

## BOARD OF DEACONS

### Active Deacons 2024

Although Deacons work as a committee of the whole, and every member participates in all areas, each member took on primary responsibility for a certain area.

Tina Calhoun – Congregation support

Susan Chawgo – school liaison

Sheryl Crankshaw – Special (PCUSA) Offerings

Mary Jo Deans -- Snail Mail Sunshine

Eileen Edward – Secretary

David Geurtsen – Hospital visits

Hanna Kenney – Daily Bread mailing

Sarah Rogers – Easter Breakfast, Jubilee Shop

Patti Stephens – Chair; Watertown Urban Mission rep.

Rev. Summer Sattora – ex officio

Deacons met at nine 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday meetings, following worship. There were no meetings in July, August, or December.

### On-going Throughout the Year

Mary Jo Deans sent out cards to individuals in the congregation for significant life events.

Quarterly, Hanna Kenney sent out the daily devotional magazine, *Daily Bread* to nine distant members of our congregation. To request the *Daily Bread* to be sent to you or someone you know, talk to a Deacon.

Sheryl Crankshaw lined up Deacon speakers for the four PC(USA) special offerings. The entire amounts of One Great Hour of Sharing, during Lent, and of the Christmas Joy offering are sent to PC(USA). Forty percent of the Pentecost offering was sent to our local area's Safe Schools Endeavor. Twenty-five percent of the Peace and Global Witness offering was sent to Snowbelt Housing, for flood relief in Lowville area.

### Long-standing Annual Events

To continue our presence in the Can-Am parade in July, Deacons used elements from past floats to decorate Rich Connell's truck, with the theme "Love Grows Here." Vicki Wilson drove the truck in the parade. We were awarded third place.

The Pancake Breakfast and the Jubilee Shop were chaired by the ever capable and dependable team of Sue Chawgo and Sarah Rogers.

Our traditional Pancake Breakfast, open to the community, followed the Easter Sunrise Service, on March 31st. This is the Deacon Fund's only money-raiser. Donations may be made to the Deacon Fund at any time.

Jubilee Shop this year provided gifts for 26 children from 12 families. In addition, each family was given a gift certificate for groceries at Aldi's. The Jubilee Shop is funded by donations from organizations and individuals throughout the Town of Hounsfield. Members of Sulphur Springs Methodist and St. Andrew Roman Catholic churches joined those of United Presbyterian church in gift shopping.

### Whole Congregation

Throughout the Fall of 2023, the congregation had brought in household items to share with refugees entering the Syracuse area. In January and February 2024, Sheryl Crankshaw took the last of our household donations for Interfaith Works to their warehouse in Syracuse. Interfaith Works was expecting between 150 and 180 new people in the following weeks.

During February and March the congregation was challenged to contribute items and/or money toward Hygiene Kits for the Gifts of the Heart program. On March 17<sup>th</sup>, under Pastor Summer's supervision, congregation members assembled ten kits that were later delivered to the Emmanuel Congregational Church in Watertown to be forwarded to the program.

In May, Patti Stephens, Laurie Petersen, and Always-a-Deacon Judy Fiorentino went to First Presbyterian Church Watertown to help pack items that teacher-trainers took to Malawi for the schools that

have been established there. Supplies included books, vocabulary pictures, crayons, and toothbrushes, for children. We found out that Malawi teachers can use or sell men's ties, women's scarves and costume jewelry. So, we invited our congregation to bring in these items for the 2025 trip to Malawi. Large bags of these items were taken to Watertown First Presbyterian, to be stored for next summer. We will happily accept more of these.

Using Christmas mugs donated by Mary Jo Deans in December, Judy Fiorentino and Sheryl Crankshaw organized gifts for residents of Harbour Heights. The congregation was asked to bring in small useful items and treats to fill the mugs. Judy, Sheryl, and Summer made short visits to each apartment while delivering the mugs. Many residents enjoyed the personal visits.

### **Came up during the year**

In the Spring, Deacons had the opportunity to help a family move from Sackets Harbor to a Watertown apartment.

Pastor Summer has been our representative to a new group, School and Community, who first met in June. The group brings together representatives from Sackets Harbor School, St. Andrew's Church, United Presbyterian Church, and Watertown Savings Bank to coordinate efforts to aid families in need in the Town of Hounsfield. This year they established a Little Pantry, outside Hay Library. This cupboard is available 24/7 to anyone in need of food or hygiene products. Anyone may contribute also. During months susceptible to freezing, the contents of the Little Pantry; is housed in our church vestibule and is available during Pastor Summer's office hours. The School and Community group has also set up the Sackets Closet in a room in the school. Anyone may go to the closet and select from donated clothing for everyday wear or for special occasions. Donations are accepted when the Closet is open, as long as donors will stay and sort their donated items with a volunteer before they leave.

### **Financial Assistance**

In 2012 Deacons were granted \$10,000 from the owners of the former McDonald's franchise in Watertown, to be used for people with needs in the Town in Hounsfield. In January 2024 the fund totaled \$4,869.11. In March Deacons gave this fund the name "Children and Families Fund."

Over the summer, Sue Chawgo got lists of needs from teachers at the school. Deacons chose to spend \$245.87 on hygiene needs for the elementary special education class. We also donated, to other elementary classes, crayons from our Sunday School equipment that is not being used.

At other times during the year Deacons were able to help families with purchases of a mattress, food, household supplies, and school clothes.

Deacons gave \$150 to Beth Burdick and Carmen Zumbach toward purchasing materials for a quilt that they made and donated to the Mennonite Auction that benefits Beaver Camp.

In order to respond to emergency needs, Deacons established a Discretionary Fund, that can be used between meetings. Any Deacon may purchase items up to \$250 in value for a family with emergency needs, but they must notify the pastor and the Deacon chair by text or phone call. This system has been used once for transportation to Urgent Care.

### **United Presbyterian Deacons**

Throughout the year Deacons have individually and as a group offered moral support and practical support for individual members facing challenges. Tina Calhoun and David Geurtsen have been especially faithful in visiting the hospital and Samaritan Summit and in keeping us connected.