

First news

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | WHITESBORO, NY
JULY & AUGUST | 2024

Take a BREAK!

Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest awhile. - Mark 6:30

Jesus commands his disciples to take a break from the demands of ministry. He instructs them to get away from the push and shove of their daily routines and to rest awhile. The Gospels capture the busy and demanding schedule that Jesus and his friends lived day in and day out. They were so busy that they often couldn't find time to eat without the demanding crowd intruding on their meals. So, Jesus commands them to rest and to get away from the press of the crowd to rejuvenate, renovate, and be restored.

From time to time, we all need to take a break. Even Jesus needed to take a break! Everyone needs some time for oneself. We need periodic moments, days, and weeks to be refreshed, renewed, and reinvigorated.

Do you remember the creation story in the first two chapters of Genesis? God labored six long days at the work of creation. At the end of the sixth day God looked with pleasure upon God's handiwork and declared creation "good." Then, on the seventh day, "God rested . . ." Even God needs to rest! So, do

we! That is why God gave us the Sabbath and commands us to rest.

In one of his sermons (*Sabbath Release*), the great United Methodist preacher, Bishop William Willimon tells of a woman he once knew "who took great pride that she had never, in her 20 years of work at a company, taken all of her vacation time. Year after year her vacation days accumulated but she never went on vacation. She considered her lack of time away from the office as a great virtue. Vacations? Those are for wimps who don't enjoy their work and who are always whining about how tired they are; not for good, sturdy stock like me!"

Bishop Willimon observes, "I'm afraid that in reality her failure to take vacations was a vice rather than a great virtue. She thereby showed that she had little life outside the office, that she thought that the company's entire fortunes rested solely on her sturdy, restless shoulders. It wasn't that she was so strong, so committed to her work that she did not need vacations. Rather, it was that she was vain, full of self-righteous pride, and self-absorbed."

Why is it that we follow Jesus' other commands: for instance; the commands to love our neighbor or to turn the other cheek, but not this command? Jesus commands us to take a

break! To be the persons God wants us to be we need to have the time and space to be renewed, re-energized, and restored.

In this newsletter you will find information about my vacation plans. I will be on vacation during July and August. I have some projects around our house to tackle. Paula and I have some daytrips planned. We have a longer trip to Chicago scheduled to visit the Institute of Art, one of our favorite museums. We will spend some time with our daughter and son-in-law. We are getting together with family at the end of the summer to celebrate our sister-in-law and Paula's significant birthday. I also will be reading, listening to music, and doing those things that restore my soul.

I hope you too will take a break this summer. Summer is the perfect time to change the rhythms of our daily routines, to re-connect with each other, and to re-connection with God. I hope you will be able to have a change of scenery, a change of pace, a chance to clear your mind and renew your soul. Remember, our Lord still commands his disciples to take a break!

Grace and peace,
Mark S. Caruana | Interim Pastor

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH presents...

JULY - AUGUST

SUMMER WORSHIP

JULY @ WMO & AUGUST @ FPC

EACH SUNDAY | 10:30 AM

WMO | 714 WASHINGTON STREET, UTICA
FPC | 1 ELM STREET, WHITESBORO

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THANKS TO THE CHOIR!

We are so grateful to our faithful dedicated choir members for all their invaluable contributions to our worship services: Peggy Beaton, John Faust, Barb Hallenbeck, Rick Kincaid, Mike McHale, Judy Miller, Jan Waterbury, and Barb Wuest. Saturday rehearsals will resume in September.

PER CAPITA

We all work together to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ on many levels and in many places. The *per capita* is a financial assessment based on church membership which every congregation is responsible to pay. Our tradition is to include it as a line item in the budget. However, many congregations ask (never require) their members to pay their personal share in addition to their pledge. For 2024 each church member is assessed \$45. If you are able to pay your own *per capita*, it will have a positive impact on our cash flow.



Thank you to all who have been faithful in your pledge by mailing, dropping their tithes and offerings in the plate or by using the QRcode. Please remember to continue fulfilling your pledges.

JUST A LITTLE Reminder You can mail your check to the church office at anytime.

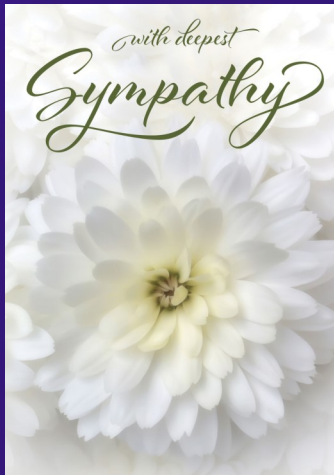
PASTOR AWAY

The Pastor will be away for the months of July and August. During this time, if you are in need of pastoral care or spiritual support, please do not hesitate to call the church office. We have arranged for a group of wonderful and compassionate clergy to be available to pray with you and provide any assistance you may need. Your well-being is important to us, and we are committed to ensuring you receive the care and support you deserve during the Pastor's absence.

SESSION NOTES

- Thank you to all the volunteers and cooks who support Your Neighbors by providing nutritious meals to shut-ins.
- We are continuing the elevator repairs, with multiple efforts to finance the project.
- The session will meet with the Presbytery to develop the "Plentiful Gift" program that empowers the gifts of the congregation.

take note



We extend our deepest sympathies to Rick Kincaid, Alice Putnam, and Becky Willsey on the recent passing of their beloved brother and uncle. During this challenging time, our thoughts are with you. May you find solace in the fond memories you shared and in the support of your loved ones.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- ◆ Worship Team - July 10th @ 7 pm
- ◆ Session Meeting - July 17th @ 2 pm
- ◆ Admin Team - July 24th @ 11 am
- ◆ Worship Team - August 14th @ 7 pm
- ◆ Session Meeting - August 21st @ 2 pm

LAST MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS!

MISSION NEWS!

Collecting Personal Hygiene Items for The Center During July and August

The Center is always looking for partner to collect personal hygiene items for those in need. This initiative aims to provide essential items



such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, and feminine hygiene products to individuals and families. Join us in making a difference. Your generosity can help promote wellness and self-respect within our community. Thank you for your support!

Collecting Non-Perishable Food Items

SEEDS OF HOPE food pantry is in need of non-perishable food items to support families and individuals facing food insecurity. We are calling on FIRST CHURCH during JULY, AUGUST, and SEPTEMBER to donate items such as canned vegetables, pasta, rice, cereal, peanut butter, and canned soups. Non-perishable food donations are crucial as they have a long shelf life and can be stored easily, ensuring a steady supply of nutritious food for those in need. Your contributions will help fill the pantry shelves and provide reliable meals to many in our community. Donations can be dropped off at the food pantry Tue. & Thur. during operating hours. You may also bring your items to the church and place them in the basket provided. Together, we can fight hunger and make a significant impact. Thank you for your support and generosity!



VILLAGE WIDE GARAGE SALE

Over \$1100 was raised for the church's mission.

A big thank you to everyone who helped make this a wonderful event for the community.



ROAD RACE

The Boilermaker race will be held on Sunday, July 14th. Allow extra time in coming to church.



Please excuse all errors, and omission, slight mistakes, and oversights.

LAST MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS!

COOK-IN

Cindy Molesky coordinated 100+ meals that were delivered to Your Neighbors to give to people who are not able to cook for themselves (hospital releases, other illness)...The meals go to the freezers at Zion Lutheran and will be distributed to people who need them by volunteers. Thank you to Marcia Bramhall, Judy Miller, Susan DePasquale, Debi Hoffman, and Becky Willsey who came out to package up the trays.



WE HAVE A SIGN!

We're excited to unveil the new sign in front of our Church! This vibrant, welcoming sign not only enhances the appearance of our church but also serves as a beacon for all the activities and services we offer. It's a symbol of our commitment to serving and connecting with our community. Be sure to check it out next time you're here!



Firstnews

"FIRSTnews" is published monthly.

NO SUBSCRIPTION FEE

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"Opening Minds, Hearts and Hands."

The Rev. Mark S. Caruana | Interim Pastor

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Birthdays

JULY

- 4 Beverly Ryan
- 10 Charlene Zegarelli
- 13 Carol Colerick
- 28 John Faust
- 30 Betty Abel-Jellencich
- 31 Peggy Beaton

AUGUST

- 1 Judy Blair
- 2 Valerie Phillips
- 10 George Abel

Anniversaries

JULY

- 12 John & Mary Wilde



On July 1st, the church office will start its summer hours on Monday through Thursday from 9AM-1PM. Regular hours will resume after Labor Day.

Holiday



The church office will be closed on July 3rd - 5th, in recognition of Independence Day!

On July 25th - August 2nd the office will be closed for Vacation