



# First *news*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | UTICA, NEW YORK  
JULY - AUGUST 2020



RESET  
RESTART  
REOPENING

Welcome Back to  
Onsite worship  
06.21.20  
10:30 a.m.

In just a few months, this pandemic dramatically changed our lives and turned our worlds upside down. As Christ's disciples, we are learning to worship, pray, encourage, witness, and serve in creative ways that minimize the risk of transmission of the virus.

**CHANGES TO OUR WORSHIP WILL HAPPEN AS WE BEGIN TO OPEN SAFELY. RE-OPENING GUIDELINES ARE LISTED ON THE NEXT PAGE**



# Future Life

When we put a for sale sign in front of the church, it never crossed anyone's mind that we would sell the church property while being physically isolated from one another. That is what has taken place. In summary what has happened in these last three months is that an offer has been made, accepted by church members, and approved by presbytery.

It's fair to say that the sale of the church property is a sad thing for everyone. Given that it is not possible for us to maintain the property into the future, many of us feel that this particular offer is an answer to prayer. We believe that the legacy of our congregation will be carried forward, in a very different, but significant way. In line with our concern to meet community needs, the buyer will use the building for addiction and substance use rehabilitation. The philosophy of this project is: "to combat the hurdles faced by those struggling with addiction. By creating a facility in a local setting, participants can engage in their recovery process free of distractions, in a calming and relaxed environment, surrounded by counselors and peers with similar backgrounds and experiences. What will set our facilities apart is our focus on recreational therapy, a non-traditional approach to addiction recovery that is growing in popularity due to its success. Recreational therapy integrates activities such as art, music, and sports into the treatment program. Mental health services, ongoing recovery support will also be critical components of the treatment. Most importantly, we will create a safe place for pregnant women with children to begin their recovery without facing the threat of losing their children to the foster care system. This portion of the population is severely underserved in the rehabilitation community."

The date of closing has been delayed due to consequences of COVID, so we do not know when that will take place. There is a possibility that we will negotiate the use of the sanctuary while we explore together where we would like to relocate. That conversation with the buyer will take place in the near future. If we are able to continue to worship here it would be wonderful, if not we have options and time to explore them together. In spite of the uncertainty of details, we trust God to be leading us where God wants us to be.

Among the other things that have taken place in the last three months:

- We have increased e-mail communications, if you have not been included please email the church (fpcutica@gmail.com) and that will give the church your e-mail address.
- Seeds of Hope Food Pantry has remained open, with no more than 10 people in Fellowship Hall at a time.
- Session has met for regularly scheduled meetings and special meetings via zoom video conferencing.
- Worship prayers and reflections have been posted on YouTube every Sunday (FPCUtica).
- We will continue to receive One Great Hour offering through August.



## FIRST CHURCH RE-OPENING GUIDELINES

*Our desire is to honor the Biblical command to gather as a church family for corporate worship, while implementing wise guidelines that serve one another and our community.*



**No touch** - temperature taken when you enter the building. Must be under 100°



**Sanitizing supplies** will be available upon arrival to the building.



**We are requiring everyone in attendance to wear masks.** Please bring your own masks. If you need a mask please speak to Rev. Jeanne.



**Do your part: stay 6' feet apart.** Your health first—social distancing in effect at all times.



Pews are roped off in the sanctuary to provide **6' distancing** between households. We will operate well under 25% capacity in accord with regulations.



**Different worship gatherings are available each weekend.** Online feed will still be available on YouTube: FPCUTICA for those who wish to stay at home.



**Worship elements** are being adapted differently to provide the healthiest environment we can provide. (i.e. Communion, coffee hour, hospitality, etc.) We will keep you updated when we will be including these elements.



**The sanctuary will be sanitized after each service with disinfecting spray.** Bathrooms will be cleaned after use. ONLY one bathroom will be available during worship time.



We recommend **folks who are at risk** participate in worship online from their home. **Please stay at home if you have a fever and are symptomatic.**



# Sympathy

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This pandemic has been extremely challenging for so many people, yet we cannot think of anything more difficult than the loss of a church member. The church family is deeply saddened by the passing of **John Lanz** on Friday, June 5th, and expresses condolences to Bill Westcott during this difficult time.

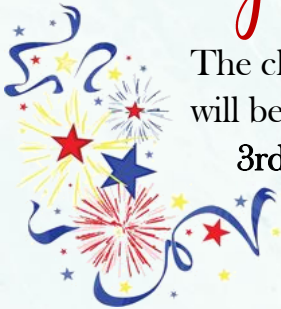
# Vacation

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Rev. Jeanne will be away on vacation the week of **August 2nd - August 9th**. If you are in need of pastoral care please contact the office at 315-732-5111.

# Holiday

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The church house and office will be closed on Friday, **July 3rd**, in recognition of Independence Day!



## This Summer

Thank you to all who have been faithful in mailing in their tithes and offerings during this pandemic. Please remember to continue fulfill your pledges during worship by dropping them in the provided container. We will also be continuing to collect One Great Hour of Sharing offering through August. You can mail your check to the church office at anytime.

# Summer Office Hours

On July 1st, the church office will start its summer hours. The office will be open Tue. through Fri. Regular hours will resume after Labor Day.



# Chancel Flowers

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Memorial flowers are purchased for the chancel at various times during the year. If you would like to purchase flowers in memory or in honor of a special person, please call the church office to confirm the availability of the date that you would like. An appropriate sized arrangement is usually purchased for \$65.

# Thank You

Many thanks to Peggy Beaton and Wayne Campbell, who have collated, folded, taped and labeled this issue of *FIRSTnews* just for you!



I will  
Trust &  
not be afraid  
ISAIAH 12:2



# First+news

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*"Opening Doors, Minds, and Hearts: Serving Christ and Community."*

The Rev. Jeanne Kumbalek | Pastor

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## Birthdays and Anniversaries

### JULY

- 4 Eloise O'Brien
- 4 Beverly Ryan
- 8 Jeanne Deaner
- 10 Charlene Zegarelli
- 13 Carol Colerick
- 26 Cornelia Knower
- 28 John Faust
- 30 Betty Abel-Jellencich
- 31 Peggy Beaton

### AUGUST

- 2 Judy Blair
- 3 Valerie Phillips
- 10 George Abel
- 10 Joshua Willsey



Happy Anniversary

### JULY

12 John & Mary Wilde