

First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls



1st Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls



A Member Congregation of the
Covenant Network of Presbyterians

Toward a Church as Generous
and Just as God's Grace

December Newsletter 2021

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Pastor's Corner



It is hard to believe we have entered the last month of 2021. These last two years I have felt like we have been living in a wormhole, but in the spinning there have always been places for us to spot, so as to not become dizzy or overwhelmed. One of those points is the Season of Advent. Last year we were unable to gather safely, so we stood together outside every week for 15 minutes, distanced and with masks, to light the Advent Candle. For me, this was a highlight of 2020. Though we can gather indoors this year, we will continue to light our Advent Wreath outside, a place for others to spot or pinpoint, lest they feel overwhelmed or dizzy.

The Advent Candles set the intentions for the week. Each theme gives us a focus for our prayers, activities and conversations.

Hope - What is your hope?

Peace - How do you create peace?

Love - Who are you struggling to love?

Joy - How do you experience joy?

Christ - How are you serving Christ?

Remember, prayers are a variety of shapes - silent, words, dance, instruments and songs. Activities can include shopping, baking, walking and creating. Conversations can be with loved ones, strangers or enemies. We are invited to prepare in the Season of Advent. We are invited to spend the last month of the year preparing for the year to come, the birth of Christ. How is Jesus' birth going to change your life in 2022? I look forward to hearing about your weeks in Advent.

Peace, Pastor Leah

Session Briefs

At its Thursday, November 18, 2021 meeting, the Session:

- Approved concert for opera singer on December 23rd
- Heard request and approved membership, with a letter of transfer from First Presbyterian Church of Waterloo, for Carol Millis and Ann Millis.
- Approved opening church 10am to 2pm on Friday and Saturday of *It's A Wonderful Life* weekend, and heard call for volunteer hosts for related art show in church social rooms
- Heard call for Elders to volunteer as mentors for church youth in Confirmation Class
- Approved leave for Pastor 12/26/21 to 01/01/22
- Discussed possibilities for building a Membership Campaign incorporating our Sunday recitation of *Be Welcoming* Be Compassionate* Be You (bravely)*Be Community*
- Discussed how and where to move COVID Memorial ribbons from church outdoor front steps
- Discussed floor conditions at Eastman Hall and the need for annual upkeep
- Heard report of 16 stewardship pledges returned, to date
- Heard plans for Christmas Eve worship for Advent Wreath, special music, Scripture reading and Communion
- Discussed how our local church may go about studying and engaging in the work of improved racial relations

The next meeting of the Session will be on Thursday, December 16, 2021



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<i>Bea Jones-12/2</i>	<i>Jay Hoyle-12/18</i>
<i>Neil Walsh- 12/3</i>	<i>Erica Walsh- 12/19</i>
<i>Jean Morris-12/6</i>	<i>Mary Beth Day-12/22</i>
<i>Joanne Elysée-12/11</i>	<i>Megan Derr-12/27</i>
<i>Peter Seem-12/17</i>	<i>Michelle Dugan- 12/27</i>



Women's Circle



Will meet on Monday, December 6th at 12:30pm

When the Women's Circle last met, it was November. Ginny, Barb, Michele and Joyce listened as Kae read to us from Exodus and gave an opening prayer. Joyce had a movie suggestion as part of our ongoing effort to further our understanding of, and appreciation for, cultural diversity.

A United Kingdom (premiered at the Toronto Film Festival 2016)

Directed by Amma Asante, born to Ghanaian parents, immigrants to the UK

This film, based on the true life story of British citizen Ruth Williams and Prince Seretse Khama, a student in the UK from Bechuanaland (later Botswana), portrayed life and racial attitudes in the mid-20th century both in the UK and on the African continent. Ruth's family, with the exception of her sister, did not accept the marriage of Ruth and Seretse. When the couple moved to Bechuanaland, there was considerable distress among Seretse's family and village. International politics became involved and Ruth was forced to stay behind in the village, while Seretse travelled back to England. South Africa was in the grips of a racial apartheid, the scourge of which echoed throughout the continent. There is a happy ending to this film. Be patient! (Prince Seretse is played by British actor David Oyelowo, born in 1976, to Nigerian parents in the UK).

Moving on to our Scripture study, Michele led discussion of Chapter 2, "Rachel and Leah, Sisters and Rivals" in *The Women of the Bible Speak*. Michele helped us to see the rivalries which too often existed between sisters and among brothers in the Hebrew Bible, and how they went about reconciling these tensions. Forgiveness played a part, as did keeping God, in Michele's words, "...at the center of their lives and decision making." On a happy note, Barb heard from Ruby that she'd like to read this book and join us in discussion. We'll order a book from Alibris, straightaway. See you soon, Ruby!

When we meet on December 6th, Michele will lead us in prayer and give a Scripture reading and cultural diversity offering. She will also lead us in discussing Chapter 3, "Tamar and Ruth: Outsiders."

We now have sufficient funds in our treasury to buy a case of infant formula for the House of Concern. Barb will see to this.

We discussed the possibility of hosting a Holiday Luncheon, as Women's Circle has done in past years - minus *last* year...and considered since the church has not deemed it wise to resume coffee/refreshments and coffee hours, or potluck suppers, we will sadly forgo our luncheon for another year. We'll meet and maybe share some Christmas cookies on December 6th, and have our usual study time.

Each of us will bring a package of DIAPERS for the House of Concern

Joyce and Barb took the collection of cleaning supplies, donated both by us and by the congregation, over to the office at the Women's Shelter in Waterloo. Among our donations were paper towels, Soft Scrub, sponges, window cleaner, powdered cleanser, bleach, air fresheners, wash cloths, tissues, and various personal care items.

Ginny wrote an announcement for the worship bulletin, to appear on each Communion Sunday, in which we will ask for donations from the congregation to help with our work.

**DECEMBER special item for the House of Concern is DIAPERS
(infant and toddler sizes).**

Food and non-food household items are welcome any time!



The 75th Anniversary Celebration of “It’s a Wonderful Life” December 8-12, 2021

First Presbyterian Church will be a big part of the festivities!

Wednesday, December 8:

4:00 pm: Participants will include representatives of the Seneca County Suicide Prevention Coalition and RiSE (Resilience & Inclusion for Students Everywhere) youth group. Church Bells have historically been rung in times of celebration to herald in good news. As Seneca Falls becomes Bedford Falls and begins the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of “The Most Inspiring Film of All Time,” participants are invited to ring the church bell and sign the bell wall at the First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls.

Saturday, December 11:

4:40 pm: It’s a Wonderful Run 5K. We will be ringing the bells at First Pres as the runners fly by the church, **AND WE NEED YOUR HELP!! Please call the Church Office if you would like to help us let everyone know that these running angels have earned their wings!**

Every Day Throughout the Festival

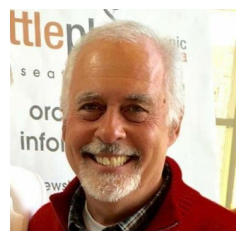
10:00 am to 2:00 pm: “The Timeless Message of ‘It’s a Wonderful Life’ - A Journey Through Seneca Falls.” Visitors will tour our church where Alice Paul first introduced the Equal Rights Amendment in 1923, ring the church bell and, according to our long-standing history, will sign the bell wall, and add their names to the giant guest book.

4:00 pm to 5:30 pm: “The Timeless Message of ‘It’s a Wonderful Life’”- Activities sponsored by the Seneca County Suicide Prevention Coalition and RiSE (Resilience & Inclusion for Students Everywhere) youth group.

10:00 am to 2:00 pm & 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm: “I want to live again! Reflections and lessons from George Bailey.” Paintings by Paul Abate will be on display in the Social Hall.

Please see the Seneca Falls “It’s a Wonderful Life” Museum website for specific times, and other events

Sunday, December 12 - Join Us After Our 10:00am Service for an Exclusive Coffe Hour With Rev. Greg Asimakoupoulos



Reverend Greg Asimakoupoulos will be our coffee hour guest on December 12th as part of the “It’s a Wonderful Life Festival.” Following the morning service, at 11:30, Pastor Greg will read excerpts from his book “Finding God in It’s a Wonderful Life.” This discussion will provide an opportunity to dialog with Pastor Greg about his sermon, his book and his connection to the movie. He will also sign copies of his book for those interested in purchasing them.

In addition to “Finding God in It’s a Wonderful Life,” Reverend Asimakoupoulos is the author of twelve books and he writes a “Faith and Values” column for three newspapers. He is the full time chaplain at a retirement community in suburban Seattle.



Meet Our New Pianist– Jen Braun!



Hello Church Family,

If you haven't already met me, my name is Jennifer (Jen) Braun, and I am the new pianist at First Pres. I am very excited to be starting this new position, and to be able to create more connections with all of you. I grew up in a Presbyterian church and was very active there, playing the piano and singing. I've also conducted two other church choirs, played the piano, and substituted at many different churches throughout Central New York. Currently, I teach general music to Pre-K through 5th grades full time, along with leading 4th grade and 5th grade choruses and a combined 4th/5th grade swing chorus. When I'm not working, I love doing arts and crafts, various projects with my husband Tim, and playing with our three dogs and one cat. My primary love, instrument-wise, is the piano. If you would like to get to know me better, or want to practice a piece of music together, please email me at Jenbraun33@gmail.com, or follow me on my personal Facebook page called Jen Braun. I look forward to meeting all of you soon!



January newsletter articles are due on December 21st and mailing will be on December 30th, due to the Christmas holidays.





Church Family News

Christmas Eve Service Readers and Musicians Needed - please consider lending your musical and oratory talents to our Christmas Eve service which will once again be held in the sanctuary. Come and celebrate the season with your Church Family! The service will also be available online.

Thank you to all who have submitted their **pledge forms**, as this is a tremendous help when making plans for 2022. If you haven't yet sent yours in and would like to, do so, we will still accept them. If you need a form, just let us know.

The **Per Capita** amount has stayed the same as the past two years. Our church must pay \$50.00 for each member on our rolls. Early payment of this Per Capita Apportionment will enable us to meet this obligation, due during the first six months of 2022. Thank you for your assistance and understanding.

Lindsay Kate Brown to Appear in Concert at First Pres



American mezzo soprano Lindsay Kate Brown will be performing in the sanctuary at First Pres on Thursday, December 23rd at 6:00 pm, with refreshments to follow in the Social Hall. The program will include holiday favorites and operatic classics.

Ms. Brown graduated from Binghamton University in 2016 with a degree in Opera Performance, and in 2018 was awarded an Artist Degree in Opera from Rice University in Houston, TX. She is currently appearing in Aucoin's *Eurydice* at the Metropolitan Opera House in NYC.

Members and Friends to Keep in Our Thoughts

Name

Address

Dorothy Dickieson	303 Ferris Hills, Canandaigua, NY 14424
Betty Geraghty	8 Iroquois Lane, Waterloo, NY 13165
Carson Langford	3120 Patton Road, Seneca Falls, NY 13148
Liza Merriam	Heritage Hall West, 61 Cooper Street, Agawam, MA 01001
Jean Morris	Lockport Presbyterian Home, 305-327 High Street, Lockport, NY 14094
Jean Stenlake	Steuben County Healthcare Facility, Room 125, 7009 Rumsey Street Ext., Bath, NY 14810



Congregational Meeting Sunday, November 21, 2020



A meeting of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls, New York was held in the sanctuary and opened with a prayer by Pastor and Moderator, the Reverend Leah Ntuala. The purpose of the meeting was to elect three elders for three-year terms, to begin in January, 2022. The following names were presented: Susan Derr, Michele Edmondson and Jay Hoyle. Nominations were called from the floor and there were none. Those named above were approved.

Pastor thanked the outgoing Nominating Committee of Marc Smith, Jay Hoyle, Bob Seem, Susan Sholar and Matthew Cramer, and the committee was dismissed. The congregation next approved a Nominating Committee for 2022, to work on 2023 nominations: Susan Derr, Sue Harkey, Matthew Cramer and Susan Sholar will serve. The meeting was adjourned by Reverend Ntuala.



Service Schedule



December 5th—Communion— Advent 2-Joel 2:12-13, 28-29; Luke 11:13
Turn to a merciful God, promise of the Spirit.

Join us <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMY7YsXpd6ybud2LmWCoijA>

December 12th—Advent 3-Isaiah 61:1-11; Luke 4:16-21; The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to bring good news, liberty, and to make an everlasting covenant.

Join us <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMY7YsXpd6ybud2LmWCoijA>

December 19th—Advent 4-Luke 1:26-45, 46-56; Psalm 113
Announcement of Jesus' birth to Mary; he will receive the throne of David.

Join us <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMY7YsXpd6ybud2LmWCoijA>

Christmas Eve—Join us at 7:00pm in the Sanctuary for Lessons and Carols.

Join us <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMY7YsXpd6ybud2LmWCoijA>

December 26th— Luke 2:21-38; Psalm 31

Simeon and Anna, Lord now you let your servant depart in peace.

Join us [https:// www.youtube.com/channel UCMY7YsXpd6ybud2LmWCoijA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMY7YsXpd6ybud2LmWCoijA)

January 2— John 1:35-51; Psalm 66:1-5

Behold the Lamb of God, call of Disciples, "Come and See."

Join us <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMY7YsXpd6ybud2LmWCoijA>

Liturgist List



Liturgist List

- 5th— Joyce Lohr
- 12th— Dick Damaske
- 19th— Peter Snyder
- 26th— Barb Van Kirk
- 2nd— Bob Seem

Coffee Hours

- Dec 5th: Dr. Suzie Park - Old Testament Lesson 5
- Dec 12: Rev. Greg Asimakoupoulos - reading from his book, "God in It's a Wonderful Life"
- Dec 19: Christmas Story, As Told By Kids
- Dec 26: No Coffee Hour; Christmas

All Coffee Hours, with the exception of Rev. Asimakoupoulos on Dec 12, will be held remotely; the link is available in ENews or on our website.

Prayer List

Know someone ill or hospitalized? Please call Sue Harkey at 315.568.2289



To Keep in Our Prayers: Reatha Bishop; Jennifer Colbert; Sue Ellen and Peter Crego; Norine Crull; Dorothy Dickieson; George Elyseev; Joanna Fuller; Betty Geraghty; Pat & Marvin Gordon; Tori Guerina; Crystal Hanes; Teall Harkey; Hedra Harrison; Jack Hassler; Greta Hauser & family; Al Johnson; Bea Jones; our Law Enforcement Officers, Firefighters and EMTs; Carson Lankford; David Lobdell; Ronald Lobdell Jr.; Lucy and Nancy Lopez; the Lowry family; Liza Merriam; Eleanor Mirabito; Tyler Morgan; Jinny Noone; Joy Novack; Elaine Ritter; John Schavemaker; Linda Schavemaker; Barb Squires; Jean Stenlake; the Swick family; Linda Warner; Darryl Wells; Gretchen Whitacre; and all those suffering in the world.

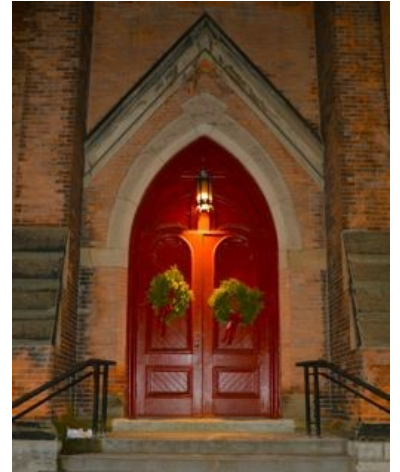
Church Office: 315-568-6636
Hours: Thursday 7:30am to 12:30pm
Manse: 315-398-4356
E-mail: firstpres13148@gmail.com
Website: www.fpressf.com

Scan this code
to learn more
about us!



Sunday In-Person and Online Worship at 10am

Rev. Leah Ntuala-Pastor
Rev. Dr. Peter J. Crego-Pastor Emeritus
Kae Hoyle -Treasurer
Laurie Weller- Office Manager
Peter Snyder- Sexton
Jen Braun- Pianist
Joyce Lohr- Clerk to the Session



Session meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 10am
Presently serving Elders: Jim Clark, Marion Crull, Dick Damaske, Susan Derr, Michele Edmondson,
Susan Harkey, Jay Hoyle, Ginny Konz and Marc Smith
Joyce Lohr, Clerk to the Session and with Pastor Leah as Moderator

First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls
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Happy Holidays to You

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