

The Old Man's News

Mt. Sinai Congregational, UCC - March 2026

Upcoming Events @Mt.SinaiChurch



Emergency Communication Plan

Trying to get the word out when church is canceled is difficult. We send email blasts, put it on our Facebook page and website, but still not everyone gets the message.

Council is exploring the possibility of adding **text message alerts** to our emergency communication plan. If this option is approved and you would like to receive church emergency text messages, you will need to complete a form authorizing your participation. Forms are available in the church and in the bulletin. You can drop forms off at the church or even save time and email the information to the church.

We will let you know if and when this system is put in place. In the meantime, email blasts will continue to be used for emergency communications.

Come Break the Fast with Members of the Turkish Cultural Center

It is Ramadan in the Muslim world. Each day for a month, Muslims refrain from eating from sunup to sun down to reflect on their faith. They break their fast at the end of the day with an **Iftar** dinner.

The Turkish Cultural Center would like to host our church at their Iftar meal on March 8th at their location near McArthur Airport.

A signup sheet is posted on the Mission bulletin board in Voorhees Hall. Many of us will be carpooling to the location.

Join us. The food is wonderful and it is very interesting to speak with our Muslim friends about their customs and beliefs.

Daylight Savings Time Starts on March 8, 2026 - SPRING AHEAD!!



Logo courtesy of Theatre Three

Let's Go See Godspell Wednesday March 11 at 2 p.m.!

The Congregational Nurture Board has reserved 30 seats for an afternoon performance of Godspell at Theatre Three. Tickets are \$25. Please sign up in Voorhees Hall. The deadline for payment is March 1st. Make checks payable to Debbie Quigley.

Godspell "...is structured as a series of parables, primarily based on the Gospel of Matthew, interspersed with music mostly set to lyrics from traditional hymns, with the passion of Christ appearing briefly near the end." [Godspell - Wikipedia](#) It includes familiar songs such as, "Day by Day" and "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord."

If you would like to join everyone after the show for dinner at Joey Z's (217 Main Street, Port Jefferson), please call or text Debbie at 631-681-8464.

Upcoming Events @Mt.SinaiChurch

Clothing Drive Dates

March 8th, last date to drop off items for storage in the garage

April 12th, the truck will be here after church

Please keep saving the following good-quality items: Clothing, Shoes, Handbags, Backpacks, Stuffed animals, Small single-item plastic toys (PLEASE NO PUZZLES, BOARD GAMES, LEGOS OR TOYS WITH PIECES) Linens, including towels, curtains and table linens (NO BLANKETS OR COMFORTERS) for our upcoming clothing drive. Put all items in kitchen-size garbage bags.

The garage will be open for anyone who would like to drop off donations for the April 12th clothing drive on March 8th between 11 and 12 after services.

If you need assistance bringing the bags to church, please send an email to dmcinerney63@gmail.com. If you need to come during the week, please email or call the church office to make arrangements.



Missions Board: Social Action

Save the date March 28, 2026 for the next No Kings rally to be held at Route 112 and 347. Time to be determined.

Events @Mt.SinaiChurch

Congregational Nurture: New Young Adult Group

A new Young Adult Group is being formed at Mt. Sinai Church. All 20 to 30+ year olds are invited to attend to get to know each other and, in the future, talk about issues important to their age group.

Five people attended the first activity on February 1st in the church conference room. Activities consisted of a "getting to know you" exchange through playing board games. The general response from the first gathering was very positive and they hope to meet again.

Interested? Contact Diane Corson, Lead of the Congregational Nurture Board.

Missions: Social Action Bread for the World

On February 22, 2026 the Missions Board sponsored a letter writing campaign in support of **Bread for the World**.

Bread for the World is a nonpartisan Christian advocacy organization that urges U.S. decisionmakers to pursue policies that end hunger in the US and around the world through letter writing campaigns.

Congregates were encouraged to stop by and sign letters, which were mailed out to Congressman LaLota and Senators Schumer and Gillibrand.

Events @Mt.SinaiChurch

New Members

Seven new members joined Mt. Sinai Church on Sunday, February 22, 2026. **Seven!**
Some have been worshipping with us for years and others are newer.
We welcome you all as members of our congregation!



Lenny Holter



Andrew Jones and
Jackie Longacre



Glenn Tausek

New Members



Opal Sewell-Brown



Eric Johann (shown with his
wife, Elyse Oveson at
their February 20th wedding
ceremony, performed in our
sanctuary!)



Liz Twiss with her friend,
Karadut (ask Liz to tell you
the story behind that name.)

The Caribbean Cruiser's Are Back

Welcome home to our Caribbean Cruisers! Here's a report from Carol Melendez:

"Twenty-one of us left NYC in ice covered waters. We broke bread, laughed, played games, shared our stories, toured & enjoyed a wonderful getaway to the Caribbean. Grateful & blessed that we returned safely. Here we are... **Eddie & the Cruisers.**"



Worship Board: Lent Activity

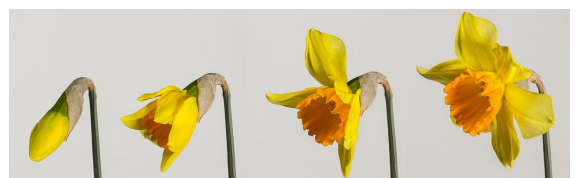
Once again, the Worship Board is offering a self-guided Bible reading plan. Beginning on Ash Wednesday, this "From Death to Life" reading plan proceeds daily through Lent to Easter.

BIBLE READING PLAN: *From Death to Life*

During Lent, Christians observe 40 days of confession, prayer and renewal. Just as our Savior fasted and faced temptation in the desert for 40 days, we use this season to grow our faith and prepare to minister.

Use this Bible Reading Plan to follow Jesus to the cross and then rejoice at his empty tomb on Easter. Travel through Scripture to reflect on who Jesus is and what he lovingly endured to give us life.

Paper copies are available on the Worship and Sacraments bulletin board in Voorhees Hall, or you may take one from the magazine rack just outside Voorhees Hall. For an electronic copy use this [LINK](#).



Pastoral Ponderings – March 2026

If we had some way to record everything that everyone on Long Island has said during the past three months, surely “It’s snowing again” would emerge as the most frequently articulated sentence in our part of the world. It’s as if we have switched places with Colorado. They’ve had what meteorologists are calling a “snow drought” there – which is serious business, as the mountains states rely on spring melt water from heavy winter snowpacks in order to provide sufficient fresh water. I got an e-mail from a friend in Denver a couple of days ago, and he told me that it was 70 degrees there. The absence of snow, it turns out, can be just as perilous as too much of it.

Meanwhile, we’ve been buried under the white stuff. During the winter, I’m often praying for those who are homeless and have no adequate shelter, for those whose jobs require them to be outside when conditions are awful, and for the wild animals who must find a way to survive when the temperature drops and the snow falls. I also say prayers for everyone who, for one reason or another, has to be driving through snow and ice. Let’s face it, winter can be a dangerous time for both humans and beasts.

This morning, however, as I sit in my office and watch as heavy, wet flakes are falling, I can’t help but reflect on how beautiful it is. When I came to the church today, for once there were no gale-force winds blowing, and you could hear that wonderful silence that only happens when snow blankets the earth (or when you’re standing on top of a mountain). Every tree becomes a magnificent sculpture, and for a few minutes, it’s possible to imagine a world filled with this kind of quiet peace.



[G1Shredder from Pixabay](#)

Sometimes, the very things that seem like hazards or inconveniences have another dimension, if only we have the eyes to see. My prayers for those who are at risk during a winter storm will absolutely continue, but just for today, I’m going to appreciate the fact that there is another, more positive, edge to what seems like a crisis.

Perhaps we would all do well to look at other situations that seem dire, and consider whether there might be a blessing hidden beneath the apparent difficulties. Finding the beauty beneath the surface is another way we can take strength from God, who is always looking for ways to encourage and uphold us.

Peace & Blessings –

Pastor Bill

Worship & Sacraments

Lent 2026

Lent began on Ash Wednesday, February 18th, with the first Sunday in the season on February 22nd. The worship board has selected “Speaking Truth to Power” as the theme for this Lenten season. We conceived that that is precisely what Jesus did in the wilderness when he confronted the powerful temptations placed in his path by Satan. In rejecting Satan’s offerings, Jesus confronted their power with the word of God. His final rejection was,

“Away with you, Satan! for it is written,
“Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.”” (Matthew 4:10)

In selecting this theme, the board suggests that the church today must also resist temptations to align itself with powerful forces other than the word of God revealed in Jesus Christ. If God is still speaking, as we in the UCC believe, then the church must speak out loud and clear in the face of those forces that are contrary to a God of Love. We are called Christians not because we come to church on Sundays; but rather, because we take on the name of Christ and stand with him in worshiping and serving only God. We evaluate everything in that light of love and speak out when we see it dimmed or misdirected.

Lent, then, is a time for reevaluation of how our faith moves our words and actions, so that we, bearing Christ’s name, may worship the Lord our God and Serve only him.



[Sonja Kalee](#) from [Pixabay](#)



Sunday Worship At Mt. Sinai Church

In-Person Worship - Join us at our 10 a.m. service in the sanctuary. Communion, as always, takes place on the first Sunday of the month.

Digital Worship - Digital worship is available as a live stream. at 10 a.m. on the LIVE tab of our YouTube channel: [Mt. Sinai Congregational Church, UCC - YouTube](#). After that time you can find the service in the regular recordings section.

Offering - There are many ways to donate to the church: via check or cash (offering plate, drop-off or mail), electronic payment via the church website <https://www.msucc.org>, by setting up bill pay through your bank or roll-over from a 401(k)/403(b). We appreciate your support.



[Clicker-Free-Vector-Images from Pixabay](#)

Music Ministry Notes

A wise organist emerita once said something to the effect that, the anthems in Lent are so dour and dark. Why can't we sing ones that are more upbeat? Taking this thought to heart, the choir will bring anthems to you during Lent this year, many of them new to our music library, that will reflect the season's theme, "Speaking Truth to Power." They are anything but "dour and dark!"

Here is an annotated list of what to expect in March.

March 1st, "Good Trouble," by Thomas Keesecker. The title of this piece comes from the words of the late Congressman, John Lewis, who famously said, "Do not get lost in a sea of despair. Be hopeful, be optimistic. Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble." Lewis marched arm-in-arm with Martin Luther King, Jr. over the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, getting into some good trouble on behalf of voting rights.

NEVER, EVER BE AFRAID TO MAKE SOME NOISE AND GET IN GOOD TROUBLE, NECESSARY TROUBLE."- JOHN LEWIS

March 8th, "Wake Up, Church, Wake Up!" by Pepper Choplin. This popular composer has combine recognizable style and musical themes into a challenge for today's churches to speak truth to power because "there is Kingdom work to do." You'll hear a snippet from Reveille and a rousing chorus of "Rise and Shine and Give God the Glory," a good old Christian camp song.

"THERE IS KINGDOM WORK TO DO"

March 15th, "A Gospel Song of Peace," by Sally K. Albrecht. Beginning with the familiar Latin round, Dona Nobis Pacem, Albrecht invites us to "swing the 8th notes" to give it a gospel feel. The anthem states that peace only comes when empathy works to create love and harmony by caring for those in need, those who can't cope, the "least of these" of whom Jesus speaks in Matthew 25:40.

"...A GOSPEL FEEL"

March 22nd, "Let the Church Arise," by Lee Black, Joesph Habedank, and Tony Wood. Deeply meaningful for today's churches, the opening stanza presents a challenge for all who carry the name of Christ:

We've sat silent for too long, while the darkness ever strong,
casts a shadow on this land.
But we're the children of the Light; we have hope that's burning bright.
We weren't made to cower, we were made to stand:
Let the church arise!

March 29th, Palm Sunday, "Let the King Come In!" celebrates the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem; while "Lest I Forget Your Love (Lead Me to Calvary)" foretells how the week will end. It includes the line, "If your holy sacrifice becomes too familiar, lead me to Calvary."



It is the choir's hope that you find our anthems meaningful and inspiring during Lent.

[strut wattanamaetee from Pixabay](#)

Mission Work

Hurricane Relief for Jamaica

Hurricane Melissa, which struck Jamaica and surrounding islands in October, created a huge need for relief to those affected by this devastating storm.

Church friend, Opal Sewell-Brown, has asked for our help and has offered this list of various reputable relief agencies:

- * Jamaican government "needs list" at <https://supportjamaica.gov.jm>
- * Church World Service at <https://cwsglobal.org/donate/3/emergency-response-fund/>
- * UCC Disasters Ministry at <https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/wider-church-ministries/global-hope/disaster/>

Contact Opal at opalsewellbrown@gmail.com for more information.

Everyday Food Pantry Needs

Our food pantries are always "hungry." Here is a list of the most useful items we always need:

Canned soups, tuna, pasta sauce, peanut butter & jelly (small jars), hot and cold cereals (no oatmeal), rice (small bags/boxes) and granola bars.

You can bring your donations to church on Sundays and place them in the container under the table in the front entry. You can also drop them off at church any day during office hours. Thank you!



Image by [Alicja](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Mt. Sinai Congregational, UCC

We are a congregation committed to justice. All are welcome into our full life and ministry regardless of age, race, abilities, economic or marital status, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identification. We are a church that is open and affirming of all people, as we are each made in the image of God.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Old Man's News

Published by the Mt. Sinai Congregational United Church of Christ, (MSUCC) formerly known as The Congregational Church in the Community of Old Man's, Miller's Place & Rocky Point, established 1789.

If you would like something in the church's monthly newsletter, the deadline to let the editor know is the **20th of every month**. Please, keep in mind that your submission may be edited for content and for space. Email the OMN Editor at cdwiebel@gmail.com with all submissions and questions.

Moderator's Message - Jim Cibulka

My Moderator's report this month shares highlights of the Church Council meeting held on February 24, 2026. Pastor Bill led the Council in an opening prayer.

Some members amplified their monthly email reports. Carol Wiebelt, Finance Lead, announced that the annual budget hearing will be Sunday, October 18th, followed by the annual meeting on Sunday, November 1st. She also asked Council members to provide her with feedback on the draft brochure she and Pastor Bill have prepared announcing the legacy giving program, which will be mailed to members and others in March. (See article on page 11.)

Sue Hoff, Worship Lead, announced her plans to represent our church at the annual meeting of the NY Conference, May 15-16 in Albany. She shared information on the schedule for the Bible Study Guide discussed in the current issue of Old Man News. She is seeking an additional volunteer for the bell chimes, which are similar to tuning forks and very easy to use. She also updated Council members on a new Emergency Communications Plan. Details will be provided in the current issue of Old Man News. There will be several ways congregants can opt into this communications plan by completing a Text Message Report Form.

Barbara DeTurk, Missions Lead, shared information on issues currently facing the Island Heart Food Pantry. A discussion ensued concerning how to protect client private information given widespread ICE raids on Long Island. She also discussed the plans for the upcoming March 8th Turkish Cultural Center interdenominational dinner (see article on page 1.)

Barbara DeTurk and Diane Corson, Congregational Nurture Lead, discussed the continuing search for a Publicist. It was agreed that they would meet, along with Carol Wiebelt, to go over which specific duties are needed. Everyone agreed that identifying one or more qualified individuals to assume these duties is a top priority.

In her treasurer's report, Rita LaRosa discussed strategies for handling the cost overruns on snow plowing this winter. Carol Wiebelt discussed details of a balanced budget in the current year, considering a combination of pledges, donations, and fund- raising. A discussion of the possible merging of the Contingency money market account with the Merrill Lynch Madsen Fund was tabled until the March meeting, pending consultations with our financial advisors.

Additions to the March and April calendars were enumerated. Jim Cibulka said he will work with Kevin to get these calendar changes incorporated.

Jim also announced that he will continue as Moderator for the full-term in 2026. He thanked the Council for its patience as he considered how to move forward after the death of Margaret.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is Tuesday, March 24, 7 pm in the Church Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Cibulka

The Social Life at Mt. Sinai Church

Women's Breakfast Group & Lunch Bunch

Interested in spending time with other women of the church? Like to eat? We have just what you need!



**Women's
Breakfast
Group**

The Women's Breakfast Group meets at 9 a.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month,



and/or...



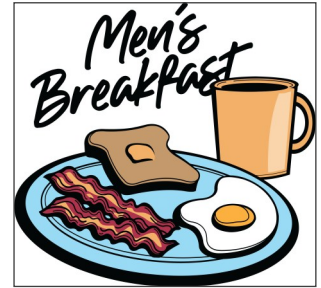
12:30 p.m.

If breakfast time is not your thing, you can check out the monthly Lunch Bunch gathering held at different restaurants in the area. The Lunch Bunch meets on the second Wednesday of the month at

Please call the office for locations if you are interested in attending. All meals are self-pay.

Men's Breakfast Group

Our men's breakfast group welcomes all men of the church to join them each Thursday morning, 8 a.m. at various restaurants in the area. For more information, contact Kevin, our Office Administrator, or Dennis Murphy.



FRIENDLY CIRCLE!

The Friendly Circle meets on Tuesdays in the Conference Room from 2 to 4 p.m. Participants work on personal knitting, crocheting and craft projects while sharing conversation and a good feeling of fellowship.

If you are interested in joining the Friendly Circle, feel free to drop by on Tuesdays or give the office a call at 631-473-1582 to let us know that you are coming.

CARING MINISTRY

Caring Ministry members call and/or visit those members of the congregation who are not able to attend regular church services. In addition, cards are sent for holidays, birthdays, and to those who are experiencing health issues.



The Caring Ministry will continue to generate the prayer list for

the bulletin each week. Please send in prayer requests to Kevin or submit them through the website.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT SNOW DAYS

If the weather is threatening and you wonder if there are any cancellations of church activities, please check your email and/or the church's Facebook page for information. Also, the office will close if schools are closed.

Legacy Giving Program

Pastor Bill and the Finance Board are working on a Legacy giving program called the **1789 Fellowship**, which is intended to encourage people to remember Mt. Sinai Church in their wills.

Gifts will go into the contingency operations fund, which supports the general fund of the church. These funds help us look to the future by providing for any budget shortfalls or unexpected, but necessary, costs to the general fund, including buildings & grounds needs.

Materials will arrive soon to tell you more about this program. We encourage you to join us in working to help keep the church in operations as we move through our third century and beyond.



**Follow the QR
Code to our
Website**



Office Hours

Pastor Bill Kovacsik

Sunday 8 - 3

Monday & Tuesday 9 - 5

Wednesday 9 - 2

Kevin Martin, Main Office

Monday - Friday

8:30 - 1:30

Graphics used in this issue of the Old Man's News are from ChurchArtPro, unless otherwise stated.

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www.msucc.org

Please visit our website if you would like to be added to our email list.

Upcoming Events @Mt.SinaiChurch

January through April 2026

(See individual articles for more information)

March

- 3/8 Daylight Savings Time - Spring Ahead!!
Drop off Clothing Drive donations to be stored in the garage
- 3/22 Regular service, 10:00 a.m.
Alternative Compline Service, 7:00 p.m.
- 3/29 Palm Sunday

April

- 4/2 Holy Thursday, 7:00 p.m. Worship Service with Communion and Tennebrae
- 4/3 Good Friday, Noon to 3:00 p.m., Self-guided Stations of the Cross in the Sanctuary
- 4/5 Easter Sunday
6:15 a.m. Service at Cedar Beach
10:00 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary with Communion



Your Church Needs YOU!

Here are some long- and short-term opportunities for volunteers:

Church Publicist - To get the word out to the community about church services and missions activities, we need someone to serve as church publicist. While we have contacts in print and other media, we have no one to handle distribution of our information. No experience required; learning on the job is okay. The reward is new faces in the pews!

Musical Interludes - Do you play a brass or woodwind instrument? Have a drum set you like to play? Maybe you have a music student in your family (high school, preferred) or know someone who plays? Let Sue hear from you!

Choir - Finally, why don't you consider adding your voice to the choir for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter services? Rehearsals are at 9 a.m. Sunday mornings. Just show up!!

Food Missions

Food Pantry Hours

Island Heart

Wednesdays, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Church Food Cupboard

Tuesdays, 9:15 to 11:45 a.m.

The Food Pantries can always use: Peanut Butter & Jelly, spaghetti sauce, cereal, tuna, canned corn and beans, mac & cheese and toilet paper.

You can drop off items at church any morning, except Saturday.

Island Heart Food Pantry Numbers

January 2026

Adults	1135
Children	716
60+	84
Families	423
New Clients	35