Orwell Union Church

Dedicated 1845

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A YEAR OF MANY GAINS AND SOME SAD LOSSES

PASTORAL HAPPENINGS

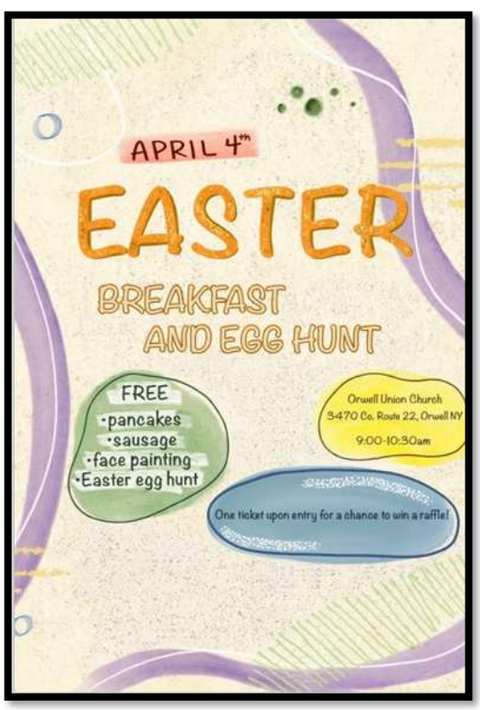
The year 2025 saw the passing of our great friend and spiritual leader, Dave Snyder. Dave served as our Pastor from 1998 to 2002 and after he retired, we were blessed to have him take the pulpit for the last five years of his life, passing to be with our Lord and Savior in April 2005.

Pastor Dave was a great blessing to our congregation and while his passing left a great void, he had the wisdom to mentor his replacement during those last five years. Josh Bush is the gift that Pastor Dave left us. Pastor Josh has a great thirst for biblical knowledge and a passion for serving our congregation.

Pastor Josh is supported by very uplifting family which includes his wife Erica, Sons Mason and Gabriel, as well as a baby girl that they are in the process of adopting. This family has been a truly wonderful addition to our Church family.

We then were fortunate to have Justin White join our Pastoral team. He has a special calling to serving our Lord and has the special talent of serving our youth. Pastor Justin joins our Church family with his wife Jessica and their six children.

COMING EVENTS



Join us in the Fellowship Hall Saturday, March 21st at 9am for a breakfast and some great fellowship and faith sharing. For more information contact Josh or Justin.

MEET OUR YOUTH PASTOR

My name is Justin White. I was raised in Central Square, New York, and I still call this place home. My wife, my treasure, Jessica and I have been married for 11 years and by the grace of God, our home is full. The Lord has blessed us with six incredible children, 3 boys and 3 girls. We humbly and faithfully count that as a gift not a badge. Psalm 127:3 says, "Children are a heritage from the Lord" and we know that firsthand… loud, chaotic, beautiful proof of His kindness.

I attended Oswego State University, where I played baseball until a torn rotator cuff ended that dream just before my senior season. What felt like loss at the time became the Lord's redirection. I've been driving tractor trailer for 14 years now, work that has put bread on the table and given me long, quiet hours to continue school, to pray, to listen, and to be shaped by God's Word. Those miles on the road took me deeper with Jesus than I ever expected and I thank God He closed a door to open a better one.

For 14 years at Life Church, I was blessed to be part of a faithful congregation and phenomenal leadership team, serving in children's ministry for six of those years. Now, the Lord has opened the door for me to serve here at Orwell Union Church, and I step into it with humility and gratitude.

God saved my life. He saved me from myself. He gave me purpose when I had none, peace when I didn't deserve it, and an identity that no injury, failure, title, or career could ever compete with. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, "If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" I live by grace I didn't earn and never could.

Walking with Jesus doesn't have to be flashy, it's forged in everyday life. An honest conversation with men before work, prayers with kids at bedtime, hugs around the breakfast table when you feel like you've come up short but they're just glad you're home. This life with Christ is real, it's grounded and it's freely given. You don't have to perform or prove yourself… you just have to come home.

New Fellowship Hall

After much hard work by many volunteers, we are now using our fellowship hall. The new space is heated and cooled by a heat pump and the kitchenette has a refrigerator and a Bunn coffee maker along with a butcherblock serving counter. The Pastors now have an office to conduct business and have some privacy for counseling.

Our children now have a wonderful space where they can learn and experience the teachings of our Lord and Savior. There is space where they can do crafts and study the Word.

Mission and Outreach

This year our Noisy Can collection yielded a total of $4,539. These funds were distributed to a number of local and national organizations such as:

- McDonalds House
- Pancreatic Cancer Research
- Brians Kids
- Tunnels 2 Towers
- Erins Angels
- Operation Christmas Child
- Sandy Creek School BackPack Program
- Families in need
- The Hub - After School Programs

Pastor Justin and family participated in the Town of Orwell Trunk and Treat event on Halloween

Hearing Hope

H.O.P.E. — Holding Onto Promises Eternal

"For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken."
— **Proverbs 3:26** (KJV)

Love One Another

February puts the word LOVE everywhere you look. Cards, candy, flowers but the kind of love our Lord speaks of isn't soft, sentimental, or seasonal. It's strong, it bleeds and it carried the cross.

On the night before Jesus went to Calvary, our Savior looked at His disciples… the men who would fail Him, scatter and hide. Yet He said, *"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*"
—**John 13:34–35** (KJV)

That's not a suggestion; it's a command from nail scarred hands.

The Apostle John, the old shepherd described as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," the one who leaned back against Jesus to ask who would betray at the last supper wrote:

"And now I beseech thee… that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."
—**2 John 1:5–6** (KJV)

Love is something we walk in. It shows up, it forgives, it bears burdens, it prays and it chooses grace when our pride would rather run.

"As I have loved you." How did He love us?

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
—**Romans 5:8** (KJV)

In a world growing darker and colder by the day, our love for one another is a testimony. In a world tearing itself apart, the watching eyes of our community are looking to see if Jesus makes any real difference. When believers love one another despite preferences, politics, personalities, and past pain… it preaches a sermon no pulpit alone can ever deliver. When seasoned saints pray for young families, when younger believers honor those who have walked with Christ for decades, when we cross small differences to preserve unity the world sees something different… they see Christ. Our love is not weakness, it's obedience. It's evidence that the Lord truly is our confidence.

So this month, ask yourself… who needs encouragement? Who needs a phone call? Who needs forgiveness? Who needs a meal, a prayer or just someone to sit with them.

The LORD shall be thy confidence, we don't love in our own strength, we love because He first loved us… and as we cling to these eternal promises… may we also hold onto one another. With the steady, faithful love of Christ.

Share Your Faith

Ask the Lord where He is prompting you to put His love into action. Then take that step! Not in your strength… but in His. The same Jesus who commanded you to love, now lives in you by His Spirit. Trust Him… He will meet you there.

Prayer

Father, thank You for Your love and grace. Thank you for every breath and each day which is filled with Your promise. Jesus thank You for loving us when we were unlovable. You sought us when we were lost and wondering, You bore our sin in Your own body on the cross... thank You. Lord teach us to love our brothers and sisters the way You have loved us. Kill our pride, soften our hearts and transform our minds. Let our love be a testimony of Your saving grace. Be our confidence and keep our steps steady. In Your precious name. Amen.

"May the Lord be your confidence, and His love guide your steps each day."

Hi, this is pastor Josh. This past year has been incredibly sad. We have lost a lot of members due to sickness and passing away. But through all that sadness we have also seen incredible things happen in our church. 6 years ago, we averaged nine members leach Sunday. Now we have between 40 and 55 people every weekend. We added Justin, which is our associate pastor, and our youth pastor. We were seeing two to three kids each Sunday and now we're seeing double digits.

It is an incredible thing we're seeing going on in our church. We are able to help our community and those in need as well as this church, by those who give weekly. This is all because of God and what He has done for us. We want to give back to Him and do His work and we've been able to do that. We offer everyone to come here and experience the love and joy that we experience each and every Sunday. If you have had a bad experience in church before, I'm letting you know that we have all gone through the same things and this church is very loving, supportive and whatever you ever need, we're there.

We would love to have you come visit. Bring your children, because as a parent it's so important to have your child in church. Justin and I also have two beautiful wives that help out in the back with the kids. This whole church is more like a family than anything else and now that we have Justin here, we're able to start doing things that we've never been able to do before with the children. We are also starting to raise funds to help pay for some of our children to attend Camp Shiloh Christian Camp this summer.

We look forward to seeing each and every one of you come through this door and see how welcoming and loving we are. This is truly an incredible experience, and you learn the word of God as it is written. Some days you may not like what you hear, but we have to speak truth, and at the end of the day the truth will set you free