

July-August 2024

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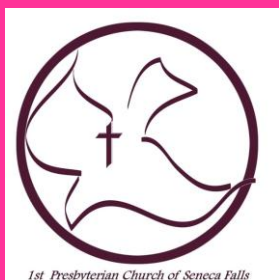
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1st Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls



September
Newsletter Articles
Are Due on August 26, 2024

The First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls Pastor's Corner



Such a large crowd of witnesses is all around us! So we must get rid of everything that slows us down, especially the sin that just won't let go. And we must be determined to run the race that is ahead of us. We must keep our eyes on Jesus, who leads us and makes our faith complete. He endured the shame of being nailed to a cross, because he knew later on he would be glad he did. Now he is seated at the right side of God's throne! So keep your mind on Jesus, who put up with many insults from sinners. Then you won't get discouraged and give up. - Hebrews 12:1-3 -

This summer brings the joy of the Olympics! I love watching these athletes compete! We all watch sports, on the edge of our seats, that we never watch any other time of the year - like skeet shooting or rhythmic gymnastics. But there is something inspiring about watching people live out their dreams, use their gifts to the best of their ability, and defy reality. It is wonderful to get wrapped up in their joy.

The Olympic history is filled of stories of triumph and defeat, and so is the Bible. Hebrews reminds us to run the race that is ahead of us. We are never running someone else's race. We are reminded to never give up. The world can be loud, but the large crowd of witnesses that surround us are louder. The Olympics reminds us that even our personal best might not win a medal. They remind us that the expected winner doesn't always win a prize. They remind us that sometimes what is at stake is more than a race or event. Olympians have used their platforms to remind the global community of a crisis their Nation is facing. Olympians have used their platforms to speak to their Nation about hardships. We are connected to one another, and those connections are also larger than one event. Like the rings on the Olympic logo, we are interconnected and part of each other.

May you be inspired by the stories of the Olympians to preserve, to triumph, to understand you will sometimes fail and lose, even when giving it your all, and that you have a great cloud of witnesses cheering you on. May you be inspired to use your gifts to the fullest of their potential, running the race that is ahead of you, in service of God.

Peace, Pastor Leah

Contact Us

The First Presbyterian Church of
Seneca Falls, NY

Address:
23 Cayuga Street

P.O. Box 383rd
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Phone:
315-568-6636

Email:
firstpres13148@gmail.com

Website:
www.fpressf.com

Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday and
Thursday
8am-3pm

Staff

Rev. Leah Ntuala-Pastor
Rev. Dr. Peter J. Crego-
Pastor Emeritus
Laurie Weller- Office Manager
Kae Hoyle- Treasurer
Jim Clark-Sexton
Jen Braun- Music Director
Carol Millis- Bell Choir Director
Susan Sholar – Clerk of Session

Session

Session meets every
3rd Thursday at 10am

Presently serving
Ruling Elders:
Jim Clark, Marion Crull, Dick
Damaske, Susan Derr,
Jay Hoyle, Ginny Konz,
Anne Millis and Susan Sholar

Session Briefs

At its Thursday, June 20th Meeting, the Session discussed several issues. The following is a brief overview:

- Carol Millis acted as Clerk pro tem for the June meeting of the Session.
- Treasurer's report for May was received from Treasurer Kae Hoyle, showing Total Revenue of \$137,890.15 and Total Expenditures of \$36,482.87
- Youth Group has received a \$7,500 Synod Grant to host monthly social gatherings for Middle School and High School students. The "Rugless Room" will become the game room for these monthly activities.
- Pastor Leah has a writing seminar September 16th to the 20th for her doctoral program; however, this will not affect Sunday morning worship services.
- Pastor Leah, as a General Assembly Commissioner for the Presbytery of Geneva, has a meeting via Zoom on June 25th to June 27th, and then will be in Salt Lake City from June 29th to July 4th.
- The paperwork required to open five new accounts with Fidelity Investments is complete, and monies are being transferred from NBT.
- The final payment for our solar payments was made to Generations Bank, and the panels now officially belong to the church.
- Session approved Lyons National Bank to become the new bank for the church, per the recommendation of the Finance Committee.
- Personnel is working with our auditor to ask questions about healthcare coverage, in light of the Board of Pension changes that have been proposed.
- Session discussed a security camera system on all entrances and exits to be done by Covert. No decisions have been made.
- Michele Edmondson's resignation from Session was approved.
- Work with Mission Management is to begin shortly.
- Session approved a \$5,000 donation to Mynderse Academy from the Marge and Al Johnson Fund, for the chorus trip to Carnegie Hall.

The next meeting of the Session is Thursday, September 5th at 10am



Christina Lopez - 7/20
Joyce Lohr - 7/23
Marion Crull - 8/10
Cherie Clark - 8/24
Louis Lobdell - 8/24
Mason Ntuala - 8/28
Matt Crull - 8/29

Members and Friends to Keep in Our Thoughts

Joanne Elyseev
Living Center at Geneva
North
75 Mason Street, Room 138
Geneva, NY 14456

Jean Morris
5465 Upper Mountain Rd.
Lockport, NY 14094

Carol Rook
2878 Hopewell-Manchester
Townline
Clifton Springs, NY 14432

Our Law Enforcement
Officers, Fire Fighters and
EMTs



Women's Circle

**Will not meet over the summer months of July and August . . .
But we enjoyed a lovely time together, with several church friends
lunching at Wolffy's on June 3rd!**

There were more than a dozen of us seated at a long deck table: Pastor Leah, Diana and Jim Hinman, Kae and Jay Hoyle, Anne Millis and Carol Millis, Ginny, Joyce, Barb, Rita Frankenfield, Cathy Olsowske, and Sue Derr. Cathy took some pictures which she sent for the July/August Newsletter. **Thanks, Cathy !**



We'll finish discussing the remainder of the C.S. Lewis book when we meet in September. Hopefully, each of us in Circle will have some suggestions for next season's study.

As everyone knows, the needs at the House of Concern continue, year- round. Over 450 loads of food, laundry, diapers, and other personal care items are dispensed to families and needy persons each month of the year. Growing school children are at home for two months and everyone's appetites increase with summer activities. It would be great if we could remember this and make some additional, even weekly, donations to the "Needy Neighbors" crates and baskets at church (Lohrs deliver our donations to the House, each month.)!

HOUSE OF CONCERN special item for JULY: Condiments: catsup, salad dressing, mustard, mayonnaise, as well as other food items; especially SNACKS ☺

For AUGUST: Peanut Butter, Jam, Jelly

*"...Heavenly Father, bless this food to our use and us
To your service; helping us always to be mindful
Of the needs of others. Amen."*



Church Family News



- **We Exist-FLX** hosted a **Table of Found Souls** luncheon in the Social Hall on **Saturday, June 22nd** from 2pm to 7pm.
- **An Ice Cream Social** was held on **Sunday, June 16th** at the church, right after the worship service. What a great way to welcome summer!
- **Learn to Knit** with Barb Van Kirk is still being held every **Wednesday** at **10am** in the Hawley Room. It's never too late to learn something new.
- Our **monthly Coffee and Conversation** meetings with Pastor Leah will take a break in July and August, but will start up again at Café 19 on **Tuesday, September 17th** at **10am**. Please plan to come by to visit and enjoy your favorite beverage.
- In **March of 2025**, the **Seneca Falls Mynderse Academy** chorus has been invited to sing *A Vision Unfolding* by Kyle Pederson at **Carnegie Hall in New York City!** The Session sent a \$5000 donation to the school, using the mission dollars from the Marge and Al Johnson Fund. Marge and Al Johnson left monies to the church to be used for youth activities. They loved music and arts programs; we couldn't think of a better way to honor their legacy. If you would like to make an individual donation to this trip, checks can be made out to the **Drama Club, memo: Carnegie Hall; and mailed to Mynderse Academy, c/o Vocal Music Director Anna Luisi- Ellis, 105 Troy St, Seneca Falls, NY 13148**

LGBT

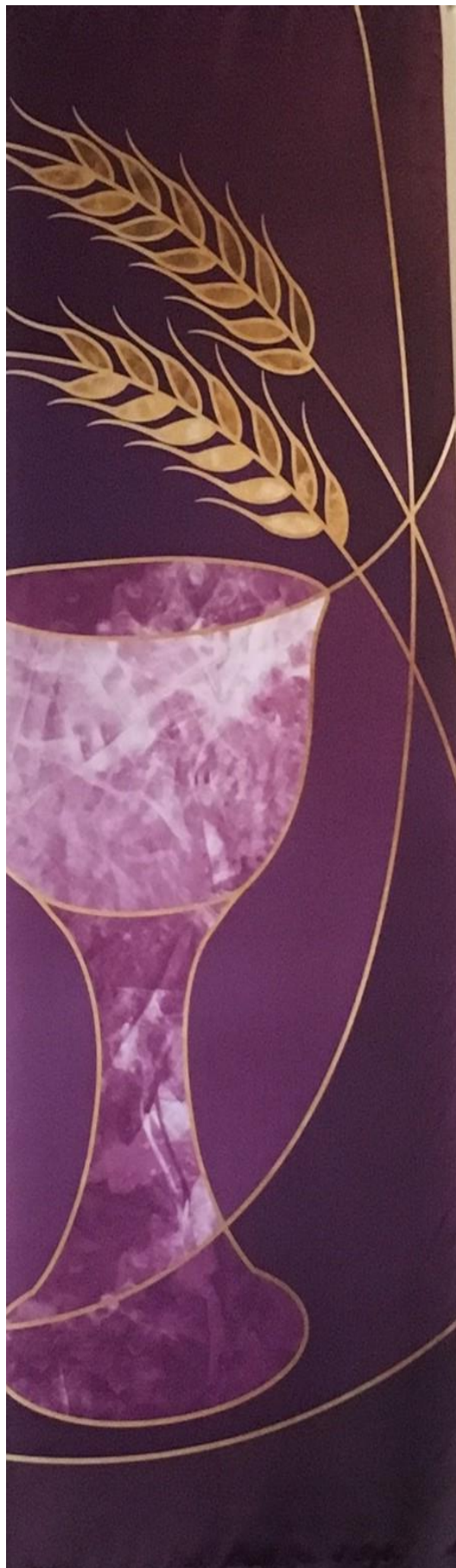
Our world today is changing and allowing some to be,
Members of a Bi, Gay and Lesbian community,
So many people look down on it and it is debated,
They feel is it a sin in the way they were created.

Why do not all people act the way they should,
Why do they act differently, is their way of life good?
Does a man and a woman have to love one another,
Or can sister love sister, and brother love a brother?

Were we by God's creation not to love one another?
Should a woman love a woman or two men love each other?
To me it is a mystery that out of the same sod,
Was this and everything not created by one God?

Why do we out of God's work find it so hard to believe
That He made Bob love Harry, or maybe Jane love Eve?
I know not how or when or why that God from up above,
Decided to whom, when and why, that we would fall in love.

~ Louis L. Lobdell ~



Worship Schedule

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

July 7th - Communion - Matthew 24:42-44; 2 Peter 3:1-10, 17-18.

July 14th - Matthew 13:34-35; Proverbs 1:1-7, 3:1-8.

July 21st - John 8:56-58; Proverbs 8:1-11, 22-36.

July 28th - Luke 13:1-3; Ecclesiastes 1:1-11, 3:1-17.

August 4th - Communion - Song of Solomon 2:10-13, 8:6-7; Mark 8:35-37.

August 11th - Genesis 1:1-5; Matthew 6:30-34.

August 18th - John 1:1-18; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25.

August 25th - Acts 2:1-18; Matthew 28:17-20.

September 1st - Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Matthew 11:28-30.



July 7th - Barb Van Kirk
July 14th - Ginny Konz
July 21st - Susan Sholar
July 28th - Marion Crull
August 4th - Carol Millis
August 11th - Anne Millis
August 18th - Dick Damaske
August 25th - Barry Porsch
September 1st - Barb Van Kirk



July 7th - Anne Millis
July 14th - Sue Derr
July 21st - Ginny Konz
July 28th - Marion Crull
August 4th - Zoe Van Kirk
August 11th - Carol Millis
August 18th - Anne Millis
August 25th - Sue Derr
September 1st - Ginny Konz

4TH OF JULY



Coffee Hours

Coffee Hour is taking a break for the summer months. If you have any ideas for coffee hours to begin in September, please contact Sue Derr.



To Keep in Our Prayers: Kathleen Albert; Reatha Bishop; Robin Blundon; Jennifer Colbert; Peter Crego; Cindy Danielson; Joanne Elyseev; Carl Feltus; Joanna Fuller; Diane and Cal Goodman; Pat Gordon; Gerry Gray; Rev. Deborah Grohman; Amy Guarino; Tori Guerina; Crystal Hanes; Cindy Hinman-Cosola; Susan Horton; Bea Jones; the Jopek family; our Law Enforcement Officers, Firefighters and EMTs; Bob Lamphere; Josh Lenard; Stephanie Lesinski; the Lobdell family; the Lopez family; Ana Marcias; Kim Martin; Ken Mell; Tyler Morgan; Roger Morin; Timothy Mosher; Jinny Noone; Joy Novack; Linda Parker; Paula Paxton; Gene and Dean Potter; Justine Saunders; Mary Sceney; Dale Shaw; Susan Sholar; Nora Sibley; Shelley Vanderbogart; Linda Warner; Robert Wagner; Gretchen Whittacre; the Wilson family; and all those suffering in the world.

Know someone ill or hospitalized? Please call:

Anne Millis 315-246-6264



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Vitality

Dismantling Structural Racism

Eradicating Systemic Poverty

FIRST PRES OF SENECA FALLS
A MATTHEW 25 CHURCH!

The Olympic Games - Beating the Odds

12 months before Sydney's 2000 Olympic Games Eric Moussambani had never set foot outside of his home country, the tiny nation of Equatorial Guinea where most citizens get by on less than one dollar a day.

Having secured his entry into the Games with the help of a wild card, Moussambani set about teaching himself to swim. The only pool available belonged to a local hotel, and they allowed him to use it between 5 and 6am, just three times a week. Before Sydney he had never set eyes on an Olympic pool, let alone swum in one.

Moussambani had no coach, no lanes, and no way of tracking his efforts. His training was further hampered by a communication breakdown that led him to believe he had been entered into the 50m race, not the 100m endurance test he would actually be competing in.

When the day came, events only got stranger. Of the three swimmers in the qualifying heat, Moussambani was the only competitor not to be disqualified for starting early. He now had to swim alone, against the clock, before 17,000 spectators to be in with a chance of qualifying for the final.

The underdog captured the hearts of the Australian audience, and although he flagged in the second half of the race, with commentator Adrian Moorhouse remarking that "this guy doesn't look like he's going to make it", he completed the heat with a time of 1 minute and 53 seconds.

It was the slowest time in Olympic history, but a personal best.

International media dubbed him "Eric the eel" and he was hailed as the embodiment of the Olympic ideal that it's not the winning, but the taking part that counts.

When he was interviewed, still dripping from his exhausting feat, Moussambani remarked; "The first 50 metres were OK, but in the second 50 metres I got a bit worried and thought I wasn't going to make it. Then something happened. I think it was all the people getting behind me. I was really, really proud. It's still a great feeling for me and I loved when everyone applauded me at the end. I felt like I had won a medal or something."

Moussambani is now the head coach of the Equatorial Guinea swimming squad and thanks to his efforts, the country has since built two 50m swimming pools.¹

Yusra Mardini is only 18 but has suffered great ordeals. The Syrian refugee represented the Refugee Olympic Athletes team in the 2016 Rio Olympics swimming 100m freestyle and 100m butterfly. Although she didn't win a medal, her achievement outside of the Games is incredible - especially considering her age - and the stuff that true heroes are made of.

Before she left Syria Mardini was already backed by her country's Olympic Committee, but her homeland was becoming more and more dangerous, and she soon found herself training in pools with the roofs blown off by bombs. It wasn't safe to stay there anymore.

She fled her country for Greece, via Turkey. 20 people left Turkey in a boat designed for six and it wasn't long before their engine failed. Her and three others saw no option but to swim the boat to safety, in order to stop it from capsizing. They swam for three hours straight.

"We were the only four who knew how to swim," she said of the experience. "I had one hand with the rope attached to the boat as I moved my two legs and one arm. It was three and half hours in cold water. Your body is almost like...done. I don't know if I can describe that."

After settling in Berlin, Coach Sven Spannekrebs quickly recognized her potential and has been training her with the 2020 Olympics in mind, although thanks to the Refugee Olympic Athletes team, her route to the games were much quicker.²

¹ <https://www.readersdigest.co.uk/inspire/life/7-inspiring-olympic-heroes-who-beat-the-odds>

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P.O. Box 383 Cayuga Street
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Happy 4th of July to you, a fearfully and wonderfully made child of God:

