



First *news*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
WHITESBORO, NY
MAY 2024

LEARNING TO LISTEN

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. —2 Corinthians 5:18

I have been thinking about conflict a great deal recently. It almost goes without saying that we live in a conflicted world. Open, violent warfare defines the relationships between the Ukraine and Russia, Israel and Gaza. I am writing a few hours after Iran launched an unprecedented missile and drone attack against Israel in retaliation for its destruction of the Iranian embassy in Syria. Many fear that this may be the spark that ignites a broader regional conflict.

Conflict is not limited to relations between nation states. Our nation's electoral and governing systems are increasingly defined by dysfunctional conflict. Our politicians demonize their opponents, regularly engage in fearmongering, and are unable to agree on solutions that promote

the common good. Families and marriages also experience the destructive power of unresolved conflict. Spouses are alienated from each other. Children are alienated from their parents. Many are angry at the world believing no one cares for them. Is there any hope when people have come to distrust one another, relationships are strained to the breaking point, and objectives seem to push us in opposite directions?

Twenty years ago, I completed my doctoral studies at Hartford Seminary. A significant portion of my coursework was in conflict resolution and reconciliation. One of things I learned about conflict resolution is that it begins not with an answer or solution to a problem, but with the ability to be present and to genuinely listen to others in their pain, anger, and fear.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German Lutheran pastor and

theologian who was martyred for his opposition to the Third Reich, writes about the power of listening in a little book titled, *Life Together*.

Many people are looking for an ear to listen. They are talking where they should be listening, but he who can no longer listen to his brother will soon no longer be listening to God either. . . (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, New York: Harper & Row, 1954, p. 97)

Listening is hard work. It is easier to speak. In our increasingly conflicted world with its many differences of opinion, competing goals, and differing agendas, a genuine listening ear and open heart may be the gifts the world most needs. These are also the very gifts those who walk in the way of Jesus may be best equipped to offer. May God grant us the capacity to genuinely listen to others. As Bonhoeffer observes, in listening, we not only serve one another, but we also develop the ability to hear God's voice.

Grace and Peace,
Mark S. Caruana
Interim Pastor

Join APE for

PENTECOST SUNDAY

joint service with WMO

May
19th

10:30
am

Wear the color of fire: red, orange and yellow!



1 Elm Street | Whitesboro, NY

There are several accounts in the Bible that describe the coming of the spirit to the church and the difference it makes in our lives. Luke describes how the disciples were waiting and praying together in Jerusalem, when they were overwhelmed by the spirit's power. It blew through their lives, making it possible for them to speak so they could be understood. It transformed them from people unsure of how to proceed, to those who were in the grip of a grace that expanded their understanding, and the reach of their witness.

EACH SUNDAY ...

**FOLLOWING WORSHIP IN
FELLOWSHIP HALL**

JOIN IN FOR COFFEE, REFRESHMENTS & CONVERSATION!

- If you enjoy baking, please consider signing up to bring snacks for one of our upcoming coffee hours. Sign-up sheets for the whole year are conveniently located in the hall just outside the fellowship hall.



Join us!

for a special Mother's Day coffee hour filled with food, games, gifts, and fellowship!

Session Notes:

- For over 70 years, One Great Hour of Sharing has provided Presbyterians a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world. Our OGH (One Great Hour) offering raised over \$1800 this year.
- Session has made plans for that with WMO in Kirkland Park in August, pavilion secured...more info to follow.
- We have invited WMO to share worship services here on Pentecost Sunday May 19 at 10:30.
- Session voted to host the Presbytery Meeting September 23rd 2025

Cashless Giving Opportunity!

Our Cashless Giving Opportunity is live and provides members and friends with a modern and convenient way to contribute digitally, ensuring seamless support for our ministries. With the **TITHE.LY APP**, we empower individuals to embrace technological advancement while upholding the tradition of generosity in our community. Utilize our QR code for instant access to our contribution platform, where you can seamlessly sign in, create an account, or simply give a one-time gift to support our church's mission and ministries. Embrace the ease of digital giving as we strive to make your donation experience as convenient and meaningful as possible.



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

This bag is pure
Magic



hannaford.2givelocal.com
Community Bag Program

Seeds of Hope News

We are so excited to share that, for the entire month of MAY, Seeds of Hope has been selected by store leadership at both New Hartford Hannaford's to receive a \$1 donation from every purchase of the \$2.50 Community Bag. This is a great way to broaden awareness and help our cause. The Community Bag Program facilitates community support with the goal of making a difference where shoppers live and work. Over \$2.2 million has been donated to more than 6,000 nonprofit organizations since the program launched in October 2015. Let's get started! Share the news with friends and family. Call, send emails, and post on social media. The more people who purchase the Community Bag in MAY, the greater the donation we will receive from Hannaford.

4593 Commercial Drive,
&
50 Kellogg Road
New Hartford NY

Volunteers



We're excited to invite volunteers to join us in a wonderful opportunity to spread some community spirit! We're looking for enthusiastic individuals to help distribute refreshing bottled water right in front of the church on Monday, May 27th, coinciding with the village's annual parade. It's a fantastic

chance to engage with our neighbors and offer a small gesture of hospitality during this festive occasion. Keep an eye out for further updates and details as we organize this event to make a meaningful contribution to our community celebration!

Upcoming Meetings

- ♦ **Worship Team** -
- May 8th @ 6:30 p.m.
- ♦ **Session Meeting**
- May 15th @ 2 p.m.

Special THANKS!

Gratitude goes out to everyone who contributed soups and breads for our Lenten Lunches. Following the Lenten Luncheon series, any remaining soup and chili were carefully packed into containers for Your Neighbors. Cindy Molesky personally delivered 106 containers to Zion Lutheran Church and stored them in the freezer for Your Neighbors.



Community Events!

Rev. Dr. Mary Webster

PRESENTS

MAY
18



Mark Bolos



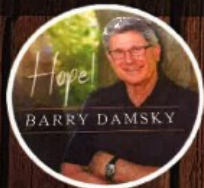
Rev. Dr. George Clark

Deacon, Kenneth Bowens
The Saint Paul's Men's Chorus



The Reverends Harrieff

*Gospel
Benefit Concert*



Barry Damsky



Rabbi Galiley
& The Messianic Project

First Baptist Church, 7 Oxford Rd. - New Hartford, NY,
No Admission - Free will offering

Mohawk Valley Choral Society

performs **Mozart's Requiem**

with works by Randall Thompson



Directed by Mr. David Kolb

Featuring orchestra and soloists:

Laura Enslin, Soprano

Ying Wu, Alto

Juan Tello, Tenor

Mark Webster, Bass

Sunday, May 19, 2024

4:00 P.M.

Our Lady of Lourdes Church
of Mary, Mother of Our Savior Parish
2022 Genesee St., Utica

TICKETS on sale in mid-April:

\$12 in advance OR \$15 at the door

Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts, Little Falls

New Hartford Presbyterian Church: 9-3, M-F

Weisser's Jewelers, Herkimer

For reservations
and/or further information,
please call 315-826-3092

OR

contact the website at:
www.mvchoral.org

Holiday

The office will be
closed on Monday,
May 27th, in honor of
Memorial Day.

memorial
★ DAY

Perfection
isn't a
requirement.
What truly
matters is
embracing
God's Grace.

IT'S BACK!
**MEATBALL
MADNESS!**

Taste & Vote for the **BEST MEATBALLS**
in the greater Utica area!

Sunday, May 19th, 2024

3pm - 6 pm

At the:



Adults - \$30
Kids (2-12) - \$20
Seniors (65+) - \$25
Military (w/ ID) - \$25

Advance Sale Tickets:

www.theabrahamhouse.org

ABRAHAM
HOUSE
our house, your home



Meet the Fire Department

Join us for a Special Luncheon! Help our local fire department's Annual Fund Drive by joining us for a delicious luncheon on May 29th! This isn't just a meal—it's a chance to unite in support of our community and hear inspiring stories from our firefighters.

Date: May 29th

Location: Fellowship Hall

As part of their ongoing commitment to keeping the village safe, all donations collected during the luncheon will directly support the Annual Fund Drive. Your generosity empowers our volunteer department to continue serving with excellence.

Come prepared to savor good food, enjoy great company, and discover more about the department and their upcoming events. Let's stand together in support of a safer, stronger community.

Mark your calendars and Save the Date!

We look forward to seeing you there!



We would love you to join ...

We're delighted to have welcomed several former members of Whitesboro Presbyterian Church to our Sunday worship services and other gatherings at First Presbyterian. Whether you're a member of the former congregation or not, if you're worshipping with us and interested in joining First Presbyterian Church, please don't hesitate to reach out to Pastor Mark.



June Highlights!

- **Your Neighbor Cook-In - Coming soon!**
This cook-in isn't just about preparing food; it's about coming together as neighbors to support one another and make a difference in people's lives. By lending your time and skills, you'll be spreading warmth and nourishment to those who need it most. Mark your calendars and get ready to roll up your sleeves! Together, we can make a real impact and show the power of compassion and community spirit. Stay tuned for more details on how you can get involved and help make this event a success.
- **Village-Wide Garage Sale!** Get ready for an exciting event coming your way next month: the village-wide garage sale! And this year, we're adding a special twist with our very own parking lot sale right here at the church. It's the perfect opportunity to clear out your clutter and turn your unwanted items into cash. Start setting things aside now and reserve your spot to sell your extra stuff. Whether you have clothes, furniture, toys, or household items to sell, this is your chance to declutter and make some extra money in the process. Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity to join in the village-wide garage sale festivities and showcase your goods at our parking lot sale. Stay tuned for more details on your donation to us and how to reserve your spot and make the most of this exciting event!



Did Jesus Have a Favorite Bible?

By Dr. John Barnett

If you were put on the spot and hundreds of eyes and ears were on you and you were asked to give THE reason why you know the Bible is true—what would you say? That question is best answered by remembering what Jesus said in the same situation.

At that huge gathering, called the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus confidently told all the thousands who heard Him speak—that Heaven and Earth would pass away before any word of His Bible failed. Wow, He sure knew He had a Bible He could trust. Jesus didn't fear that there were any historical, moral, theological, and scientific inaccuracies in His Bible. He had a copy of the Book anyone can trust!

But as we read Matthew 5:17-19, Jesus summed it up as simply this, HE believed God's Word and so should we:

*“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”¹⁸ **For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.**¹⁹*

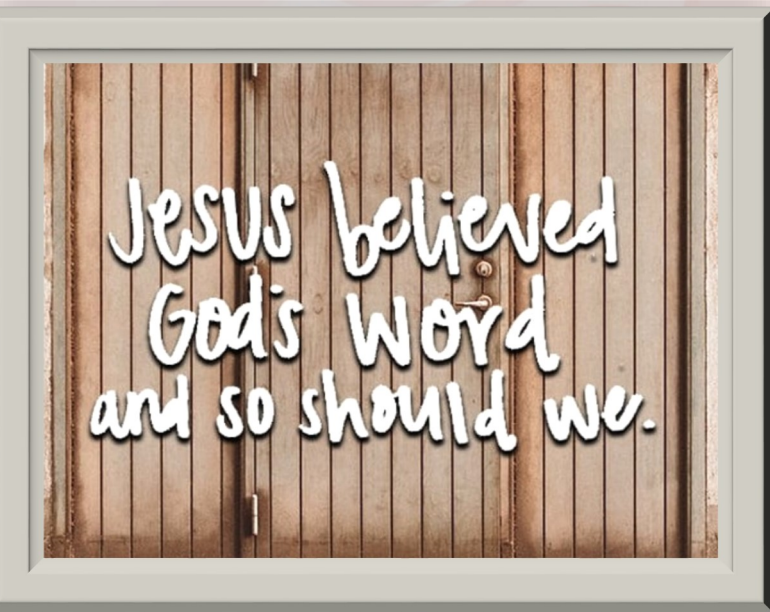
Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

Have you ever looked down and wondered if you really held the same Bible Jesus had, the one God breathed out supernaturally by inspiration? And further, have you ever wondered if this one is okay, because it is a translation, and not the actual Hebrew or Greek words that God gave to those 40 plus men, who He used to write the Bible?

This is the Bible Jesus Used

The Septuagint was the first translation of the Hebrew Bible; and was made in the third century B.C. by Jewish scribes, who were direct descendants of those trained in Ezra's Great Synagogue of Jerusalem. They were complete experts in the text, being very well versed in Hebrew and Greek.

This translation became very popular among Jews in the first two centuries before Christ because many Jews in those days did not understand Hebrew. Their ancestors had left Israel centuries before, and genera-



tion after generation gradually lost the ability to read the Scriptures in Hebrew.

Many of the Jews in Jesus' day used the Septuagint as their Bible. Quite naturally, the early Christians also used the Septuagint in their meetings and for personal reading; and many of the New Testament apostles quoted it when they wrote the Gospels and Epistles in Greek. What is most fascinating is that the order of the books in the Septuagint is the same order in our Bibles today, and not like the Hebrew scrolls. So this means that:

Jesus Primarily Used a Translation

Jesus and the Apostles: studied, memorized, used, quoted, and read most often from the Bible of their day, the Septuagint. Since Matthew wrote primarily to convince the Jews that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed their promised Messiah, it follows as a matter of course that his Gospel is saturated with the Hebrew Scriptures. Yet, when Jesus quotes the Old Testament in Matthew, He uses the Hebrew text only 10% of the time, but the Greek LXX translation—90% of the time!

Amazingly, Jesus and Paul used the LXX as their primary Bible. It was just like the Bible each of us holds in our hands, not the original Hebrew Old Testament, but a translation of the Hebrew into Greek. But it was based on exactly the same original and inspired words, and reads just like the Bible we hold in our hands today.

note: This content was taken from the original article “What Bible Did Jesus Use.”

Away for Vacation

Beth will be on vacation from Wednesday, May 24th, through Friday, May 31st. If you need to contact the pastor please call the church office and leave a message. Calls will be returned -

Firstnews

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NO SUBSCRIPTION FEE

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315.732.5111

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

The Rev. Mark S. Caruana | Interim Pastor

E-Mail fpcutica@gmail.com | Follow us at www.facebook.com/fpcutica

May Birthdays

- 1 Kay Blancovich
- 5 Norma Cutler
- 24 Christine Coons
- 26 Steve Best

