts the plan of God
 - d. Receives the Lord's Blessing because he was...
 - i. Constant in crisis and in peace
 - ii. Consistent in prayer
 - iii. Content in all situations
 - iv. Careful in his behavior

The editor uses commentaries such as "Barnes," "Clarke," "Pulpit," and others, but "Barnes" is the most used. Some of the lessons include a short story to illustrate a point. The author is also well informed in Biblical and secular history, Biblical backgrounds and contexts, archeology, and church history. Each quarterly includes daily Bible readings that correspond with the next S.S. lesson's theme, which can be adequately used for one's daily family devotions. Each lesson concludes with one or two paragraphs that revisit the "Golden Text."

In summary, *Holiness Bible Studies* is comparable to *The Way, Truth, and Life* publication by Herald and Banner Press, with a few exceptions. In "Holiness Bible Studies," there seems to be slightly more emphasis on conservative holiness teachings and fewer repeated topics over the years. Unlike "The Way, Truth, and Life," there is no teacher's edition. (Everyone reads the same booklet.) However, one of the Wesleyan Nazarene Church's preachers sends out weekly emails with discussion questions for the adult lessons. The Wesleyan Nazarene Church is also working on a future children's curriculum. Each booklet is sold for \$3.50. If readers are interested in obtaining more information, Editor Brent Woodard can be reached at **605-388-0742** or **chaplain.woodard@gmail.com**.



CHURCH EXTENSION

Easter Offering

UPDATE

The Goal
\$35,000

Amount Raised
a little over
\$20,000

Thank you to all who gave!

GOOD NEWS

ARCHDALE

Line upon line, precept upon precept, week after week — the Archdale church continues to faithfully sow the seed and trust God with the harvest. And what a harvest He is bringing forth!

At the end of April, 12 of our young people had the exciting opportunity to attend Penn View Preview Days. We are praying and believing that God will call some of them into Bible college and set their feet on a path of lifelong ministry.

And then came a moment that made every faithful week worthwhile — Eva, one of our own young people, felt God tugging on her heart after Discipleship class and chose to pray and get saved. She was baptized on May 30. What a celebration!

John Ward, who pours himself tirelessly into our outreach work, has been quietly changing lives in ways that are simply beautiful to witness. One of the Muslim families John has walked alongside chose to name their child after him — and little John just celebrated his very first birthday! To make it even sweeter, Uwase, one of our young people who is learning violin, honored Bro. Ward by playing Happy Birthday for him — her very first public performance of this.

Trevor and Danae continue to be a steady blessing to the outreach as well, even celebrating a birthday together right in the church van — because ministry is life, and life is ministry!

God is doing beautiful things in Archdale. We can't wait to see what comes next.

BLOOMINGDALE

Our church has seen both loss and beauty the past few months.

We lost Debbie Rawdon who faithfully attended our church since coming to Christ. She loved God and her family above all else. She gave generously to her local church and missions, and had a kind, caring heart — always ready to listen, help those in need, and offer a warm cup of coffee or tea. Debbie was a gracious reflection of Christ in her home and workplace, standing firm in her faith even when faced with opposition. She carried a constant burden for unsaved loved ones and prayed faithfully for family and friends. Through every hardship and time of pain, she testified to the goodness of the Lord.



In November 2025, Debbie was diagnosed with a fast-growing brain tumor. She entered her eternal reward on February 11, 2026, leaving behind her beloved family.

A wonderful highlight at our church was the wedding of Brittany Shumway and Dr. Joshua Johnson on May 23, 2026. It was a beautiful ceremony. Following a trip to Maine, the couple will be making their home in Vermont, where Brittany works in a crime lab with her degree in Forensic Science, and Josh will complete a Pharmacy Residency at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire.

We have a community member who has joined us for Easter and Christmas — she recently had hip surgery, and we stay in regular contact with her. She is always open and receptive to prayer.

On Easter Sunday we also welcomed a family visiting their son at college, and the following week three college students attended before returning home at semester's end.

While our numbers have not grown, I believe we are witnessing a real spiritual growth among us — and I trust God will provide the increase in His time.

BRUSHTON:

The congregation at Brushton, New York has been walking through a season of transition as they continue to seek the Lord's leading for a new pastor. But in recent weeks, God has brought some sweet encouragement through the gift of visiting family.

Several relatives of church members have made their way through the doors, filling the seats with warmth and familiar faces. Among them was Allen Wittmer and his family, who came to share with the congregation. Allen is the nephew of Lana Blow, and his visit was a special blessing to all who gathered.

Perhaps one of the most delightful surprises came when a visiting relative, Jameil sat down at the piano and began to play. For a congregation that has not had a regular pianist, the music was a true treat — a reminder that God knows just what His people need, right when they need it.

Though the search for a pastor continues, the church in Brushton is not without hope. These recent visits have been a gentle reminder that they are surrounded by a larger family, and that the Lord is faithful to encourage His people along the way.



FROM OUR CHURCH FAMILY

CANANDIGUA

On Easter Sunday, a very special dedication took place. Pastor Lambeth had the privilege of dedicating little Sylvia Susanna Rose Blowers to God — and the significance of that moment ran far deeper than one sweet baby girl.

Sylvia is the third child of Levi and Haylee Blowers, but her story in this church didn't begin with her birth. It didn't even begin with her parents. Sylvia Susanna Rose represents the fourth generation of the Blowers family to call this church home — a living testament to a family that has passed down their faith, year after year, decade after decade, from grandparent to parent to child. God bless the Blowers family, and may little Sylvia continue to pass on her rich heritage.



GRAND GORGE

Grand Gorge was glad to open its doors and host the Central Zone Youth Rally. Eric Samborski brought the message, and Matt and Norman Waterman sang a special that blessed everyone present. It was good to see the church nearly full, with six congregations represented — including the folks from Wilkes-Barre. After the service, everyone headed over to the Civic Center for food and fellowship.



GREEN GROVE

Green Grove had plenty of reasons to rejoice this spring, starting with a very special birthday! On March 22nd, the church gathered to celebrate the 60th birthday of Pastor Jonathon Fall with a carry-in dinner following the morning service. And thanks to the creativity and determination of Sis. Fall, the weekend was full of surprises — which, if you know Bro. Fall, makes it all the more impressive, since surprising him is no small feat!

Daughters Brianna and Brittany secretly made their way in for the



weekend with their families, and Pastor Fall had absolutely no idea they were coming. To top it all off, his dear friend Charles Whitney showed up on Sunday. It was a weekend full of love, laughter, and the kind of joy that only comes from being surrounded by people who truly care. Pastor Fall, you are deeply loved and you absolutely deserve it!

In other wonderful news, the Fall family is also celebrating the arrival of a precious new granddaughter! Sophia Brooke Wallace made her grand entrance into the world, weighing 7 lbs. and 18 inches long. Her proud parents are Jason and Bethany Wallace of Marion City, Pennsylvania. Congratulations to the entire Fall family!



KINGSTON

Greetings from Kingston, Ontario! It has been a wonderful and busy season for our congregation. In April, we had the joy of hosting the IHC, with Brother Jim Plank, Brother and Sister Tim Cole, and Chester Water serving as workers. New faces were present in every service, and the meetings were a true blessing — we only wished they could have gone on longer!

We celebrated with Mr. Mike for the grand occasion of his 77th birthday. It is such a joy to have him attend our church. He is Pastor Andrew's former coworker and the church bus driver.

On May 8th, we celebrated the mothers in our church with a lovely Mother's Day dinner at the parsonage.

Thirty-one ladies gathered for the occasion, including two brand new guests. Each lady was invited to share a cherished memory of her own mother, and the time of sharing was warmly received by all. Every guest was honored with a rose to mark the special evening.

Then on Mother's Day Sunday, we were thrilled to have 43 downstairs for junior church — what an exciting sign of growth and life in our congregation!

We are grateful for God's goodness and look forward to what He has in store.



GLEN IRON

The junior church at Glenn Iron has been a busy and vibrant place this spring! In February, dedicated junior church workers Alana and Marlaina went above and beyond by organizing two separate party days, thoughtfully tailored to different age groups. The kids enjoyed watching the Sight & Sound Esther DVD and celebrated together over pizza — a fun, faith-filled time that the children won't soon forget.

March brought encouragement as a couple from the community visited on a Sunday morning — a wonderful reminder that God is drawing new hearts toward Glenn Iron. That spirit continued into Easter Sunday, when a visiting child joined junior church and a visiting family worshipped in the adult service — fresh faces and answered prayers all in one day.

LAKE PLACID

Spring has brought a season of beautiful growth to Lake Placid Church! Our average Sunday morning attendance for April reached 55, with a high of 59 on Easter Sunday — and on any given Sunday, we are thrilled to have 25-26 in attendance under the age of 25. God is bringing the next generation through our doors!

We are overjoyed to welcome a precious new addition to our church family. Lanie Elina-Joy Marshall was born on March 29th to proud parents Noah and Michaela Marshall. Proud grandparents are Jon and Rebekah Blow and Michael and Hannah Marshall, and proud great-grandmothers are Sharon Marshall and Eleanor Withe. Lanie represents the fourth generation of Marshalls in our congregation — what a wonderful legacy of faith! On May 31st, Noah and Michaela joyfully dedicated little Lanie to the Lord. We had 72 in attendance. All of Lanie's grandparents, and all but one great-grandparent were in attendance for this blessed dedication. As our pastor noted, the occasional cry of a newborn is truly one of the most beautiful sounds in the church.

Mother's Day was equally encouraging, with 25 moms in attendance — including three visitors, two of whom had never attended before. The men blessed everyone with a special song in honor of the day. Each year our church takes time to honor one very special mom with flowers, a gift card, and tributes from her family. This year that honor was lovingly given to Linda Symonds — congratulations, Linda, and thank you for all you mean to this church family!

Perhaps one of the most exciting moments of the season came when a young man named Matt walked through our doors for the very first time — having never attended church anywhere in his life. Matt has since continued attending, and he is clearly hungry for the Lord. He has already taken one of the Bibles we keep on hand for those who need one. We are believing great things for Matt!

We give God all the glory for how He is working and for those He



is using to build His church. Lake Placid, we are truly blessed people!

LINESVILLE

Cathy Slozat and Pam Gehman have been a wonderful blessing, faithfully alternating in leading Sunday Worship devotionals and keeping the spirit of worship alive week after week. Their dedication is a true gift to the congregation.

We were also encouraged by a visitor who has come not once, but twice — and we are believing and praying that each visit plants a seed that continues to grow!

We are additionally grateful for the gracious ministry of Rev. and Mrs. Michael Hoskins, who have so kindly stepped in to lead services when they are able. Their willingness to serve this congregation is deeply appreciated and has been a real blessing.

God sees every faithful heart in Linesville, and He is not finished here. Small and steady is still moving forward — and we trust Him for each step ahead. Our cross in the church is still shining as a beacon of hope to our community.



LISBON

Through God's help we are getting things done in Lisbon! We are starting on a renovation project in the church basement which will give us more Sunday school room, and we just are in the process of buying a home that we can fix up for a parsonage. Both of these things will help and the Lord's work here in Lisbon. On April 8th we had a baptismal service in the morning service. Four people were baptized. Some of our children have been helping and praying for the offering. That has been a blessing to see children learning how to pray! Congratulations to Joyce Chapman who won a first place medal in Special Olympics track! God is good all the time!



MARCY

The Marcy Church is alive and well, with our congregation faithful in both attendance and participation.

In March, Dennis Hoover spoke on behalf of the Willow Network, a pro-life crisis pregnancy organization. The breadth of services they offer to both women and men is truly amazing.

Bryan and Wendy were grateful to attend the Ministerial Convention — what a wonderful time! Thank you for the opportunity.

Palm Sunday was a special day! Bro. and Sis. Brewer were visiting Valerie, and Bro. Brewer both preached and served Communion. We enjoyed a fellowship dinner afterward and cherished the time together. Easter Sunday followed with a meaningful service of readings and music celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus.

May 4th brought our Annual Meeting with President Whitaker, whose devotional was inspiring as always. After handling business, we enjoyed fellowship, snacks, Strawberry Shortcake, and Ice Cream!

On Mother's Day, we held a heartfelt service with members sharing what their mother meant to them, or what being a mother has meant. Bryan reflected on the character of Moses' mother, and Va-



lerie put together sweet gift bags for the mothers present.

May 17th, Pastor Carl Chapman — a retired Wesleyan minister who worships with us alongside his wife Roberta — delivered a wonderful message about the rest Jesus gives. We followed it with a fellowship meal. We love the Chapmans!

God continues to help and bless our church, and we are so thankful!

MIDDLEBURGH

On April 25, the Middleburgh church hosted a Spring Tea. Twenty-two women and girls from 5 churches gathered for this time of food and fellowship. We were delighted to have Megan Samborski with us to share her homemade products from her business, Five Oaks Herbals. She gave a short presentation about her philosophy of ministry, that all-natural products showcase the wonders of God's creation and His plan for us to take care of our bodies and each other. Everyone in attendance had a lovely time and expressed enthusiasm to attend more teas whenever they are scheduled. The church plans to host another one in the coming months.



MILLVILLE

Sometimes in ministry, you wonder if you are making a difference. You pour years of your life into a congregation, love the people, sow seeds faithfully, and sometimes lack seeing visible results. The silence that follows can make a person question whether any of it took root.

God has been answering that question beautifully at Millville.

Rev. Gary Mills and his wife pastored this little church for 40 faithful years. They loved their people, invested in their young people, and trusted God with the results. Due to Bro. Mills' health, they had to retire. But God never forgot a single seed that was sown! Recently, word has reached us that five souls — young people who once sat in the pews of this very church during the Mills years — have found Christ. Five lives changed. Five names written in Heaven.



At Hobe Sound Camp Meeting this past February, President Whitaker met one of them — a man named Daniel. Daniel had been gloriously saved at the Fort Myers Rescue Mission. When he and Sis. Mills were able to connect by phone, Daniel recalled the seeds that had been planted in his heart so many years ago in this church. With deep gratitude, he told her that he wanted to be just like Rev. Gary Mills. What a testimony. What a God we serve!

Here at Millville, we have been deeply reminded that some plant, some water, and God gives the increase — in His time, not ours. The harvest doesn't always come quickly, but it comes.

We've had other reasons to celebrate this spring as well. On May 6th, we had the privilege of hosting the IHC service. Rob Dicken brought a wonderful message and the Dan Hardy Family blessed us with special music. We had 18 in attendance and everyone went home encouraged. We also welcomed President and Sis. Whitaker for a Sunday visit and annual meeting, topped off with a delicious pitch-in dinner and sweet fellowship.

God is faithful. Keep sowing. The harvest is coming.

NORTHVILLE

We recently concluded a revival with Bro. Jonathan Fall, and it was a blessed time. The presence of the Lord was real in every service. Hearts were stirred, and some made their way to the altar to seek God. Our attendance was up throughout the week, and Sunday morning we were thrilled to have 43 in the building — including several visitors who joined us.

The young people got in on the fun too. On Thursday and Saturday evenings during revival week, our kids gathered with a number of youth for volleyball and hotdogs. There's something special about faith and fellowship happening together, and it was a joy to see the next generation connecting.

Beyond revival week, the Lord has continued to open doors. New people and families have been finding their way through our



doors in recent weeks, and we welcome each one with open arms. God is at work, and we don't take that for granted.

On the lighter

side, our ladies enjoyed one of their favorite traditions — a ‘Ladies Day Out!’ This time we gathered at Peaceful Valley Maple Farms, about 12 of us around the table, enjoying good food and even better company.

The Lord is helping at Northville. We press on with thankful hearts.

ROCKWOOD:

The Rockwood church is alive with joy, growth, and the unmistakable move of God — and we have so much to share! Easter brought a truly memorable celebration as 21 children and 12 young people participated with skits, poems, and songs to honor the risen Christ. Families packed the room, and with 90 people in attendance, the joy was simply overflowing.

But perhaps the most remarkable news from Rockwood is the salvation of one of our newest ladies! She came, she sought, and she found the Lord — and God is doing a beautiful work in her life. She shared with us the many changes God has made in her heart and the deep peace she now carries. To top it off, she put her testimony into poetry, and it moved us all. Her poem, “I Met the Lord,” says it better than we ever could:

*I looked in the mirror
I didn't recognize me*

*Who I became isn't
Who I wanted to be*

*What a lonely heart
Where and when did all the pain start*

*I didn't understand the ache in my soul
What could I do to fill this hole?*

*One day I decided to meet the Lord
I could no longer run, and I couldn't hide*

*Oh Lord I need you so
I need you by my side*

*I started feeling a light-heartedness
No more confusion and Haze*

*He transformed my sharpest sorrows
Into beautiful tomorrows*

*Thank you Lord for loving me
Without you, what would I be?*

What a testimony!

The youth of Rockwood have also been making the most of this season — fishing trips, visits to the Rockwood Reservoir, a hike through the State Forest, and a work day at Victory Grove Camp have kept them busy, bonded, and rooted in community. They also



held a youth service where three young men stepped up to preach, while others quoted Scripture and shared special music. The future of this church is bright!

We are also thrilled to welcome Mahala home from college for the summer — we missed you!

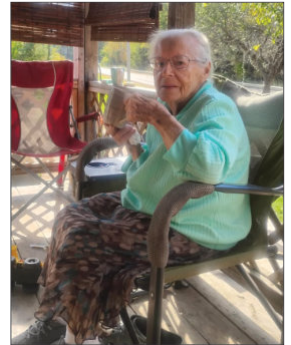
And to close on a high note: on May 27th, three new members were officially received into the Rockwood church family. What a joy to see God adding to our number. He is faithful, and Rockwood is growing — in every sense of the word.

RUSSELL:

A Faithful Life Well Lived

Belva P. Church (1934-2026)

It began one afternoon when Brother and Sister Emmerson Walker invited Belva to a revival meeting at Russell Pilgrim Holiness Church. That night, God came down and she was saved. When she walked through her front door afterward, she didn't need to say a word. Her husband took one look at her and said, “You got saved tonight.”



From that moment, her faith became the cornerstone of everything. She put on skirts to go to work, and her coworkers noticed the change. She witnessed faithfully to her family. She led her husband to the Lord moments just before his passing.

For years she served as a faithful trustee, and she welcomed every visitor to Russell Pilgrim Holiness Church with genuine warmth. Her Bible — given to her shortly after her salvation — was the same one she carried through the doors decade after decade. The binding loose, the pages creased and written on. Every morning she would read and pray, then head to a neighbor's for coffee, banana bread, and a word about her Savior.

I (Pastor Colton) knew her as a teenager, and for sixteen years as her pastor. Through all of it, her faith never wavered — rock solid and steady.

Now, after 92 faithful years, God called her home — to friends, to loved ones, and to the Savior she had served so well. And we can be certain He said to her, “Well done, my faithful child.”

SCHENECTADY

This has been a time of blessing as well as a time of saying goodbye to precious people connected to our congregation. In March, we were privileged to host a wonderful revival with some very special guests, our Conference President and wife. The presence of Jesus was felt among us in a meaningful way, and we are so grateful for that time of renewal and refreshing.

To close out revival, we gathered together on the final Sunday for a beautiful meal of homemade lasagna lovingly prepared by Chuck Asbell, along with wonderful side dishes and delicious desserts. What a joy it is to share life together around the table!

In April, we were thrilled to welcome Jerry from our community who joined us for Easter Sunday. We pray his visit was a blessing and look forward to seeing him again!

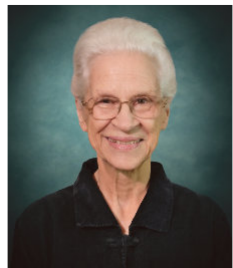
We want to share the passing of our dear sister, Wanda Fay Knapp, who entered into the arms of her Savior on April 22. A beloved member of Schenectady Pilgrim Holiness Church, Wanda was a cheerful, vivacious woman who brought so much life wherever



she went.

Wanda had a heart for Jesus and for people. She poured her gifts into teaching, music, and ministry — directing choirs, leading Sunday School, Vacation Bible Schools, and Good News Clubs, and joyfully sharing the gospel with all who crossed her path.

She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Wesley, her children, five grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and many loved ones. She will be deeply missed and fondly remembered.



We also want to lift up our dear pastor's wife, who lost her precious mother, Joyce Ann Cassidy on April 23rd. Sis. Peabody wanted to express deep thanks to our Conference church family for all of the text messages, lovely cards, prayers, and the beautiful lantern! She was very touched and grateful. Sis. Peabody shared these thoughts about her mother.

My Mom grew up in a difficult home but found faith when I was young. She raised 7 children and was always there for her family — cooking, doing laundry, and showing up whenever she was needed.

She had a gift for prayer. After the birth of my first child, I developed a fever and my husband asked Mom to pray — and my fever immediately broke.

She was also full of joy and laughter, especially when shopping or going out to eat. Though she's passed on, her precious memories live on in my heart.

In May, we were blessed to host missionaries Matt and Brooke Smith for a powerful evening service. Afterward, they, along with Joe and Brittany, gathered for food and fellowship — what a sweet time it was!

Finally, we want to celebrate Jacob Oare, who graduated on May 23rd from Penn View Bible Institute. We are so incredibly proud of him! Pastor Peabody was honored to take part in the graduation ceremony, and it was a joy that his son Jacob was also able to attend and share in the celebration.



STRATTANVILLE

Exciting things are happening at the Strattanville church!

First, we are thrilled to announce the launch of our very own Junior Church on Sunday evenings, led by the wonderful Larissa and Nathan. The kids are already jumping in with enthusiasm — this past Sunday night, seven children came ready to learn and grow.



What a blessing to invest in the next generation!

We are also embarking on a significant and meaningful project — the rebuilding of our historic steeple and bell tower. This beloved landmark will soon be restored to its former glory, and we couldn't be more excited to see it rise again as a beacon for our community. Stay tuned for updates as this project unfolds!

And we simply cannot move on without talking about the highlight of April — a surprise 60th birthday celebration for our very own Pastor Perry! Nearly 30 church family members gathered at Eat 'n Park restaurant to honor this man who means so much to all of us. The look on his face said it all! To make the evening even more special, the Bishop was on hand to share in the surprise — what a wonderful gift that was. Pastor Perry, you are deeply loved, and here's to many more decades of faithful ministry!

God is good and blessing at Strattanville!

TUNKHANNOCK

Spring has been a season of joy and growth for our church family! On May 8th, we celebrated the arrival of Ava Lanae Welch (7 lbs. 7 oz.), the precious newborn daughter of our Assistant Pastor and his wife, Brian and Krystal Welch.

Easter weekend was a tremendous blessing with three special services — our Penn View Choir service drew 145, the Sunrise service brought out 54, and our main Easter service saw 97 in attendance. Altogether, over 185 different people came through our doors! We also gave out free Easter baskets and hosted a fun Easter Photo Booth for the community.

On May 25th, our church and school marched in the Memorial Day Parade, handing out over 200 VBS announcements — complete with three horses, two dogs, and plenty of excitement along the way!

We closed the month on May 30th by celebrating our two Endless Mountain Christian Academy graduates, Angie and Samiah. We are so proud of these young women and excited for all God has in store for them. God is truly at work in Tunkhannock!



VENUS

On March 15, 2026, we had a meaningful service as we took in two new members into the church.

Emmalee Peck, a talented young lady has already made a remarkable impression on the congregation. With a heart fully devoted to God, Emmalee faithfully pours her musical gifts into the church — and her passion and dedication are an inspiration to all who worship alongside her.

Tim O'Brien joins us by transfer from Marcy Church, bringing

with him a well-established legacy of faithfulness. Tim is the kind of servant who simply shows up — wherever there is a need, he fills it — and his willingness to plug in and give of himself speaks volumes about the man he is in Christ.

During the service, both Emmalee and Tim shared their testimonies with the congregation, signed the church covenant, and were received with open arms. The celebration was capped off with a wonderful shared meal, as the Venus church family did what they do best — coming together in joy and fellowship.

Please join us in giving Emmalee and Tim a warm Venus Church welcome.



WILKES-BARRE

Something wonderful is happening in Wilkes-Barre — and the numbers tell only part of the story!

On Saturday, May 9th, 31 people gathered for a baptism service, and what a celebration that was! The momentum carried right into Sunday, with 22 in attendance for worship and 26 sitting down together for a meal. God is clearly moving in Wilkes-Barre, and it is a joy to witness!

Adding to the excitement, Jacob Oare recently completed a six-week internship there — and by his own words, it was nothing short of transformational. Jacob put it beautifully:

“After 6 incredible weeks of memories and ministry, my internship with the Samborski family and God’s Resistance in Wilkes-Barre has officially come to an end. I learned so much, made memories I’ll never forget, and had such a great time working alongside this family. This place and these people have truly become special to me, and I’m already looking forward to the next time I get to be with them again.”



What an encouragement Jacob is — and what a testament to the life and spirit thriving in Wilkes-Barre. We can’t wait to see what God does next.

Reaching Up,

Our world seems so broken and lost. It is heartbreaking to see the pain and suffering that goes on around us every day — even in our own communities. With so much brokenness surrounding us, it can feel almost hopeless and very overwhelming! Then you add to that the culture of busyness that seems to have engulfed us all, and we might crack under the pressure. I think deep inside every follower of Jesus, we long to see Him exalted and the broken around us healed. We know that Jesus is the answer for the problems we see, but it can be hard to know when, what, and how to reach out. We worry that we might say the wrong thing and push someone away. We feel anxious about a question that might arise and that we don’t know how to answer. We may even have our own questions and problems, and worry that we are doing a poor job reflecting the abundant life that Jesus offers. If you have any of those thoughts — dear sister, know you are not alone, but you may be falling prey to the enemy and his plan to silence your story.

You don’t need a theology degree to reach out. You don’t have to be able to preach or teach a class. You need to know Jesus. That’s it. He is always enough! Let me remind you of the woman at

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Then Reaching Out

the well (John 4). She met Jesus, and when she realized and believed that He was who He was claiming to be, she left her water pot and ran to her town to tell her story. I am not suggesting you need to leave your cart at Walmart and get on the loud-speaker (although if God leads... who knows). We all have circles of influence. For some, the circle may seem quite small, but for others, they have been given a large circle of those whom they can touch. There is no shame in a small circle or any bragging rights about a large one; we are each called to be faithful where we have been placed. If you know Jesus, then you can share Him with those in your circle.

A friend who is going through trauma – let her know Jesus cares and so do you! A child in your circle of influence who can be very difficult – seek to reach out in love! A lonely senior citizen – remind them they are not forgotten. It may not look big, but we can touch the world through being the hands and feet of Jesus. Does

that mean I never have to speak of Him? Of course not! Hopefully, the things you do open a door for you to share why you do what you do. This does not ensure it will always be well-received. Sometimes people will

choose to reject the One who can bring them life – and in doing so, they may reject you too. That is hard – even painful. We find comfort in knowing we have been faithful to our Savior and to those who need Him (even if they don't acknowledge their need). Who do you know that needs to feel the touch of Jesus in their life? Is there a way you can show God's grace and goodness? Have you taken your worry, care, and fear and laid it at Jesus' feet? The more time we spend with Him, the more we trust Him to meet our needs, the more we will naturally want to share Him with others. Make time to draw near to the One who loves

you most – then tell your story to your circle of influence in this world!



Pilgrim Kids | **HEATHER PECK**

What can young people do to evangelize?

“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.” PROVERBS 20:11

Have you ever heard exciting stories from missionaries, pastors, and evangelists about how they led someone to Jesus? Maybe you love God, and you think that one day... maybe a long time from now... You can lead someone to Jesus, too. Or maybe that thought scares you a bit, and you think...no way...not me, that is just for missionaries, pastors, and evangelists. I want you to know that everyone who loves Jesus can have a part in leading others to Him, no matter how young or old they are, and no matter what their job description might be.

Part of evangelism (or leading others to Jesus) is living your life to please Jesus. No scary speeches, no preaching, no trip overseas (although we should be willing to do those things if God asks us to), but you can

shine a light for Jesus right now, right where you are, just by living your life for Him. “How do I know what Jesus wants me to do – I’m just a kid?” You might ask. A good place to start is what you already know. The best place to learn what God wants for any of us is His Word, the Bible. You likely already know that the Bible says that children should obey their parents. (Ephesians 6:1) You may already know the 10 Commandments (Exodus 20). This is a good place to start. Even as a child, you can show the world you love Jesus by respecting your parents and doing what they say. Guess what... not all kids do that, and when you do, someone may notice and want to know why you obey when other kids don't.

This does not mean you only do what is right when others are looking. In fact, if you

really love Jesus, you know He is watching all the time, so you want to do what pleases Him even if no one else is around! Proverbs 20:11 tells us that even a child is known by his deeds. You are already building a reputation – for better or worse. Do others know you are responsible and dependable? Are you known for telling the truth or lying regularly? You are still learning and growing, and there will likely be times you mess up and have to go back and make things right. That should not discourage you! Learn from your mistakes, ask God for help, and keep moving forward, living for Jesus. If you do this...it will show up! You may be surprised at the influence your life may be having on someone. Your life may be leading someone to Jesus...one small action and word at a time!



WHAT ARE YOU *addicted to?*

“I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints).”

1 Corinthians 16:15

Recently, the Lord has brought this passage to my attention. I did not even realize that the word “addicted” appeared in the Bible. Yet there it is — at least in the KJV.

At the close of this letter, Paul gives final exhortations and recognizes faithful believers. The church at Corinth had many serious problems: division, pride, immorality, disorder in worship, and spiritual immaturity. After addressing and correcting these issues throughout the epistle, Paul points the believers to a beautiful example of healthy Christianity: the household of Stephanas. Stephanas and his family were among the first converts in Achaia, the region surrounding Corinth. Rather than pursuing recognition or position, they devoted themselves wholeheartedly to serving the people of God.

The Greek word translated “addicted” is *τάσσω* (*táссо*). It carries the idea of: putting oneself in order, dedicating oneself fully, assigning oneself to a mission, voluntarily surrendering to something with purpose and consistency. This was not a passing emotional impulse. It was a deliberate life directed toward serving others. The world is filled with

people addicted to many things: pleasure, money, entertainment, social media, recognition, and sin. If we are honest, all of us can identify with things that have controlled our hearts at one time or another.

But Paul presents a powerful contrast: there are believers so surrendered to God’s work that they appear “addicted” to the ministry. They cannot remain indifferent to the spiritual needs of others. They find joy in serving. They look for opportunities to bless. They organize their lives around the Kingdom of God. **The truth is this: every man will be dominated by something.** The question is not *if* we will have a dominant passion, but *what* that passion will be.

A BEAUTIFUL THOUGHT

The household of Stephanas did not become known for talent, wealth, or position. They became known for continually giving themselves to the care of God’s people. What a testimony. What a legacy. What a compliment for Paul to give to a Christian family.

A WORD OF CAUTION

The family of Stephanas “devoted themselves” to serving the saints,

but we should also notice that it was **a household serving together**. Ministry must never become an excuse to neglect the very people God has entrusted to our care. I am still trying to figure out this balance. A man can become so busy doing the work of God that he forgets to shepherd his own home. Our families should not feel like competitors with the ministry. Rather, they should experience the joy of serving Christ together with us.

Healthy ministry requires balance: loving the church, serving people faithfully, and also giving intentional time, attention, and spiritual leadership to our wives and children. The goal is not to choose between family and ministry, but to honor God in both. A man truly “addicted to the ministry” will not sacrifice his family for the work of God, because caring for his family is also part of serving God.

I ask that this be your prayer for me today: That God would help me to become “addicted” to the ministry. If I must be consumed by something, may it be a passionate devotion to the work of God, the care of His people, and the reaching of lost souls who are still far from Him.

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Outreach Ideas for Growing the S.S

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Massena, NY PHC (2847 NY-37) Sun. Aug. 30, 3PM

Featuring Trevor Mills, Jeffery Byer, and other local guests.

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Discussion Panel answering your questions about Sunday School.

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