

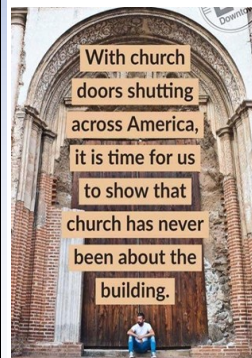
First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls

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



September Newsletter 2020

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Pastor's Corner

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.” Matthew 18:20

Fall is starting again and I had hoped we would be face to face again. Alas, it doesn't appear that we will be, be the mission and ministries of the church continue. In March, when we quickly had to shut down in-person activities, we did our best to bridge the gap. As we enter into a longer phase of being online, I wanted to make sure that we are doing more than putting a band-aid on the situation.

On Saturday, September 5th at 10:30am, in the parking lot of the church, we will be blessing our student backpacks as well as our students. Sunday school will meet on Sundays via Zoom at 4pm starting on September 1th.

Church Coffee Hour will be held on Sundays at 11am via Zoom. We will have a presentation in September by Chris Lajewski at the Montezuma Audobon Center; Melissa Killileagh will talk about her new book; and Denise Ruth, a Ranger at the Women's Rights National park will also speak. In addition, Jim Clark will be updating the church regarding our first year of being 100% solar.

Pastor Leah will lead a study written by Rev. Maxwell Grant, called 'Uncomfortable Truths.' This five-part, one-hour per session study is designed to build a productive, faith-based framework to discuss race and work toward racial equity. More information will follow here in the newsletter.

While we can't gather face to face in worship, we will continue to meet outside in fellowship at least once a month, until the weather gets cool. We'll keep finding opportunities to engage with one another in meaningful ways. We hope you have enjoyed the additions of special music, and readers to the online services. We'll continue to brainstorm, to come up with ways to enhance the services online.

Please keep checking in on one another with a call, email or letter. You remain in my thoughts and prayers. I'm committed in my desire to make sure we are being safe. I know for some it can seem a little too cautious, and for others it doesn't feel like enough. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Session Briefs

At its Tuesday, August 25, 2020 meeting, the Session:

- Heard report of Church School classes to begin on Sunday, September 14th at 4 pm
- Moved to remove the name of Nadine Held from church rolls due to her death
- Heard farewell note of thanks to the church from Karen and Stephen Beals and from Liza Merriam for the years of love and support received during their long memberships
- Moved to carry unused Continuing Education time and related monies allotted for Pastor forward to 2021
- Heard of Pastor's participation in class studying course by the Rev. Max Grant, "Uncomfortable Truths," and of her plans to teach this class (church role historically in slavery and roots of racism) beginning on Thursdays in September, from 11 am to noon
- Learned of Pastor's work with Presbytery on the subject of Vital Congregations and of plans to query the community for its concerns
- Heard report of Summer Backpack Program and of need to re-think some aspects for next summer
- Learned that Membership & Parish Life will consider a spring or fall 2021 schedule of *Bargains in the Basement!* rummage sale
- Heard report of 22 windows replaced at the manse; internet has been installed in the sanctuary; grass seed sown and new growth impressive at front of the church
- Learned and expressed thanks that pledges and offerings have come in this summer by mail and during outdoor meetings
- Learned of plans by Worship and Music ministry to home-bake bread and provide juice and cups for the next Communion Sunday, pick up Sept 5th at church between 10:30-11:30am
- Heard report from church COVID Task Force regarding re-opening the church building to congregational worship, and of its cautious approach in doing so, taking into consideration the advisory from General Assembly for each church to decide for itself
- The next meeting of Session is Monday, September 28, 2020



September Birthdays

Michele Edmondson-9/3

Joy Novack-9/5

Jessica Seem-Walsh-9/7

Sean Walsh- 9/7

Mike Day-9/10

Georgeanne (Elysée) Hauf-9/11

Barry Porsch-9/12

Just a Reminder...

**The deadline for article
submission for the
October newsletter**



**is Thursday, September
17th.**

Women's Circle



Will meet at 12:30 pm on Monday, September 14th at the home of Joyce Lohr.

Those attending should bring their own lunches. Drinks and dessert will be provided. We'll meet out of doors in the Lohr's very large yard. If that turns out to be rainy, let's meet (in a socially-distanced way!), in the church social rooms.

During phone, e-mail and person-to-person contact over the summer we shared some ideas and concerns We'll discuss those on September 14th.

We always have work ahead of us! **The pandemic has not eliminated hunger or pain for people in poverty or need.** The pandemic has intensified suffering among them. If you have something extra in your pantry, bring it along for donating to the **House of Concern**. Some of us have continued our donations since the spring when the pandemic began and through the summer months, and they have been appreciated. If you have personal care items of the kind we place in our kits for the women's shelter, bring them along; also things for the Victim Resource Center, in Newark. Ginny took our most recent donations there, a few weeks ago.

In the words of Paul in his letter to the Galatians Chapter 6:9:

"...and let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart."

The **September special** item for the House of Concern is: **Breakfast Cereals**

As always, all food items packaged and canned are welcome along with paper and soap household items.

We invite others to join us in the work of the Circle and in its studies. Meetings usually take place on the first Monday of each month, September—May. We meet in the comfortable Hawley Room, downstairs in the church. When the church building has re-opened to congregational worship (TBA), we look forward to resuming that tradition.

In the meantime, everyone is encouraged to continue with awareness of the Coronavirus and to take healthful precautions.



Uncomfortable Truths: A Five Part Series

We will build a productive, faith-based framework to discuss race and work toward racial equity. This is designed as a five-part series, to be held on Thursday at 11:00am starting on September 10th and continuing through October 8th. Each session

is an hour. Prior to the session, participants are asked to read or watch the material, in order to have meaningful and genuine conversations. Please come with your thoughts and questions. We are asking people to register for this event. Please email either firstpres13148@gmail.com or revntuala5@gmail.com. You don't need to be a church member to participate, so feel free to share this with others.



back2school prayer

"Dear Lord, use my eyes to
see new friends.

Open my ears to
hear my teacher.

Open my mind to
learn new things.

Let my heart
remember YOU are near
when I'm afraid.

Help me to
love others like you do.

I want to
shine your light so bright in my school."
Amen.

©Courtney DeFee

Blessing of the Backpacks!

On Saturday, September 5, 2020 in the church parking lot, between 10:30 and 11:30 am, we will be hosting a Blessing of the Backpacks. We'll be blessing both the students and the teachers for the 2020-2021 school year. All students and teachers are welcome; there is no need to be a church member.

We'll also be giving away communion kits, so please join us and be sure to wear your favorite mask!



History of the Bells



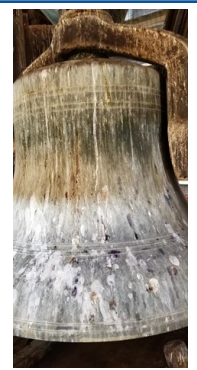
We had some work done in the bell tower and steeple, and in the process had some photos taken of the bells (thanks Jim Clark) and also learned some history.

There were two **Meneely bell foundries**, based on either side of the Hudson River in New York State.

The first Meneely bell foundry was established in 1825 in West Troy (now Watervliet), NY by Andrew Meneely, a former apprentice in the foundry of Benjamin Hanks. Two of Andrew's sons continued to operate the foundry after his death, and it remained a family operation until its closure.

The second Meneely bell foundry was established in 1870 by a third son, Clinton H. Meneely, across the river in Troy, NY. Initially he was in partnership with George H. Kimberly, under the name Meneely & Kimberly; this second foundry was reorganized in 1879 as the Clinton H. Meneely Bell Company, then later as the Meneely Bell Company. Like it's related competitor, it remained a family operation until its closure.

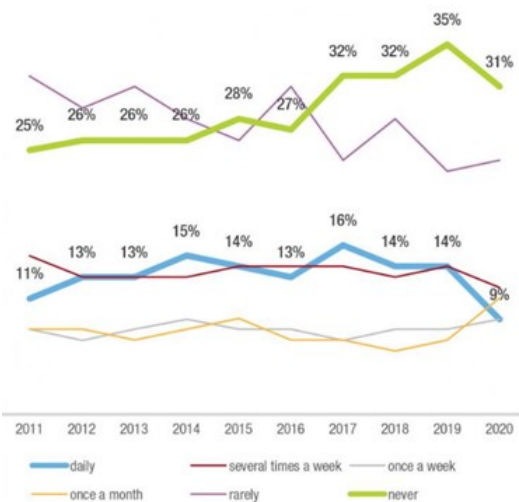
(https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Meneely_Bell_Foundry&action=edit§ion=3)



New survey: people are reading the Bible less during the pandemic

by Emily McFarlan Miller, August 10, 2020

Bible Reading Frequency Over Time



People may be reading the news and “doomscrolling” through social media during the coronavirus pandemic. But what they don’t appear to be reading is the Bible.

That’s according to the tenth annual State of the Bible survey, released July 22 by the American Bible Society. The number of American adults the American Bible Society considers “Bible engaged,” based on how frequently they read scripture and its impact on their relationships and choices, dropped from 28 percent to 22.7 percent between January and June, according to additional data collected by the organization in June.

“What we saw between January and June was that 13 million people in America who were previously really engaging meaningfully with scripture no longer were and that was a serious drop-off,” said John Plake, director of ministry

intelligence for the American Bible Society.

Frequency of Bible reading also dropped over the last year, with daily readers dropping from 14 percent to 9 percent and those who read the Bible several times a week from 14 percent to 12 percent, the lowest number on record, according to the survey, conducted in January with the Barna Group.

The decrease in Bible use tracks with what the American Bible Society has seen over the past decade of research, according to Plake. In 2011, about 64 million people said they never used the Bible, compared with 87 to 90 million today, he said.

“Frankly, there’s just a much larger percentage of the American population over the last ten years that says they never use the Bible,” Plake said.

Most of that change has come in what the American Bible Society calls occasional Bible users or the “movable middle.” Those people are less likely than they were ten years ago to open a Bible in search of answers to their questions, according to the research.

The number of people who regularly use the Bible—at least once a week—had held “fairly steady right up to COVID-19, and then COVID-19 has messed everyone up,” Plake said.

Women, who have led men in Bible engagement every year of the survey, now slightly trail behind men, he pointed out. He said that may be because of the extra demands that mothers in particular have faced during the pandemic, juggling working from home and helping children with virtual learning as workplaces and schools closed to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Many churches have also moved online, he said, and that means people “can’t get together with their friends and study the Bible” the way they have in the past.

Plake urged church leaders to focus on the women in their congregations and communities who are “struggling in ways that might not make the headlines.” He emphasized the importance of mentoring or meeting with church members in small groups to talk, pray, and study the Bible together. “I think the first thing is be assured that your role is critical in helping people maintain their faith and their deep connection to God,” he said. “It’s easy to think, ‘Well, hey, they can stream a service anywhere,’ and many, many people have done that, but the reality is without our pastors helping us, without leaders in our churches helping us to stay connected, people struggle.” —Religion News Service



Church Family News

◆ Thank you to Dick Damaske and Jim Clark, who have been hard at work with building and property since March. Repairs have happened to the parking lot, the roof, the steeple, painting repair in the sanctuary. Wi-fi, manse windows, trees, lighting Alice Paul statue and so much more. Thank you for your hard work and dedication.

◆ **Summer Backpack delivery**—Thanks to Peter Snyder, Ginny Konz, Barb VanKirk, Zoe VanKirk, Sue Harkey, Susan Derr, Dan Babbit, Louis and Romona Lobdell and everyone else who assisted!



◆ Thank you to Pete Snyder and Sue Charles for your work in the front of the church.

◆ **2 Cents a Meal/Cents-Ability** - if returning your plastic bottles and cans to the redemption center is not on your list of favorite things to do, why not donate them? There is a bin in the Social Hall to put them in. Peter Snyder will bring them to the redemption center for us, and the money will then be donated to the 2 Cents a Meal program (former Cents-Ability) through the Presbyterian Mission Foundation.



Vital Congregations Initiative

Vision

By the power of the Holy Spirit, and in authentic relationships with mid councils, we seek to equip, nurture and support church leaders to empower their congregations to renew, recover and live more fully into faithful discipleship to Jesus Christ.

Purpose

The purpose of the Vital Congregations Initiative is to work alongside leaders of existing congregations continually assessing, discerning and living into faithful actions that increase vitality through intentional spiritual practices that take them deeper into following Jesus Christ, so that their own lives are changed, congregations are transformed, and the mission of God spreads throughout particular communities and the world.

To learn more visit: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/theology-formation-and-evangelism/vital-congregations/>

Members and Friends to Keep in Our Thoughts:

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	Heritage Hall West, 61 Cooper Street, Agawam, MA 01001
Jean Morris	Lockport Presbyterian Home, 305-327 High St., Lockport, NY 14094
Jean Stenlake	Steuben Center, Room 125, 7009 Rumsey St. Ext., Bath, NY 14810

Service Schedule



September 6th– Communion- Psalm 14; Ephesians 6:10-20
Join us <https://fpressf.com/online-worship>



Use your own cup and bread to join us for communion

September 13th—Psalm 15; Preaching text: 1 John 1:1-4; Gospel: John 1:14-16

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

September 20th—Psalm 16; Preaching text: 1 John 1:5-2:2; Gospel: John 1:29

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

September 27th—Psalm 17; Preaching text: 1 John 4:1-6; Gospel: John 14:15-17

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

October 4th– World Communion- Psalm 18; Preaching text: 1John 4:7-21; Gospel: John 15:9-11



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

Use your own cup and bread to join us for communion



Liturgists

6th– Marion Crull
13th– Ginny Konz
20th– Bob Seem

27th– Barry Porsch
Oct 4th– Marc Smith

Coffee Hour and Prayer List

Sept. 13th: Zoom with Chris Lajewski, zoom link will be sent, please check email
Sept. 20th: Zoom with Melissa Killeleagh, zoom link will be sent, please check email
Sept. 27th: Zoom with Denise Ruth, zoom link will be sent, please check email



Know someone ill or hospitalized?

This month, please call: Barb VanKirk 315.568.9908



To Keep in our prayers: Frank Bocek; Gloria Chandler; Kathy Cole; Jennifer Colbert; Matthew Cramer; Norine Crull; Sue Ellen and Peter Crego; Cindy Danielson; Joanna Fuller; Betty Geraghty; Pat Gordon; Tori Guerina; Crystal Hanes; Greta Hauser & Family; Gary Ippolito; Al Johnson; Bea Jones; Debra Kemp; Timothy Kent; our Law Enforcement Officers; LewAnn Backus Lawhorn; Bruce Levine; Lucy and Nancy Lopez; Liza Merriam; Tyler Morgan; Patsy Mott; Cheri Murphy; Dean Potter; Shirley Sage; Jean Stenlake; Linda Warner; Darryl Wells; Paul Wenderlich; Gretchen Whittacre; Linda Zona; and all those suffering in the world.

Church Office: 315-568-6636
Hours: Thursday 7:00-12:00pm
Manse: 315-398-4356
E-mail: firstpres13148@gmail.com
Website: www.fpressf.com

Scan this code
to learn more
about us!



**Sunday Online Worship at 10am.
Coffee Hour via Zoom at 11am.**

Rev. Leah Ntuala-Pastor
Rev. Dr. Peter J. Crego-Pastor Emeritus
Laurie Weller-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: Matthew Crull, Susan Derr, Susan Harkey, Jay Hoyle,
Ginny Konz, Wayne Lohr, Marc Smith, Peter Snyder.
Joyce Lohr, Clerk to the Session and Rev. Leah Ntuala, Moderator.

First Presbyterian Church of Seneca Falls
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Hello
AUTUMN

to



September Newsletter 2020