



# First news

OCTOBER 2025 NEWSLETTER  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, WHITESBORO, NY

## *Witnesses, Saints, and Neighbors*

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us..." (Hebrews 12:1)*

In early versions of the Bible, the word "witnesses" was translated as "saints." All Saints Day was established to remember all the "saints" who have passed to the next life, but their "witness" helps Christians to "persevere in the race marked out for us." The original author of Hebrews was not establishing a special day in the church year, but it became a key verse as the church established "All Saints Day." "All Hallowed Eve," or Halloween, is the making sacred or hallowed of the saints and martyrs in the early church in preparation for All Saints Day. Vigils the night before are common for church holidays such as Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving.

There are many theories on the origins of Halloween. Like many Christian holidays, their historical roots are cloudy, with the intentions of the church and parallel pagan festivities. One theory is that Halloween and All Saints Day came from a Celtic harvest festival, specifically from the Irish. The Celtic festival referenced is Samhain, which is celebrated at the end of the harvest with the transition to "darker days." The Gaelic version of Samhain is the word "November." Samhain was a time to commune with their ancestors as part of the festival. Irish literature includes mythology that it was a great gathering and feast that included opening ancient burial mounds as portals to the Otherworld. (Do you now understand the skeletons, demons, and devil imagery?) The literature includes huge bonfires and sacrifices. Expanded oral history suggested the souls were released and visited their homes looking for hospitality, thus the "Trick or Treat" tradition.

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## **World Communion Sunday October 5th**

On Sunday, October 5, we will join Christians around the world in celebrating World Communion Sunday. This special day reminds us that the table of Christ is wide enough to welcome all people, uniting us as one body across nations, cultures, and traditions.

As we share the bread and cup, we remember that the peace of Christ is not only a gift but also a calling. We are invited to be active peacemakers—building God's household of love and justice here in our community and across the globe.

As part of this celebration, we will receive the Peace & Global Witness Offering. This offering supports ministries of reconciliation and peace-building both locally and worldwide, helping the church live out its witness in tangible ways. A portion of what we give stays here in our community, while the rest joins with gifts from congregations everywhere to make an even greater impact.

Together, our giving and our prayers become part of God's work of healing and hope for the world. May this World Communion Sunday remind us that in Christ, we are never alone, but always bound together in love.



Continued from cover

The combined customs of the church (celebrating the Saints) and pagan (scary costumes, and Trick or Treat) were brought to North America in the 19th century.

All Saints Day has now become a Sunday to remember the church members who have passed in the preceding year. In some traditions (predominantly Catholic), it incorporates recognized Saints. It is not a huge event in the life of the church. In contrast, "All Hallowed Eve," or Halloween, has become the second-largest holiday in America, with 70% of the population participating in some form. It is the fourth-highest revenue-generating holiday with \$7 billion in revenue, following Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Valentine's Day.

This short summary of Halloween and All Saints Day is to encourage us to share our church with others. Yes, we at the First Presbyterian Church will have an "All Saints Sunday" on November 2. We are also planning Trunk or Treat on October 31st. It is a wonderful time for kids of all ages. But it is so much more. Trunk or Treat is an excellent opportunity to meet our neighbors. I hope you will come and contribute to the hospitality for which the First Presbyterian Church is known. Let's greet and welcome our neighbors!

~Pastor George



## Prayer List

We believe in the power of prayer and the peace it brings. If you or someone you know would like to be added to our prayer list, please contact the church office. Let's join together in faith—supporting one another with love, and heartfelt prayer.

- Reid Simpson
- Tom Harrington
- Davis Family
- Capraro Family
- Morris Family
- Glenna Pryor
- Barb Wuest
- Mariana Tata
- Linda Weise
- Judy Westerhoff

*"The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective."* — James 5:16

## Calendar of Events

Oct 5<sup>th</sup> —

**World Communion**

Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> —

**Disciple Bible Study**

Oct 8<sup>th</sup> —

**Worship Team Mtg.**

Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> -

**Disciple Bible Study**

Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> —

**Session Mtg.**

Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>—

**Craft Connection**

Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> -

**Disciple Bible Study**

Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> —

**Admin. Team Mtg.**

Oct. 28<sup>th</sup> -

**Disciple Bible Study**

Oct 31<sup>st</sup> —

**Trunk or Treat**

## Holiday —

The office will be closed on Monday, **October 13th**, in recognition of Columbus Day. The Church Office has flexible hours.



## Closed —

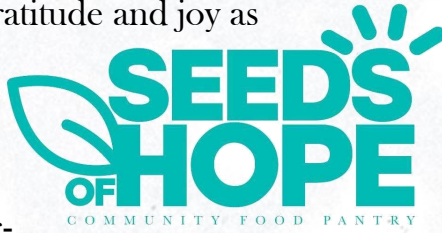
The church office will be closed from Tuesday, Oct. 14th through Tuesday, Oct. 21st for Beth's vacation. Voicemail will be checked regularly throughout the week and for pastoral care concerns during this time.

## Away —

Pastor will be away until Monday, October 6th. Please call the church office if you need Pastoral care.

# MVGives! Thank you so much!

We are filled with gratitude and joy as we share the incredible impact of **MOHAWK VALLEY GIVES!**



Sept 19th was a spectacular success for **Seeds of Hope Food Pantry**, raising an impressive \$10,418 from 65 generous donors. The entire Mohawk Valley Gives campaign was a remarkable achievement, raising a total of 6,5690,169 million from over 8,181 donors, 369 non-profits in the Mohawk valley area.

Organizations received funding through this campaign, and we are honored to be part of this life-changing effort. Plans are underway for next years campaign.



## Sympathy

We share in sorrow at the passing of **Ken Church** on Thursday, September 25th. Ken's church family held a very special place in his life, and we give thanks for the bonds of love and faith that surrounded him here. We lift up his distant family as well, asking God's comfort and peace to be with them.

May we all be strengthened by the hope we have in Christ and by the assurance of eternal life.

A Celebration of Life for **Ken** will be held on Sunday, October 19th at 1:00 p.m., followed by a meal. Please make plans to attend this time of remembrance and thanksgiving for his life.



## TRUNK or TREAT

**Friday, October 31st** this year, join us for a fun-filled evening here in the church parking lot! Decorate your trunk, dress up in your favorite costumes, and enjoy passing out candy. Come out for this safe and family-friendly experience!

We need at least **10 cars** to make this event a success, and we already have **5 volunteers** signed up! We encourage more of you to join this fun and meaningful community outreach.

There is a way for everyone to help in this outreach. We are asking for everyone to bring in **TWO or THREE LARGE** bags candy and place it in the basket in the sanctuary during the month of October. Let us fill each trunk with lots of candy to give out. Please bring a variety of candy for the kids to enjoy—let's skip the Dum Dums!



## TRUNK or TREAT

**October 31, 2025**

**4-7 PM**

*apple cider and hot chocolate*

*Sign-up to decorate your trunk*

*prizes for the best theme*

First Presbyterian Church  
1 Elm Street | rear parking lot



# Jared Box Project



The Jared Box Project aims to provide hospitalized children with small gifts to brighten their day and offer comfort during their stay. Each box is filled with toys, activities, and items that are safe and age-appropriate. The list of suggested items to include based on the child's age group is on a flyer on the table in the sanctuary. You may bring items for the project to the church and leave them in the box in the sanctuary or you may shop our Amazon Wish list using the QR code and have them delivered to the church.

**Deadline is 10/26**



## Jared Box Project Suggested Toy List



All items must be new. **NO** food items. **NO** tiny items due to choking hazards. **NO** snow globes or glass items that can break.

**NO** pencil sharpeners. **NO** bubbles. **NO** holiday items.

**KEEP IN MIND: TOYS NEED TO FIT INTO A PLASTIC SHOE BOX**

### Infant (0 to 12 months)

Softcover books, cardboard books, rattles, bibs, stacking blocks, farm animal sets, clip-on toys for strollers or cribs, crib mirrors, bath toys, stuffed animals, balls, busy boxes, light-up toys, musical toys, Oball toys. Other toys that are labeled as suggested for infants. **Be aware of choking hazards.**

### Toddler (1 to 3)

Softcover books, cardboard books, stacking blocks, farm animal sets, small toys that clip on strollers, bath toys, stuffed animals, balls, busy boxes, musical toys, colorful pillowcases, fun socks, chunky crayons, coloring books, flashcards, plastic cars, puppets, soft dolls. Other toys that are labeled as suggested for children under 3. **Be aware of choking hazards.**

### Preschool (3 to 5)

Crayons, coloring books, grab-n-go activity kits, reading books, stickers, sticker workbooks, activity books, matchbox cars, NERF or rubber balls, stuffed animals, flashcards, fun socks, small action figures, small dolls, travel size games, Silly Putty, simple puzzles, card games (Go Fish, Old Maid, Memory), colorful pillowcases, dress up items, farm animal sets, dinosaurs. Other toys that are labeled as suggested for Preschoolers.

### Elementary (5 to 8)

Crayons, markers, colored pencils, pens, coloring books, word searches, activity books, reading books, joke books, matchbox cars, NERF balls, stuffed animals, stickers, Silly Putty, LEGO kits, craft kits, Slinky, travel games (Sorry, Connect 4), hand lotion, colorful pillowcases, reusable water bottle, fun socks, action figures, puzzles, deck of cards, UNO card game. Other toys that are labeled as suggested for school-aged children.

### Tweens & Teens (8 and up)

Crayons, markers, colored pencils, pens, coloring books, word searches, doodle pads, writing journals, Silly Putty, stuffed animals, card games, LEGO kits, puzzles, brain games, books, magazines, Chapstick®, hand lotion, fun socks, colorful pillowcases, jewelry making kits, craft kits, paint sets, reusable water bottle. Other items that are labeled as suggested for teens.

**HELP  
FILL A BOX**

## *Please help us...*

### **We're Almost There!**

We are in the final stages of completing our new church directory, and we don't want to miss you! Please help us stay connected:

- Do we have your current phone number?
- Do we have your email address for the newsletter and weekly e-blast?

If you haven't been receiving emails from us, please call the church office with your updated information. Thank you for helping us keep our church family in touch!

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

*Be  
thankful in  
all things  
not for all  
things.*

## **Cards Needed**

We are collecting **birthday, thinking of you, and get well cards** to support our church's year-round outreach! These cards will be used to encourage, uplift, and stay connected with members of our church family throughout the year.

We welcome store-bought or handmade cards, which will be kept on hand and used as needed by our compassionate care teams to bring comfort, joy, and love to those who could use a little extra support.

**Drop Off:** Basket provided in the sanctuary.

Thank you for helping us share God's love and strengthen our community!

## ***Craft Connection***

**Every 3rd Monday of the month**

**October 20th @ 1:30 - 3 pm**

Join us for the **CRAFT CONNECTION**. Bring your own supplies for your favorite project—or simply bring yourself—and enjoy an afternoon of creativity and connection. We look forward to meeting, sharing ideas, and fellowshiping together! See Betty Cardamone @ [abcardamone@verizon.net](mailto:abcardamone@verizon.net) for all the details.

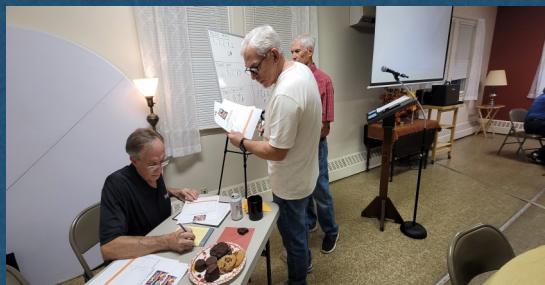




# September Highlights!



## Trivia Night







**WFD**  
**BBQ**  
*Chicken*  
**OCT 5TH**

**\$14**

**NOON TILL SOLD OUT**

FULL DINNER | CHICKEN - POTATOES - COLE SLAW - ROLL  
DRIVE THRU - 171 ORISKANY BLVD, WHITESBORO, NY 13492

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**Blessing of the  
Animals**  
In Celebration of the  
Feast of St. Francis  
Sunday  
**Oct. 5, 2025 1:00 p.m.**

Clinton Village Green Gazebo

Bring your pet to be blessed or have your pet blessed virtually by picture or digital image.

Donations of pet food and supplies will be collected for pets of Country Pantry clients.

Many living on fixed or limited income live alone and have companion animals that need support.

Sponsored by the Clinton Area Ministerium



**Second Gospel**  
*Hymn Sing*

Come spend an afternoon singing the old Gospel Hymns such as:  
The Old Rugged Cross • What A Friend We Have in Jesus  
It Is Well With My Soul • Blessed Assurance  
and many more!

**THIS EVENT IS FREE!  
ALL ARE WELCOME!**

*Come Be inspired!*

Special appearances by

David Ossenfort  
Tenor

David Kolb

Several International Choirs

A Community Choir

**Sunday, October 5, 3:30 pm**  
1134 Herkimer Road(Route 5)  
North Utica, NY 13502

 **Seventh-day  
Adventist Church**  
UTICA INTERNATIONAL

Music Leader and contact Person  
Randy Davis (315) 429-9399

New Hartford  
Presbyterian Women's  
**Rummage Sale!**

**October 9, 2025**

9 AM—3 PM

1 PM Bag Sale

45 Genesee Street, New Hartford

For more information, please call 315.732.1139





# Firstnews

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First Presbyterian Church | 1 Elm Street | 315.732.5111

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

The Rev. Mark C. Caruana

E-Mail [fpcutica@gmail.com](mailto:fpcutica@gmail.com) | Follow us at [www.facebook.com/fpcutica](http://www.facebook.com/fpcutica)

## Birthdays

*In October the following people celebrate their birthdays.*

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 5 Sophie Coons   | 25 Eleanor Angell |
| 13 Jan Waterbury | 29 Nancy Riecker  |
| 15 Maci Ward     |                   |
| 18 Donna Currie  |                   |
| 21 Kathy Bogner  |                   |



Wishing a very happy 102nd birthday to Eleanor Angell.

To send cards:

2150 Bleecker Street  
Adirondack/Saranac  
Utica, New York 13501

## Anniversaries

- 12 Duane and Becky Willsey

Daylight  
Saving Time  
Ends!  
DON'T Forget!  
TO  
TURN BACK  
Your CLOCK!

NOV. 2