

First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls



1st Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls

Toward a Church as GENEROUS
and JUST as God's Grace....



June Newsletter 2020

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Pastor's Corner

'The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God. When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.' -Jonah 2:5-7

May is Mental Health Month, so I wanted to spend some time talking about this topic. I wanted to make sure we were checking in with God, ourselves and one another. For me, emotional, physical, mental and spiritual health are all closely connected. They can't be separated and they work cooperatively. If you are struggling on one area, it does not remain in that box, it ripples out.

I don't strive for perfection as a human being, it is progress. I have learned to end the day in prayer, naming the things I am grateful for. I have learned how to begin my day with exercise and meditation. I have learned how to get help from professionals, as it is needed. I have discovered the tools that help me to feel whole and healthy. It isn't easy, but you are worth the effort.

I wanted to share some resources to help.

Bible Study: You are invited to join us for a Bible Study. All are welcome, feel free to invite others in your life as well.

[https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking/
biblestudy/](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking/biblestudy/)

Join us, for 5 sessions via zoom, Thursday's at 11am May 28- June 25
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2990167469> or Call +1 929 436 2866 US
(New York)

Meeting ID: 299 016 7469

Podcast: Brene Brown has a podcast and I found this episode particularly helpful.

[https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-on-anxiety-calm-over-under-
functioning/](https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-on-anxiety-calm-over-under-functioning/)

App: There are other apps, but this is free for the moment in NY State.

<https://www.headspace.com/ny>

Please know you are all in my daily thoughts and prayers. Remember to check in with one another.

Peace, Pastor Leah

Stay safe.
Protect your mental health.



WALK
OUTSIDE



READ OR
JOURNAL



EAT
HEALTHY



CONNECT
WITH OTHERS

Session Briefs

[Via Zoom Teleconferencing], the Session:



- Received the April budget report of \$37,183 revenue; \$11,710 expenses; and total Fund-raising YTD income \$1954. Pledge income was reported to be an estimated \$500 less than expected
- Moved to remove the names of Edward Chase and Connie Richardson from church rolls due to death
- Heard report of Backpack Program pick-up/drop off dates: June 19 and June 26 for church volunteers to take place at Generations Bank parking lot
- Learned of Bible Study program offering, scheduled to begin May 28, 11 a.m., via Zoom. Information will appear in Pastor's weekly on-line news
- Discussed ideas for celebrating Pentecost Sunday
- Heard news of Camp Whitman planning in regard to summer camps
- Discussed possibility of Coffee Hour programs via Zoom teleconferencing
- Continued discussions for increasing accessibility and participation for congregation members in worship during Covid 19 pandemic
- Heard report from Personnel of 15 applications received for Office Manager position; five interviews planned
- Learned of continuing search by Property team for steeple work contractor[s]
- Urged continuance of checking in with congregation members by phone, e-mail, and cards, in efforts to keep us all connected
- Discussed how/where to use \$200 gift from Geneva Presbytery for special needs and moved to buy TOPS gift cards to share with people in need
- Made plans for baking bread and muffins to distribute, along with grape juice, to local congregation members for next Communion Sunday
- Prayed for and gave thanks, for continuing good bodily and spiritual health for our community and around the globe.

+ + +



Camp Whitman

Despite all of the uncertainty around us we remain curious, hopeful and faithful during this time! 2020, is nothing like we had planned for - but perhaps, it will be just as God intended it to be, if we allow it. We are excited to announce three new programs for this summer:



Camp Recreate: Camp Recreate offers families the opportunity to enjoy the peace and serenity of Camp Whitman through family camping this summer. Families can book cabins to rent for two or more nights this summer, enjoy the privacy and safety of their own private lodging, and utilize the property for hiking, fishing and family recreation.

Camp Reimagined: Camp Reimagined aims to take the “essence” and spirit of Camp Whitman and bring it to our camp community at home. The program is a combination of online “virtual” programs and a “camp in a box” program that features hands-on activities for campers and their families.

Camp Renewal: Volunteers and alumni are invited to join us for an immersive volunteer program this summer - for a week or more (as your schedule allows). Volunteers will work on a variety of projects around camp (painting, sewing, gardening), as well as join in efforts within the Finger Lakes region (food pantries, the ARC, etc), and helping to provide digital content for our Camp Reimagined program. Each day or evening participants will participate in spiritual formation activities and devotions. The program also allows for plenty of time for individual spiritual renewal and recreation at camp.

Over the next few days we will begin to introduce you to each of them and let you know how you can be involved. You can learn more about each of them on our website. <https://www.campwhitman.org/>

To Sing or Not to Sing

To Sing or Not to Sing.....That is the question..... What will be our ‘new normal’ when the building re-opens? Notice, I referenced ‘the building’ because WE are the church! And WE need to be thinking about how we can be together and keep everyone safe, manage risk, carry the message, and be spiritually fed. A choir in WA with 61 members rehearsing while 1 person was infected resulted in 53 members getting sick and 2 who died. Studies show that ‘mucus and saliva droplets are ejected from the mouth or nose as we cough, sneeze, laugh, **sing, breathe, and talk.**’ This can happen at distances greater than 6 feet. A sneeze can reach a speed of 100 miles per hour; I wonder how far *those* droplets travel. Yes, we will wear masks. If we determine that we need to remove the hymnals and other articles from the pew racks, singing could be very interesting. This is not about will we have a choir, this is about how will you be affected if you are not singing? There are no firm plans, discussions, or decisions in place - just something to ponder.



Alice Paul and the Suffragists

By Honey Lobdell

My name is Honey Louise Obdell and I am writing this story about Alice Paul, a young woman who with other suffragists changed the old way of thinking by getting the 19th Amendment of the Constitution of the USA. A suffragist is: woman or man that fights for equal rights for women the same rights that men have, the right to work outside the home, equal pay, the right to vote, own property, the right to report sexual harassment.

I was in a group about women’s rights led by: Brenda Velleijx, my therapist. My family and I go to church on Cayuga Street where Alice Paul spoke to talk about Women’s Rights. We have a guest book signed by people from then until now. We have recently received a bust of Alice Paul’s head. I like this church, my family and I all joined it because we feel loved and respected.

Somehow Alice Paul is looking down from Heaven and helping us beyond the grave: because there was a time there was a picture of Alice Paul with all her Women’s Rights Suffragists. And if it wasn’t for the smart work of a friend from the church, this picture would have been lost forever. It was in someone’s garbage and now is on the back wall of our church.





Women's Circle

At present, each of our Circle members is well and bearing up during the global pandemic. We are grateful for this fact and for the spirit of cautious optimism and behavior, shared among us and in our church and wider community.

Barb and daughter, Zoe, are enjoying their mother/daughter days together and have been busy with gardening outside and studying Vegan recipes and cooking, indoors.

Ginny continues to observe a daily parade of regular and new, avian visitors to her yard and feeders. In recent weeks there's been a lovely, male Rose-breasted Grosbeak making a frequent appearance, along with colorful Orioles.

Ruby says she goes out on an errand or two, but avoids grocery stores and her daughter, Debby still grocery shops for her. She hopes we'll be able to meet in person for a Circle meeting; "in September?"

Joyce was hoping to get winter shoes and clothing boxed up for summer storage, and a lot of "other stuff" done before hot weather arrives on a daily basis...and wonders if the medications she's been prescribed are "slowing her down". She & Wayne are reading Albert Camus' *The Plague*, together, and finding [often disturbing] present-day parallels . . .

Michele reports there are several goslings now, on her and Susan's pond; "looking like little fuzzy bath tub toys!"

Kae's husband, Jay had surgery in early May to replace a faulty cardiac valve and a pacemaker installed. They are managing well and Jay is trying to abide by his doctors' orders to "take it easy".

We've talked with one another by phone and e-mail in considering a Circle donation to Church World Service for the annual **Blanket Sunday** offering. Our local Presbyterian Church has long supported this effort. Offerings enable CWS in supplying communities impacted by hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding and other crises [including homelessness and poverty] with emergency blankets, cooking & care kits, tools, etc. In 2019, 25 states across the U.S., including New York, received help from CWS. Circle will send a \$75 donation from its treasury.

Ginny and Joyce have observed an increased accumulation of donations for the **Victim Resource Center** filling the box in the church social rooms. They will call ahead to the Newark office to schedule a delivery date and the two will drive there with our donations. They also made a delivery trip last fall. Everyone who has donated to this effort is thanked!

With the forcing of families to remain at home and schools and daycare facilities closed, help agencies have anticipated a rise in incidences of domestic violence and child abuse. Shelters, including ones served by the Resource Center, remain in operation [locations undisclosed] and always are in need of **diapers, children's pajamas and underwear, adult personal care items, gift cards, and monetary donations**.

We hope people will also continue to **support** the work of the **House of Concern** with **food and non-food** items [diapers, soaps, detergents, paper products, etc.] and/or monetary donations. So many people's incomes have been affected by lay-offs and closings, there is a greater need than ever, for our help. Please remember the House is accepting only those items listed in the above paragraph, for the time being. But do, **remember our neighbors in need!**

APRIL special item: Canned Fruits & Veggies

Any/All items listed in the paragraph above would be welcomed.

You may bring items to the House of Concern: Mon – Fri. 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Until next month, you are urged to continue to call and email each other, send a card, keep in your prayers those you care about and love and those who are ill, struggling, and suffering losses and all those who risk their own lives in serving us; and remembering also to: "... in all things, be grateful".

**May the Lord watch between thee and me
While we are apart, One from the Other . . . Until we meet again**

P.S. and remember to check out **Season of Peace**, the virtual Bible study Zoom meetings beginning Thurs., May 28th. Or you may download the 5 session series. Go to **Pastor Leah's weekly newsletter for contact information**.



'I would do anything for a do-over': Calgary church hopes others learn from their tragic COVID-19 experience

Published Sunday, May 10, 2020 8:12PM MDT Last Updated Monday, May 11, 2020 8:06AM MDT



CALGARY -- Members of a Calgary church ravaged by COVID-19 in the early days of the pandemic are sharing their stories of grief and healing, after Alberta's chief medical health officer cited them as a cautionary tale. "I had the opportunity recently to talk to a faith leader whose faith community gathered together in mid-March before many of our public health measures were in place," Dr. Deena Hinshaw said Thursday. "The congregation had a worship service and then gathered together for a celebratory social event. There were only 41 people present, and they were careful to observe two meter distancing and good hand hygiene. They followed all the rules and did nothing wrong."

Despite that, 24 of the 41 people at the party ended up infected. Two of them died. Rev. Shannon Mang is the minister of Living Spirit United Church. "One of our most beloved members was having a very important birthday and we wanted to celebrate that," Mang said of the post-service celebration. "Under the circumstances, we thought we were going to be safe. We were very diligent about physical distancing, very diligent about hand hygiene."

Though the church has capacity for 200 people, fewer than 50 were at the event - well within the public health rules of the time. Food was served but everyone handling it wore gloves. "We were very careful and then a week later, we learned of the first person who was diagnosed with COVID-19," explained Mang. "A few days later we had the second, and the third and within a week there were about 14. Within two weeks, there were 24 of the 41 people who had been there that day. "The overwhelming emotion was shock."

Shannon Morey attends the church with her mom and dad and all three were at the party that day. She never got sick, but both of her parents did. "My mom thought she had a sinus infection, then a day later my dad thought he had a cold." Her father Dennis was admitted to the hospital on April 3 and the ICU two days later. Three weeks after that, he died. He was 81 but, according to his family, still very active. "He was out shoveling the walk just days before he got sick and looking forward to planting his garden," said Shannon. Other church members organized a vigil in his memory with more than 100 people dropping off candles outside his house, one at a time.

The church also held online wakes for members who died, allowing the community to grieve virtually. "That was so important because COVID-19 interrupts our traditions," said Mang. "The food at the house, being able to stay and visit and to cry together and tell stories together and laugh and show pictures. "All that stuff that we want to do, we can't do. So having an online wake helped."

Mang also says she struggles with her decision to proceed with the party. "It's really tough. Me personally I've had to keep working through this," she said. "We were working with the information that we had at the time, but I would do anything for a do-over. It's very very hard to live with this reality." Mang says the church has been devastated by the aftermath of the infection spreading among members and she wants others to learn from their experience. "We don't want another organization or faith community to go through what we've been through," said Mang. "It's really, really hard. There seems to be this huge divide between those who've experienced (COVID-19) and the majority who haven't. "If you haven't experienced it, you are so lucky. You have no idea how fortunate you are."

Even as public health restrictions start to loosen, Mang is encouraging people not to rush. "Think about the oldest person that you hang out with and visit and take care of. Are you willing to give them up?" It still isn't clear how the virus entered the church in the first place since none of the infected had travelled or knowingly encountered an infected person in the days before their last gathering together. It's suspected the virus may have breached the church a day earlier when a large choir was using the facility. Health officials say they likely will never know how it was transmitted there - and that's fine with Shannon Morey. "I don't want to know," said Morey. "When bad things happen people want to be angry and direct anger at something but if I were that person who brought it in, I would feel terrible."

Meanwhile, Reverend Mang says she doesn't know when her congregation will meet inside their church again. "We are not going back to what we were because we never will be what we were. We lost two really important members. We lost something but hope this experience will help us grow into something new - I hope a new more loving and caring community."

Church Family News



The **Need to Feed** campaign for The House of Concern is continuing so if you have a little extra please consider sharing. This congregation helped by collecting food items to send over to the House of Concern. Thank you so much to Wayne and Joyce Lohr for bringing all of those items over and for keeping track of how many items there were. Our congregation always comes through for those in need. Thank you all so much!

Backpack Program: Once again we will be delivering food to the hungry children in Seneca Falls. We will need your help delivering the meals. Our next delivery date is on May 29 then Summer Backpack begins June 29 with two deliveries each week. Stay tuned as we will need volunteers then also. Pickup of food will continue to be at Generations Bank as the church will be closed.

Are you bored and looking for something worthwhile to do with your time? **Pathway Home of the Finger Lakes is looking for volunteers** to hold a hand, comfort, make a meal, dust, address envelopes, water flowers, weed, share a joke or story, maybe just turn pages of a magazine or book for a resident. Pathway Home is the comfort care home for those who are terminally ill and are in need of a safe, home-like care. The time commitment is up to your schedule while they do try to use a four hour shift for those interested in resident care. Call 315.651.1240 if interested!



Plant Care Thanks to Cherie Clark for handling inside plants (and the new bushes at the back entrance), Sue Charles for the front garden, Peter Snyder and Ginny Konz for the fence garden, Joanne Elyseev for seasonal posies around the new bushes at the back entrance and Peter for his beautiful cacti in the Social Room!

In spite of the date (March 14) falling at the beginning of the concerns over the corona virus, the **Pie Sale** was very successful again this year. The total amount raised was _____, and we sold out at 1pm. We had people showing up before we could even get the “sold out” sign on the door, so we would have raised more money if we had had more pies to sell. Keep that in mind for next year. We asked people how they’d heard about this and received a variety of answers, such as saw the sandwich board out front for the last several days,” or “I was here last year.” One ad line we tried new this year and will certainly continue resulted in “I saw it in JumpStart.” Spencer Tulis, photographer from the FLTimes showed up when we were nearly sold out so maybe an article next year could be accompanied by a photo. Thank you to all who baked, helped sell, put out flyers and the sandwich board signs. Ginny Konz and Barb Van Kirk



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 Lankford

3120 Patton Road, Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Liza Merriam

Huntington Living Center Rm 108, 369 E. Main Street,

Waterloo NY 13165

Jean Morris

Lockport Presbyterian Home, 305-327 High Street,

Lockport, NY 14094

Jean Stenlake

Steuben Center, Room 125



Ushers and Candle Lighters


June 7th— Communion, Trinity Sunday

Join us <https://fpressf.com/online-worship>

Use your own cup and bread to join us for communion

The First Presbyterian Church Coffee Hour: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/2990167469> Meeting ID: 299 016 7469

Call on your phone: 1 929 436 2866 Meeting ID: 299 016 7469

Psalm 1; Job 1:1-22


June 14th— Flag Day

Join us <https://fpressf.com/online-worship>

Psalm 2; Job 3:1-10; 4:1-9; 7:11-21

June 21st— Father's Day

Join us <https://fpressf.com/online-worship>

Psalm 3; Job 14:7-15; 19:23-27

June 28th

Join us <https://fpressf.com/online-worship>

Psalm 4; Job 31:35-37; 38:1-11 [25-27]


July 5th— Communion

Join us <https://fpressf.com/online-worship>

Use your own cup and bread to join us for communion

The First Presbyterian Church Coffee Hour: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/2990167469> Meeting ID: 299 016 7469

Call on your phone: 1 929 436 2866 Meeting ID: 299 016 7469

Psalm 5; Job 41:1-8, 42:1-1

Summer Sermon Series:

June— Job; July -2 Corinthians; August -Ephesians.

Liturgists



June 7th— Psalm 1—Barry Porsch

14th— Psalm 2—Bob Seem

21st— Psalm 3—Marion Crull

28th— Psalm 4—Ginny Konz

July 5th —Psalm 5—Marc Smith

Prayer List

Know someone ill or hospitalized? This month, please call:

Susan Derr— 568-1918

To Keep in our prayers: Gloria Chandler; Kathy Cole; Jennifer Colbert; Sue Ellen and Peter Crego; Cindy Danielson; Michele Edmondson - family of Billy Bose Jack; Joanna Fuller; Betty Geraghty; Pat Gordon; Tori Guerina; Crystal Hanes;; Greta Hauser & Family; Minni Hergert; Jay Hoyle; Gary Ippolito; Al Johnson; Bea Jones; Debra Kemp; Timothy Kent; LewAnn Backus Lawhorn; Bruce Levine; Joyce Lohr; Lucy and Nancy Lopez; Peggy McIntyre; Liza Merriam; Tyler Morgan; Patsy Mott; Cheri Murphy; Dean Potter; Shirley Sage; Jean Stenlake; Linda Warner; Darryl Wells; Gretchen Whittacre; Linda Zona; and all those suffering in the world.



Church Office: 315-568-6636
Manse: 315-398.4356
E-mail: firstpres13148@gmail.com
Website: www.fpressf.com

Scan this
code to visit
our website!



Sunday Worship at 10am online.

Rev. Leah Ntuala-Pastor
Rev. Dr. Peter J. Crego-Pastor Emeritus
Karen Beals—Office Manager
Marion Crull-Treasurer
Peter Snyder— Sexton
Hedra Harrison—Music Director
Joyce Lohr-Clerk to the Session

*Session meetings are on the 4th Monday of each month at 7pm.
Presently serving Elders: James Clark, Marion Crull, Dick Dam-*

aske, Susan Derr,

*Michele Edmonson, Susan Harkey, Jay Hoyle, Marc Smith and Peter Snyder.
Joyce Lohr, Clerk to the Session and with Pastor Leah as Moderator*



First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls
P.O. Box 383
23 Cayuga St
Seneca Falls, NY 13148



Happy Summer to:

June Newsletter 2020