

January
2023

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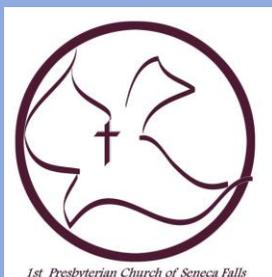
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1st Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls



February Newsletter Articles
Are Due on January 26th

The First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls

Pastor's Corner



Gracious and Loving God, thank you for another day, another year, and another opportunity. Surround us with your love as we serve you in all we do. Bless us with healthy minds, bodies, and spirits so that we have the strength to do your work. Help us and guide us as we seek to have a deeper relationship with you. Thank you for being present and giving us the courage to answer your call. In your loving name we pray, Amen.

Blessings on the start of a new year!! There are so many things I am looking forward to in 2023 and I hope you are too. Here are a few of the things I am excited about!

- Fellowship Opportunities
- Coffee Hours
- Pi Day- Pie Sale
- Work with the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly
- Continuing studies in Missional Leadership at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
- Being a Representative from the Spiritual Community for the Town's new Comprehensive Plan
- Implementing the Mental Health Grant trainings
- Growing our outreach in the community

Joel 2:28- And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

The Spirit of God is always at work; what dreams are you making into reality with God this year? Dreams written down become plans. What are you looking forward to in 2023? For the church? For yourself? For your family?

We have been dreaming and planning together since Jan 2, 2011. I never know where God is going to lead us, but I know we will continue to lean into the mission God has placed before us to do this work. In 2023, we will continue to Be Welcoming; Be Compassionate; Be You (bravely); and Be Community. Let us celebrate the good news of God's amazing grace!

Peace, Pastor Leah

Contact Us

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Hours:

Wednesday & Thursday
8am-3pm

Staff

Rev. Leah Ntuala-Pastor
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
Joyce Lohr- 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,
Susan Harkey, Jay Hoyle, Ginny
Konz, and Susan Sholar

Session Briefs

At its Thursday, December 15, 2022 Meeting, the Session:

- Received the November Financial Report for the church showing Total Revenue of \$15,047.49; Total Expenditures of \$14,296.03; and Special Events YTD Income (Tops cards, Amazon, Cards, Pecans, Pies, Bake/Rummage sales) of \$6,126
- Moved to remove the name of Betty Geraghty from church rolls, due to her death on December 2, 2022
- Received notes of thanks from Susan Harkey, Donna and Tom Montgomery, Sue Derr, and the Guarino family, for flowers, prayers and cards
- Received a holiday greeting from Nathan M. Richardson (understudy of Frederick Douglass) in appreciation for the church's participation in The Frederick Douglass Speaking Tour
- Received a note of thanks for congregational support signed by (Presbyterian and United Methodist) youth who took part in the November 11th Game-a-Thon, raising money for San Jorge Children's Hospital, Puerto Rico, and a note from Ben Jessop in appreciation for a church gift he received
- Approved request for Transfer of Membership to Bath Presbyterian Church for Donna Montgomery
- Heard report of heating issues for Eastman Hall and of plans to look at systems there and in church building
- Heard report for replacement of dishwasher from Lowe's for Eastman Hall; installation by Craig Hooper and possibility of splitting cost with tenant, Creative Choices Child Care Center
- Learned of contract with Rotundo Lawn (and snow plow) Service for snow-removal in church parking and drive areas (replacing former contractor, Ray Kisor)
- Heard estimates for painting of manse siding and trim areas
- Heard of Membership/Parish Life's thoughts for a Soup/Sandwich luncheon at Annual Meeting 2023
- Learned that poinsettia plants will be delivered by church members to those at home and out of town
- Discussed congregational strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results for church outreach
- Heard reminder from Pastor for checking in on one another this season, by phone or home visits



Prepared by Joyce Lohr, Clerk to the Session

The next meeting of the Session is Thursday, January 12th at 10am



Iva Lay - 01/1

Barbara Lohr - 01/5

Barb Van Kirk - 01/20

Nancy Rutz - 01/28

Honey Gilbert - 01/4

Pastor Leah - 01/6

Peter Snyder - 01/22

Ben Jessop - 01/29

Members and Friends to Keep in Our Thoughts

Dorothy Dickieson
303 Ferris Hills
Canandaigua, NY 14424

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 not have a regular meeting in January

We met on December 5th in the Hawley Room at church for our annual Holiday Luncheon. There was Ginny, Michele, Barb, Joyce, Kae, and Pastor Leah from Circle, and we were joined by Peter Snyder, Susan Sholar, Zoe Van Kirk, Carolyn Seem, and Hope Wilson. Ruby had another commitment that day and was unable to come. Former Circle member, Barb Lohr had sent a card to Leah expressing warm greetings to us. We all wrote a note and signed a Christmas card to send to Barb.

Earlier that day, Pastor Leah set up a festive Coffee & Tea Table replete with coffee maker, electric tea kettle, and cups. Everyone came toting a dish to share and/or something sweet for the dessert table. Some of us had set up the long tables with festive covers, holiday decorations, and candles on Sunday, following the Advent Workshop. In keeping with our cultural diversity efforts, Joyce brought an Eastern Europe (Rumania) Christmas music CD, but we were unable to get the church player working and Susan Sholar came to the rescue with music from her smart phone! Thanks again, Susan!

Following lively conversations up and down the row of tables during a delicious lunch, Peter played Santa and passed around a bag of small gifts, which we were encouraged to swap if we wished, and many did so. Michele got the picnic apron from Peter and Zoe got the old movie book from Barb. There was a good deal of laughter all around. Joyce announced that Circle's donation to the kids who played games all day at the manse to raise money for the Children's Hospital in Puerto Rico helped to put their total over \$1,000 and we received an email thanking us from organizers at the United Methodist Church.

Time slipped away and our plans for assembling Personal Care Kits for the women's shelter in Waterloo were postponed. **We'll set a date in January to do them**, we decided. Everyone helped to clear away the tables and some, led by Carolyn, retired to the kitchen and the dish pan to do the washing up of cups and silverware.

We'd been asked to each bring a package of Infant or Toddler size DIAPERS for The House of Concern. And we did so; filling the big chair in the Hawley Room corner. Later, Ginny would deliver them to the HOC.

Another jolly Holiday Luncheon and another year gone by! And we are feeling grateful: for our Pastor, for each other, and for our church and its opportunities for worship and spiritual nourishment, fellowship, study, and service.

January item for The House of Concern is PASTA & SAUCE

There is a basket at the TOPS card table and crates in the social rooms
FOR OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Thanks to everyone who donated DIAPERS in December!





Church Family News



- **The Advent Workshop on Sunday, December 4th:** all enjoyed creating crafts for the Advent season - see below!



- **Coffee Hour Programs:** we are still in need of programs for Coffee Hour for the New Year. If you have a program or any ideas or suggestions, please let us know.
- **2023 Per Capita and Estimate of Giving:** our church must pay \$50.00 for each member on the rolls - the amount is remaining the same as the last two years. Early payment of this Per Capita Apportionment will enable us to meet this obligation due during the first six months of 2023. Also, if you haven't already done so, it's not too late return your completed Estimate of Giving form. **THANKS for your support.**
- **Doug's Fish Fry UPDATE:** as reported last month, we hosted another Doug's Fish Fry and Bake Sale event at Five Star Bank on November 2nd. Bake Sale proceeds were \$382, and Doug's has now told us that we made \$280 for dinners sold. **SO - total proceeds were \$662 - we appreciate all who participated!**



Worship Schedule

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

January 1st - Online Service Only- Psalm 96; Luke 2:1-20; The Twelve Days of Christmas.

January 8th - Psalm 2:7-8; Matthew 3:1-17; John the Baptist, Jesus is baptized to fulfill all righteousness.

January 15th - Psalm 91:9-12; Matthew 4:1-17; Jesus tempted in the wilderness.

January 22nd - Psalm 1:1-3; Matthew 5:1-20; Beatitudes, salt of the earth, let your light shine.

January 29th - Psalm 20:7; Matthew 6:7-21; Lord's Prayer, treasure in heaven, and/or Matthew 6:23-34; Lilies of the field.

February 5th - Communion - Psalm 37:16-18; Matthew 7:1-14, 24-29; Speck in the eye, narrow gate, wise man builds house on rock.



Liturgist List

January 1st - Online Service
January 8th - Dick Damaske
January 15th - Marion Crull
January 22nd - Michele Edmondson
January 29th - Barry Porsch
February 5th - Ginny Konz

Coffee Hours

January 1st - No Coffee Hour; Online Service

January 8th - Committee Meetings

January 15th - To Be Determined

January 22nd - To Be Determined

January 29th - Annual Meeting



To Keep in Our Prayers: Kathleen Albert; Reatha Bishop; Rachele & Goskel Canscillar; Sue Charles; Jennifer Colbert; Michael Collinsworth; Sue Ellen and Peter Crego; Norine Crull; Sue Derr; Dorothy Dickieson; Joanna Fuller; the family of Betty Geraghty; Pat & Marvin Gordon; Amy Guarino; Tori Guerina; Crystal Hanes; Sue Harkey; Greta Hauser & family; Al Johnson; Bea Jones; our Law Enforcement Officers, Firefighters and EMTs; Bob Lamphere; Carson Lankford; David Lobdell; Ronald Lobdell Jr.; the Lowry family; Kim Martin; Eleanor Mirabito; Tom and Donna Montgomery; Tyler Morgan; Roger Morin; Cheri Murphy; Jinny Noone; Joy Novack; Ramon; Teresa Santoski; Barb Squires; Shelley Vanderbogart; Linda Warner; Darryl Wells; Gretchen Whittacre; the Wilson family; and all those suffering in the world.

Know someone ill or hospitalized? Please call:

Church Office 315-568-6636

If grace is so amazing...Why is there not more of it?

By Donna Frischknecht Jackson | Presbyterians Today

It was New Year's Day 1773. The faithful in the English town of Olney, though, were not thinking about old acquaintances being forgotten. (It would be another 15 years before Robert Burns would write his poem that would forever become synonymous with New Year's Eve revelry.) They were thinking about grace and all its amazingness.

It was on Jan. 1 that their preacher, John Newton, introduced what would become one of the most beloved hymns in history, "Amazing Grace." (The tune to which we sing Newton's words came later in the 1800s.) Newton often wrote hymns to accompany his sermons, and on a day full of high expectations for the remaining 364 days to come, he found himself preaching on how God's grace could find those who were lost and make the blind see. Newton was preaching from experience as he himself, once a slave trader, was redeemed and led to share God's saving grace for the rest of his life.

As 2023 begins, I'm not reflecting on the haunting words of "Auld Lang Syne" as I usually do. Rather, I'm reading Newton's words. I'm doing this not just to mark the 250th anniversary of "Amazing Grace." I'm doing this because in our denomination – from presbyteries to synods to local congregations – grace seems to be lacking.

I remember hearing a story of how C.S. Lewis, an Anglican lay theologian and author of "The Chronicles of Narnia" novels, once walked into a discussion where clergy were wondering if there was a belief that would be considered uniquely Christian. Lewis replied, "That's easy. It would be grace."

There was a time I would have agreed with Lewis. Grace is that unmerited divine forgiveness that Christians believe. Grace is what makes becoming God's new creation possible. And once we have experienced grace, we should then extend it to others. Yet today if Lewis walked into such a conversation with his cronies, would he give "grace" as his answer?

I ask this because I have noticed many articles from researchers revealing that humankind is more short-tempered and carrying rage. Experts believe it is the fallout of the long pandemic we have been in. I've even read somewhere that this pandemic anger is being coined "pangry" – a blending of the words "angry" and "pandemic." And so, I wonder. Where's the grace to a pastor who might be a dynamic preacher, but falls short when it comes to pastoral care? Where is grace toward someone who spoke too quickly out of frustration? Where's the grace on social media that helps us to respond in love to things we misunderstand, rather than casting stones of judgment?

A new year is upon us, and I find myself thinking about grace, the lack thereof and the need for more. On a personal note, I also think about the grace that has been extended to me as your editor.

The hardest thing for an editor to write is their first editorial and their last – well, this is the next to last editorial before **Presbyterians Today takes a sacred pause in April**, and it has been just as challenging. But I want to thank you for allowing me this space to speak from the heart. In some small way, I hope I have lightened your load, eased your worries and ignited your courage. I pray that you have found a glimmer of hope amid the pages. It's been a deep joy and humble honor to serve you this way. But remember, the Good News will continue being told, with or without the magazine, because God's grace abounds (thank you to our General Assembly co-moderators, the Rev. Shavon Sterling-Louis and the Rev. Ruth Faith Santana-Grace, for coining that phrase) and because of that, "We've no less days to sing God's praise, than when we first begun." Until we meet again, my friends, keep singing those praises.

The March/April issue of Presbyterians Today will be the last issue you receive in 2023 before the magazine goes through a "sacred pause."

JANUARY



The First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls
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Happy New Year to You, a fearfully and wonderfully made child of God:



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