

February
2024

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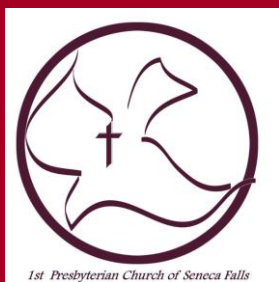
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1st Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls



March
Newsletter Articles
Are Due on February 22nd

The First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls Pastor's Corner



I wanted to take a moment to update you on my time in Pittsburgh. The classes I took this term were Public Theology/Prophetic Witness and Pastor as Adaptive Change Leader. My final project in Public Theology will engage with Artificial Intelligence and the Theology of Stewardship; how does AI direct where and how we spend our time? Where and how do we use our resources under the guidance of AI? Who is gaining the treasures from AI as a product? Does being a good steward in this context mean asking questions about the tools AI is using? The final project for Adaptive Change will wrestle with the question: how might God be moving in our practices of stewardship in partnership with the community? You will hear more about these on Feb 25th at Coffee Hour, but for this month I wanted to discuss a little of what happens when I am not in class.

On this trip I was able to visit The Heinz Museum, where the set for *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood* tv show is located. I am pictured here with Mr. Rogers who said, "Nobody else can live the life you live." Mr. Rogers was an ordained PCUSA pastor, who went to Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and lived in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood of Pittsburgh. The Seminary and Pittsburgh are filled with tributes to his life and ministry.

Mr. Rogers' ministry was in a public context. He had to talk to viewers, mostly children, without using theological language. As the world changed, his show adapted to the changing times. He understood and taught those watching that there can be many truths existing at the same time. He said, "All of us, at some time or other, need help. Whether we're giving or receiving help, each one of us has something valuable to bring to this world. That's one of the things that connects us as neighbors - in our own way, each one of us is a giver and a receiver." Mr. Rogers taught people that being a good neighbor was giving and receiving help. Being a good neighbor was about being honest with the ways we were feeling and giving those feelings healthy outlets. He couldn't tell the viewers to turn to the Psalms, but he did invite them to turn to music to express their feelings; the Psalms and prayers set to music.

Mr. Rogers didn't use the words "ministry" and "mission" in his show, but he did say, "As human beings, our job in life is to help people realize how rare and valuable each one of us really is, that each of us has something that no one else has or ever will have something inside that is unique to all time. It's our job to encourage each other to discover that uniqueness and to provide ways of developing its expression." It was nice to be in his neighborhood where one is valued, neighbor, helper, and helped all at the same time. It was nice to be in his neighborhood.

In 2024, our congregation will continue to do acts of random kindness, and remind others that "it is a beautiful day in the neighborhood." Peace, Pastor Leah

Contact Us

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Seneca Falls, NY

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Rev. Dr. Peter J. Crego-

Pastor Emeritus

Laurie Weller- Office Manager

Kae Hoyle- Treasurer

Peter Snyder-Sexton

Jen Braun- Music Director

Carol Millis- Bell Choir Director

Susan Sholar – pro tem Clerk of
Session

Session

Session meets every
3rd Thursday at 10am

Presently serving

Ruling Elders:

Jim Clark, Marion Crull, Dick

Damaske, Susan Derr,

Michele Edmondson,

Jay Hoyle, Ginny Konz,

Anne Millis and Susan Sholar

Session Briefs

At its Thursday, January 25th Meeting, the Session discussed several issues. The following is a brief overview:

- As usual, our Treasurer Kae Hoyle gave us a great report of our financials and Jay Hoyle, Chair of the Financing and Stewardship Committees, already has the next committee meeting scheduled. With this duo, we can feel confident about the management of our funds.
- In December, the Presbyterian Foundation notified us that an anonymous donor who established a Charitable Remainder Unitrust in December of 1991 recently passed away. Per the terms of the trust agreement, a permanent fund entitled The Marge and Al Johnson Memorial Fund has been established, in the amount of \$73,185.22. The church will receive the first distribution of funds in April 2025. We are so grateful.
- This week, we also received notification that the church will be receiving funds from the estate of Bernie and Muriel Horle - Muriel passed in October. Again, we are truly blessed by this generosity.
- We do have a few needs within the community that we should meet; the costs are minimal; be we want to be there when we feel strongly that funds are needed. That is the whole purpose of having fund raisers, isn't it? We want to be there to help others.
- On Sunday, January 28th we will have the installation of three Session members: Marion Crull, Anne Millis and Susan Sholar. Session looks forward to another year of accomplishments, within and outside our church.
- We had a discussion about Vacation Bible School. It was decided that we should provide daycare at the church during February break in 2025, for kindergarten and first graders whose parents must work. This will be a fun, safe place for them to play, eat and be read to.
- After the January Session meeting, we had a great presentation by Lifespan. The speaker was Sheila Brewer-Montero M.Ed, Ed.S, who lives in Corning, NY. What an education that presentation was! The topic was SCAMS. She told us about more than we ever thought would be involved in scamming, INCLUDING the dangers of AI techniques used in getting people's money. We will request that she return, if we have enough interest.

Prepared by Susan Sholar, pro tem Clerk to the Session

The next meeting of the Session is Thursday, February 15th at 10am



Barb Wagener - 02/09

Elizabeth (Lohr) Olmstead - 02/17

Susan Sholar - 02/20

Jan Day - 01/29

Members and Friends to Keep in Our Thoughts

Carson Lankford
3120 Patton Road
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Jean Morris
5465 Upper Mountain Rd.
Lockport, NY 14094

Our Law Enforcement
Officers, Fire Fighters and
EMTs



Women's Circle

Will meet on Monday, February 5th at 12:30pm - come, join us!

Circle cancelled its January meeting. The weather was less than clement and some of us are not as agile on ice and snowy surfaces as we may have been, a few years ago. (!)

So, we'll pick up where we left off and follow the January meeting plan. Ruby will offer our opening prayer and Kae has an interesting cultural item she's been waiting to share with us. We'll continue discussion of the C.S. Lewis book and talk about possible projects for the new year.

A phone call to The House of Concern to ask about urgent needs and "how's the Spaghetti Sauce Situation?", revealed an on-going shortage! So, we'll be asking for Spaghetti Sauce this month, as well as Ginny's suggestion of small cans of Tomato Sauce and Canned Tomatoes. Last month we asked for canned Soups and Stews. Not a bad idea for February we think, and you'll see our notice below.

It was good to see Barb's Treasury Report among the pages of the church's Annual Report for 2023. We had shrunk our year-end balance with donations to several worthy causes and we hope everyone in our congregation will have noticed and rejoiced; especially the kind folks who make monetary gifts for Circle projects. We make contact with the organizations listed, either in person or by telephone, on a regular basis.

**Special item for The House of Concern in FEBRUARY:
(More!) Canned Soups & Stews & Spaghetti Sauce
Also Canned Tomatoes & Sauce**

**Other items for the Needs Room (personal care, cleaning supplies, etc.)
Are always welcome; *any* month.**

The following words came to us in the Fall of 2023 from our friends at The House:

"We thank you for all your previous contributions to the mission of the Seneca County House of Concern whether that has been a generous donation of money, food, clothing, or furniture. We simply couldn't face the challenges of the present without you. THANK YOU." The letter went on to say, "On a yearly basis, The House of Concern directly assists on average 6,000 families and provides enough food for 360,000 meals. This is a number that never seems to go down; just up and up."

Very sobering numbers, indeed. We hope more people will feel inspired to share: either by picking up extra items as the grocery store or by plucking from your own pantry shelves. Let's fill up those baskets and crates!

*"Lord, when did we see thee hungry..."
Matthew 31:37*

Come, join us in Women's Circle!



Church Family News

- On Thursday, January 25th, a lunch and learn presentation was given in the Social Hall by Sheila Brewer-Montero with Lifespan, regarding scams and how to avoid them. Lunch was homemade soup, and Michele's rolls and bread. What a great way to spend a cold winter afternoon.



- Learn to Knit with Barb Van Kirk will be held every Wednesday at 10am in the Hawley Room. ALL are welcome.
- Our Fix-It Café, held every Saturday of the month from 10am-1pm, is on Saturday, February 10th. Bring whatever items you may have that need to be repaired.
- Coffee and Conversation with Pastor Leah will be happening at Café 19 on Tuesday, February 20th at 10am. Come on by and have some coffee and a chat.

Suicide Loss Support Group Beginning January 29th 2024

Many people who have suddenly lost a family member, friend, classmate or colleague find that sharing openly with fellow survivors can help with the healing process. Twice a month support group meetings will take place. These groups are not treatment or therapy based groups, more support based and offer emotional support, healing and hope in a confidential and safe space.



Suicide Loss/Sudden Loss Support Group

WHEN: 1st & last Monday of each month

First Monday: VFV: 7068 NY-96, Ovid, NY 145216

WHEN: 5:30-7:00 PM

Last Monday: VFV: 29 W Elisha St, Waterloo, NY 13165

WHEN: 5:30-7:00 PM

Note: Please enter through front door and go up stairs



For more information:
Judy Mellgard: 814-762-6928
Holly Doe: 315-909-4667



Visit us online at:

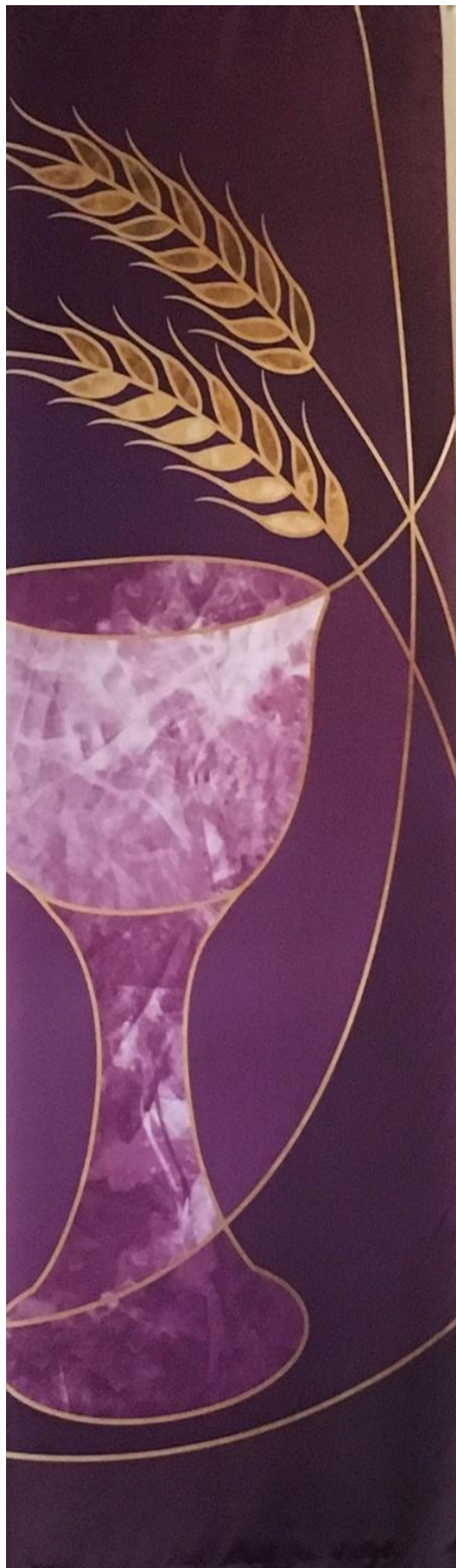
<https://www.facebook.com/SenecaSuicidePrevention>



United Way
of Seneca County



- Michele Edmondson's next Bread Baking Class is on February 21st at 10am. Just take a look at that photo above. Who can resist it? Bring your friends!
- CPR for Pets: Susan Sholar will teach this very important class on Saturday, February 24th at 10:30am. This is a don't-miss event for all pet owners.



Worship Schedule

Join us online: www.fpressf.com on our YouTube Channel



February 4th - Communion - Psalm 131; Mark 5:21-43.

February 11th - Psalm 27:1-4; Mark 8:27-9:8.

February 14th - Ash Wednesday - Psalm 32:1-5; Mark 9:30-37.

February 18th - Psalm 19:7-10; Mark 10:17-31.

February 25th - Psalm 34:11-14; Mark 10:32-52.

March 3rd - Communion - Psalm 86:8-13; Mark 12:1-12 [13-17]



February 4th - Michele Edmondson

February 11th - Barry Porsch

February 18th - Anne Millis

February 25th - Carol Millis

March 3rd - Susan Sholar

ANOTHER REMINDER
*From Ginny Konz, our Pi
Day Chairman
Pi Day Plans*

March is coming right up, and I'd like to suggest you be looking at baking supplies on sale during this season - sugar, pie tins, whatever you will need.

This has been a very successful fund-raiser for the church, and since it was decided not to have Bargains in the Basement any longer, it is really the only one. Remember, we lost our incredibly prolific baker in Stu this fall, and we really can't expect Cathy to pick up the slack on her own. I suggest that each of us bakers pledge to make one or two more pies than we usually do. Starting now, you can do this and keep them in your freezer (or mine if need be). People have pointed out the rising cost of ingredients, which is why I'm suggesting you watch the sales. Sugar and apples come to mind, and cranberries, too. Also remember - pumpkin pies don't seem to sell well in March but are big at this time of year.

*Thanks,
Ginny*

PS: Pie boxes are available at the church (there's a stack in the kitchen), so no need to buy any!

Coffee Hours

February 4th - Committee Meetings

February 11th - Valentine Sunday

February 18th - We Exist FLX - Shauna O'Toole

February 25th - Lessons Learned - Pastor Leah



To Keep in Our Prayers: Kathleen Albert; Reatha Bishop; Jennifer Colbert; Michael Collinworth; Peter Crego; Norine Crull; Sue Derr; Joanne Elyseev; Carl Feltus; Joanna Fuller; Walt Gable; Pat Gordon; Rev. Deborah Grohman; Amy Guarino; Tori Guerina; Crystal Hanes; Susan Horton; Jay Hoyle; Bea Jones; our Law Enforcement Officers, Firefighters and EMTs; Bob Lamphere; Carson Lankford; Josh Lenard; Stephanie Lesinski; David Lobdell; Ronald Lobdell Jr.; Lucy, Ephraim and Juan Carlos Lopez; the Lowry family; Ana Marcias; Kim Martin; Ken Mell; Tyler Morgan; Roger Morin; Timothy Mosher; Jinny Noone; Joy Novack; Teresa Santoski; Justine Saunders; Mary Sceney; Shelley Vanderbogart; Linda Warner; Gretchen Whittacre; the Wilson family; John Yells; and all those suffering in the world.

Know someone ill or hospitalized? Please call:

Church Office 315-568-6636

or

Anne Millis 315-246-6264

Flowers Brighten the Décor - by Ginny Konz

You may have noticed, from looking at your own yards or at the bouquets in church, that the flower season is winding down. There isn't much left in my garden, or Barb Van Kirk's or Damaske's, either. This presents an opportunity for you to become more involved in this beautifying process.

We now have a sign-up chart on the table next to Leah's office, where you can sign up for a day to be responsible for providing some sort of flowers or foliage for the altar area.

Along with your name on a date, please write in the person, event, or whatever it is you are honoring or remembering.

Birthdays, anniversaries, and graduations are all good thoughts. You can bring in flowers from your yard in season, from the grocery or pharmacy, or a pretty house plant from home. You can also visit

Sinicropi's, order something and have them deliver it - they have the fob for the back door and can easily do this.

It actually doesn't even have to be floral; we've had some incredible altar decorations that weren't.

Thanks for your help!

**First Pres Annual Meeting Highlights
Sunday, January 28, 2024**

- The 2024 Budget, which had already been reviewed by the Session, was approved.
- Pastor Leah's Terms of Call was approved.
- A tithe in the amount of 10% of our overall church income was approved, and will be used to provide assistance to our community. If you have any ideas regarding ways that our mission dollars can impact our neighbors in Seneca Falls, please contact the Session. First Pres has always been an integral part of this community, and we will continue to make a difference.
- In spite of the change in our membership numbers, our pledge dollars have remained essentially the same. We give thanks and gratitude to our congregation for their continued support.
- In addition, we give a GIANT thank you to all of our volunteers and members who do the work needed to keep First Pres going. We see you, and appreciate you!

**Support for the Library
Submitted by Ginny Konz**

The library fund raiser for this season is called Winter Splash Party, scheduled for March 9th at noon. For an entrance fee of \$79 you are invited to wade or jump into Cayuga Lake at the beach at the State Park. Frankly, folks, you would have to pay me to do that in March, and I'd be asking a lot more than \$79. I can't think of anyone I'd want to see doing that, either, but I always support libraries.

This church has always responded to various community and school requests for support, and in the past these funds have come out of the Coffee Hour Fund since they are not budget items. Because we have not had as many Coffee Hours lately as we usually do, that fund is not as plump as usual. We will be having Coffee Hours again, starting February 11 with Valentine Sunday. If you come, please consider putting more into the donation basket than you ordinarily would. If each of us tosses in an extra \$1 each time we enjoy a Coffee Hour, the church could easily and comfortably support this library project and any school and community projects that Session approves.

Thanks in advance!



The First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls
P.O. Box 383 Cayuga Street
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Happy Valentine's Day to you, a fearfully and wonderfully made child of God:

