

September 2020

We give thanks this morning for the incredible beauty of this day, for the magnificence of life, and for our own individual potential still untapped. As we reflect on these blessings, we praise God for the good signs in our own lives- good signs of the past and good signs ahead.

Richard G. Capen, Jr



The Vine



September 2020

First Presbyterian Church of Penn Yan

Rev. Paul E. Malles, Pastor

211 Main Street, P.O. Box 639, Penn Yan, NY 14527

Telephone 315-536-8235

www.pennyanpresbyterian.org

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9 AM – Noon



Coming Events



- | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|---|
| September 6 | 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM | “Reconciliation”
Live streaming of service on Facebook, then posted on YouTube - have your own communion elements available
Elements are available for those attending service in-person |
| September 13 | 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM | “Forgiveness”
In-person service as well as live streaming on Facebook, then posted on YouTube |
| September 15 | 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM | Book Study - J.I. Packer’s book, “Knowing God.”
(via Zoom) |
| September 20 | 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM | “God Provides”
In-person service as well as live streaming on Facebook, then posted on YouTube |
| September 22 | 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM | Book Study - J.I. Packer’s book, “Knowing God.”
(via Zoom) |
| September 27 | 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM | “Acting on Faith”
In-person service as well as live streaming on Facebook, then posted on YouTube |
| September 29 | 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM | Book Study - J.I. Packer’s book, “Knowing God.”
(via Zoom) |

Pastor's Ponderings

Online Book Study

The congregation has not held Bible Study Classes since the outbreak of the COVID 19 Virus. However, this fall we will begin a book study of J.I. Packer's book, "Knowing God." The discussions will be held on Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. beginning on September 15. We will meet through Zoom. The classes will last one hour.

Not everyone is able to use Zoom. Therefore, we will also post the video discussions on the new website that is being created. This will give more people an opportunity to enjoy the discussions.

Years ago, when I worked in a Christian bookstore, I remember many people coming in the store requesting a copy of "Knowing God." The book has been popular for many years. Many people consider it a very significant book. It is not uncommon for people to read the book a second or third time.

Packer wrote the book primarily to help people realize God's greatness. By focusing on the greatness of God we are inspired to not be too self-absorbed. Packer shares how it was a revelation for him to realize that he was not the center of things, but God is.

I think that is an important message for us to hear. Our society expends a great deal of energy about making life all about ourselves. The best place to begin thinking about life and its meaning is by contemplating God's identity.

The author also realized as God's child, he exists for God, rather than God existing for him. Putting God first is the key.

Packer writes that we were made to know God and that the aim of our lives should be to know God. He quotes John 17:3, "This is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent."

The author surmises that the best thing in life that brings more joy and contentment is the knowledge of God. "This is what the Lord says: 'Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength, or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that he or she understands and knows me.'" Jer. 9:23-24

I hope you will join the discussions. Funds are available through the Hatti Hartman Tithe Committee if you are unable to cover the costs for the book. Money is not an issue. We want as many people as possible to participate.

With God's blessings,

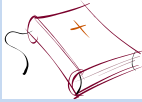




Sunday Scriptures for September



September 6	Exodus 12:1-14	Matthew 18:15-20
September 13	Exodus 14:19-31	Matthew 18:21-35
September 20	Exodus 16:2-15	Matthew 20:1-16
September 27	Exodus 17:1-7	Matthew 21:23-32



Bible Studies



During September, the Wednesday Morning Bible Study Classes have been canceled until further notice.



Prayer Line



Charlotte Gillespie	315-536-7185	Nancy Burt	315-536-9204
Judy Wilbert	607-292-6958		

Please keep the following in your prayers: Larry Ayers, Carole Conlon, the family of Isabelle D’Ingianni, Jay Fadden, Sue Goodrich, Marilyn Malles, the family of Jan Martens, Daryn Potts, James Rohr, Devie Russell, Jennifer Stollery, Joan Wiley, and Paul Wendlandt. And especially our healthcare workers, first responders, police, and firemen; and our store clerks and military.



Keuka Food Pantry



Non-perishable goods such as pasta, pasta sauces, peanut butter, cereals, canned vegetables, and fruits are always needed. Thank you to everyone for contribution to this program to help feed the hungry in our area and other areas. Helpers are always welcomed. Please have your contributions here at the church, in the box in the entry hall. Hours of operation for the Hope Center Keuka Food Pantry are typically Monday, 9AM-2PM, Tuesday, 11AM-4PM and Thursday, 10AM-2PM – clients can visit the pantry for your monthly distribution on a day/time that works best for them. Please call ahead to ensure they are not on pause!!



Let's Celebrate



The following have birthdays and anniversaries in September. Feel free to cut this portion out and pray for those whose birthdays and anniversaries are listed below:

Mary and Herb Tennies' Anniv	September 1	Jeff Johnson	September 14
Marcia Kneeland	September 6	Michael Hansen	September 18
Wava and Jim Anniversary	September 7	Cole Wicker	September 20
Sue Goodrich	September 8	Greg Doan	September 22
Mary Tennies	September 8	Darlene Palmer	September 25
Kaitlyn Hamm	September 9	Christopher Johnson	September 26
Margaret Dilgard	September 11	Deb and Mike Snyder Anniv	September 26
Bernice Spanneut	September 12	Alyssa Wood Wicker	September 30

Congratulations To All!

Have we missed your birthday or anniversary? If so, we are very sorry – please let us know by filling out the form below and bringing it to the Church Office!

Name _____



Church /Local News



News from Session

Electronic statements: With the computer input of our giving, the church is posed to send statements electronically by email – this will help decrease our spending for postage. If you currently do not receive your quarterly statement by email and wish to receive it through email, please contact Linda Bracht at firstprespy211@yahoo.com. Otherwise, the church office will distribute computer-generated quarterly statements during service for the first two Sundays after each quarter; those not distributed will then be mailed.

Penn Yan Area Council of Churches: The minutes from the Penn Yan Area Council of Churches will be posted in the office hallway.



Trustees

News from Trustees

Renovations: Yes, we are **STILL** working on renovations to our church – we are excited to see the beauty that will be coming to the garden on the Clinton Street side of the church by our garden group and the Memorial Committee!!! Thank you to Sue Baxter, Phil and Linda Bracht, Jon Burt, Alan Doan and Bob Gillespie for removal of the shrubs.



News from the Presbyterian Women

We have canceled our Spring Rummage sale which was rescheduled to June 12th – the new date is now May/June 2021. Sandy will chair this event.

We have canceled our Chicken BBQ at Oak Hill.

We have canceled our Fall Picnic at Joy's cottage – hang in there, we will be back together again at some point in the future!!!

December 8th is the date for our Advent Evening with chairs Jean and Char.

Celebration of life chairs remain the same – the list is on the kitchen bulletin board. Committee chairs remain the same.

Miracle Cloths: The Presbyterian Women are selling streak-free microfiber Miracle Cloths as a fundraiser – \$5.00 for each cloth. The cloth fiber is a special yarn that is strong and is virtually lint-free - it does not damage any surface. The fibers grab and hold dirt, dust and grime - tough on dirt and gentle on surface - these cloths are GREAT for cleaning windows and almost anything else. Please see Sandy Carlson.



News from the Worship and Music Committee

Hard to believe summer is winding down and we are looking forward to moving into our modified fall schedules. I don't believe any of us are really sure what the remainder of the year will look like. What a year 2020 has been.

Church will be continuing to be semi open under all the guidelines that have been posted previously. Please remember if you are not feeling well, stay home and watch our Church service on line. It is so good to have this option now. It will be a great benefit to so many people at different times. Our snow birds, our friends in nursing homes or care centers, and for all of us as we continue to struggle through the Covid-19.

A quick reminder, until Church opens fully, there is no need for ushers or hospitality people. Choir will also be cancelled until further notice.

We hope everyone is enjoying our new pianist/organist Chris Hann. What beautiful music we are hearing. Hopefully we will have a welcome Chris coffee hour in the future. We also hope you are enjoying listening to Megan each week. What a joy it has been hearing her every Sunday morning. Thank you to both Chris and Megan for sharing your talents with us every week.

I hope we can continue to enjoy this wonderful weather that has allowed us to still be social distancing outside. Have a safe and healthy Labor Day.

Live streaming of service on Facebook – We are continuing the live-streaming on Facebook of our Sunday church service, and then the service is posted on YouTube.

In-Person service: We are also offering in-person Sunday church service at our usual time of 10 AM. The service will be different in that:

- The service will be approximately 40 minutes as a safety precaution. While there is live-streaming with one camera, the pastor will perform the service from the communion table; once we have more cameras, the pastor will perform the service from the pulpit. There will be no layreaders.
- Because all windows and doors will be as open as possible to increase ventilation, please dress accordingly.
- There must be no more than 41 people in the sanctuary at one time.
- Everyone must wear a mask at all times, covering their nose and mouth with the exception of the Pastor during service, and with the exception of taking communion; this includes but is not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks - we will have masks available if you do not have one.
- Every ‘household’ must maintain a 6 foot distance from other households.
- Every person must hand sanitize before entering the building – we will have hand sanitizers at the building entrance.
- All pew cushions have been removed.
- An usher will meet attendees at the door to the sanctuary, record the name (also address and phone number if a visitor), take/record the person’s temperature and ask if they have symptoms (Y/N). If anyone has any symptoms following the service, Pastor Paul must be contacted.
- In the sanctuary, there are directional arrows to maintain traffic patterns – all household members must enter the sanctuary through the usual door, then be escorted up the center aisle by an usher with seating starting at the front pulpit pew; once the pulpit side is filled, all household members are escorted up the center aisle with seating starting at the front choir-side pew. Exit following service is out the pulpit front door for those seated on the pulpit side, starting with the first row; for those seated on the choir side, exit down the far-right aisle starting with the back row, out the foyer door and out the main front door.
- Ushers will place the appropriate number of bulletins in the seating area as he/she is escorting a household to a seating area.
- If you wish to share a prayer or joy and/or concern, please call the church office (leave a message if no one answers) or email Pastor Paul
- There will be no choir or singing of hymns.
- There will be no hand shaking or laying-on of hands across households during the benediction.
- There will be no passing of the collection plate or 2 cents a meal boxes – a plate and box will be available on both tables behind the last pew on either side, and on the table near the pulpit exit door.
- There will be no Sunday school or nursery
- All Bibles, hymnals and other papers are removed from the pews; you are welcome to bring your own Bible.

- Please exit the building **immediately** after service – if you want to stop and speak with others, please do so outside in the parking lot. There will be no fellowship/coffee hour in Crosier Hall until further notice.

Communion: For those live-streaming the service, you are welcome to have your own communion elements available; for those attending the in-person service, prepackaged bread and pre-poured juice is available in disposable containers (please dispose of them in the provided trash can as you exit the building).

Choir: Rehearsals on the first Wednesday of each month are canceled until further notice.



News from Personnel

Mary-Ellen has notified us that she will be retiring as Secretary. She has done a wonderful job during her term and will be helping us in the transition to a new person. We sincerely appreciate how Mary-Ellen has consistently gone above and beyond her job description, seeing needs and taking the initiative to get important things done. She will continue to help out with some of our church activities as she is able. Thank You Mary-Ellen!



News from Outreach

Peace and Global Witness Offering: On Sunday, October 4th, we will have the Peace and Global Witness Offering. The theme this year is ‘Building God’s Household of Peace’. The Peace & Global Witness Offering encourages the church to cast off anxiety and fear, discord and division, and embrace our reconciling God’s mission to those around the corner and around the world. Let us offer the peace of Christ in all times and all ways. Please give generously to support those working to share the dream of peace around the world, as proclaimed by the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. Giving can be done through our congregation, by texting PEACE to 20222 to give \$10, and through presbyterianmission.org/give/peace-global.

Let us continue to pray for those in need: Draw all people together, gracious God, and make us your house. Let our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing create a home and a wholeness for people in need, especially those suffering from the impacts of the current crisis, so that the whole human family will know your love. Amen.



News from Church Life

Supper Club: Our Supper Club for September has been canceled. Stay tuned for October!!!!



News from Christian Ed

Confirmation Classes: Our confirmation classes are starting – YEA!!!!!!.



News from the Memorial Committee

The Memorial Committee continues to receive gifts from family and friends of our recently deceased members – what a special way to remember them – we do so miss them.



Hattie Hartman Tithe Committee

Hello again from the Hattie Hartman Committee. We hope you have enjoyed this summer as much as you can and have stayed healthy. In June it was noted that the committee had not met for 3 months and now it is September with no meetings for six months. Our work for the community has not stopped and we do what we can. Meetings via Zoom are planned to start this month.

This summer the Yates County Habitat for Humanity completed another home for a family. I would like to quote the closing comments of the letter we received from Habitat for Humanity:

“The First Presbyterian Church Grant has been a huge factor in our success in making this home affordable while still providing the necessary special features. Yates County Habitat For Humanity is privileged to be the “conduit” for your exemplary community minded outreach. **Thank you.**”

Please take a moment to feel the warmth in your heart, for it is your support to this committee that allows these special gifts to happen.

We wish you all good health and look forward to being together again and sharing the Peace of Christ with each other. In the meantime, if you see a need or you have a need please let one of the committee members know.

Peace,
Hattie Hartman Tithe Committee

Jen Rouin, Sandy Carlson, Karen Montgomery, Phoebe Parker
Peter Martens, Larry Edgington, Robert Constantine Chairperson



News from the Higher Education Gifts Committee

The Edward L. Scherer Higher Education Gift fund is available for all members of the church who are going on for higher education. These gifts are given out twice a year, in September and in January. If you want to apply, you need to find an application form on the table in the back of the sanctuary, fill it out with as much information as possible, and mail it to Char Gillespie, 2888 Sherman Hollow, Penn Yan, NY 14527 or call at 315-536-7185 or email the application to: charlottegillespie41@gmail.com. The committee especially needs to know whether you are a full time or part time student, how many credit hours you will be taking if applicable, your major, and when you hope to complete your education. Later in the year you will be asked to provide the committee with a copy of your official registration for courses for the upcoming semester. An application needs to be filled out each year you are in school. You may also contact any member of the committee: Chairman - Charlotte Gillespie; Student Coordinator - Judith Wilbert. The students receiving higher ed gifts for the 2019-2020 school year are Keegan Baxter, Anna Detar, Lin Dickinson, Elizabeth Martens, and Alex Rouin.

In the 23 years that the gift fund has been used, the church has distributed \$451,791 – thank you so much to the higher ed committee and the Investment Committee for their support of our church members.



News from the Deacons

Usher and Hospitality list for 2020: Even though our services have been canceled until further notice, we still have our usher/hospitality list which shall be active, hopefully sooner rather than later!!!

Opening: We have 4 openings on the Board of Deacons – if you are interested or want to find out more information, please contact any one of our Deacons.



2020 Stewardship Campaign: “Share the Gift”

Our Stewardship Campaign theme for 2020 is ‘Share the Gift’. We are pleased to continue to offer the choice of using an automated electronic procedure for pledged offerings. If you wish to take to take advantage of this method, please contact Linda Bracht, our church Treasurer and team member. She will need your bank account and routing numbers, the amount and frequency

you desire for your offering. Of course, the usual method of presenting offerings continues to be available.



Passing to God's Heavenly Kingdom

It is with great sadness that we share that Jan Martens, Klaas Martens' brother passed on August 2nd. Jan was a hard-working organic farmer who loved his family. His wife, Stephanie, held a Memorial Service at their family farm at 1724 Ridge Road, in Penn Yan, on Saturday, August 15th with a catered luncheon following the outdoor service. Please keep the family in your thoughts and prayers.

Also, it is with great sadness that we share that Isabelle D'Ingianni passed away peacefully on Monday, August 17th at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hospital. Her children were at her side. Isabelle was 101 years old. Family and church were always very important to her. She will be remembered for her kindness, her faith, her wisdom, and her graciousness. Her passing was not related to the virus. There will be no calling hours; a Graveside Committal Service will be at a later date for the family. Cards of condolences may be sent to: Marcy Mitchell, 5443 Dutch Street, Dundee, NY 14837. Please keep the family in your thoughts and prayers.

New Website

Mike Seppala has been working very hard creating a new website for the church that allows live-streaming of Sunday service – so you will not need a Facebook account. The other information you are used to seeing on our current website will be there too, along with a link to catchup on Sunday services as each service will be recorded and accessible from the new website. When the website is up and running, Pastor Paul will email the congregation!!! More details to follow!!!



Yates Christmas Program Fundraiser

The Yates Christmas Program is having a chicken and pork barbecue fundraiser on Saturday, September 19th at Oak Hill Bulk Foods (3173 route 14A, Penn Yan). Serving starts at 10 AM in the pavilion until sold out, with a portion of the proceeds going to Yates Christmas Program – please come and support the fundraiser as the other usual fundraisers may not be done this year in an abundance of caution for the volunteers.

Our Town RoCKS

Our Town Rocks has many programs coming in September:

- September 3rd - Meet me in the Park from 6:30 PM – 8 PM with Roy Litteer & Friends at the Seneca Street Park, Dundee – sponsored by the Dundee Library – social distancing of course!!
- September 10th – Turkey Dinner – take-out only to benefit the Dundee Baptist Church – serving from 4:30 PM – 7 PM at the Classic Café - \$12 for adults.
- September 12th – Dundee Rotary Scrap Metal Drive at Knapp & Schlappi (71 Bigelow Avenue, Dundee) from 9 AM – 1 PM

- September 19th – free paper shredding at the Dundee Office of ServU Credit Union, from 9 AM - noon
- September 30th – free Rabies Clinic for dogs, cats and ferrets, from 7 PM - * PM at the Dundee Village Barns, 25 Spring Street, Dundee.

Name Tags

Is your name tag up-to-date, or do you need a name tag??? If so, please drop a note in the collection plate, or see an usher or greeter, or tell someone in the church office!!!

Joyful Noise Memorial Bell Choir

The Joyful Noise Memorial Bell Choir has joined the chime and bell choir of the Methodist Church. We usually rehearse on Wednesdays from 6:15 PM -7:15 PM alternating between our church and the Methodist Church; we typically play on the 3rd Sunday of each month (but if the Buffalo Bills are playing at home on the 3rd Sunday, then we will play on the 4th Sunday!!!) – all is also on pause until further notice. If you know someone or if you are interested in playing with us, please join us on Wednesday evening. We are so fortunate to have handbells and we want to continue making Joyful Noise with them.

Men’s Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study which typically meets at 9:00 AM on the first Saturday morning of each month in the church office, is also on pause until further notice.

Church Play Date

Our church children’s play dates have been canceled until further notice – we will keep you updated!!! When they start up again, if you are interested in more information, please contact Linda Malles, Rachel Anderson or Hanna Martens.

‘Paul’s Place’

“Paul’s Place”, the Respite Care Program initiated by the Living Well, has been canceled until further notice. This program was geared to serve people living and dealing with dementia or early stage Alzheimer’s. If someone you know, or care for, could benefit from this program, please contact Kim Lyons at the Living Well at (315) 536-0838 for information.

Literacy Volunteers of Ontario-Yates

Do you know an adult who can’t read? Someone who would like to read better or earn a high school equivalency diploma? A non-English speaker who would like to communicate better or earn U.S. citizenship? Literacy Volunteers of Ontario-Yates can help. We also welcome new tutors and now have online tutor training available. For more information, please call us at (585) 396-1686 in Ontario County or (315) 536-6799 in Yates County.

Coronavirus Anxiety Workbook

Phil Rouin has introduced us to a Coronavirus Anxiety Workbook – A Tool to Help You Build Resilience During Difficult Times – if you have not seen and it when Pastor Paul emailed it to the congregation, and you wish to have a copy, please let the office know and we can print a copy for you.

Walking Can Be Fun!!!

The walking classes on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 9 AM – 10 AM have been canceled until further notice – we will keep you informed when we resume!!!

Per Capita

Our Per Capita for 2020 is \$50 – if you give electronically, please tell Linda Bracht what is the amount and when you would like the church to take the per capita – she does not take it automatically.

What is Per Capita? In essence, per capita is a set amount of money (apportionment) per member that is paid to the Presbytery of Geneva, the Synod of the Northeast, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Just as a train cannot move without an engine, our church councils require a power source to enable them to provide basic services which support our mutual mission as the Body of Christ. Per capita covers the ecclesiastical expenses of the denomination: the coordination and evaluation of mission, and the performance of ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions. Per capita is an opportunity for all members of the Presbyterian church to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the organizational costs of the larger church.

What does the Book of Order say about Per Capita? “Each council above the session shall prepare a budget annually for its operating expenses, including administrative personnel, and may fund it with a per capita apportionment among the particular churches within its bounds. Presbyteries are responsible for raising their own funds and for the timely transmission of per capita funds to their respective synods and to General Assembly. Presbyteries may direct per capita apportionments to the sessions within their bounds but in no case, shall the authority of the session to direct its benevolences be comprised.” (G-3.0106)

How is per capita paid to the Synod and General Assembly in the Presbytery of Geneva? Different denominations have different ways of collecting revenue. Some receive a “head tax” of more than \$50 per member. Others receive a certain percentage of a congregation’s receipts (up to 25%). In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), per capita is an obligation of the Presbytery. The Presbytery of Geneva affirms the interdependent nature of our church by allocating funds in the annual operating budget for Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly per capita regardless of income from the churches.

What are the consequences if a Church does not contribute to the Presbytery? The majority of congregations in the Presbytery generously contribute funds every year. When particular churches do not contribute, a greater burden of responsibility is placed on sister churches in the Presbytery to fund our mutual mission including our partnership with Synod and General Assembly. Per capita establishes a minimum level of financial participation in the vital work of our connectional church as the Body of Christ, strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians. It is a moral obligation we share with one another. Some sessions encourage each member to contribute per capita beyond regular giving to the church. For more information about per capita: <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/departments/per-capita/frequently-asked-questions/>

The Presbytery of Geneva is grateful for your congregation’s partnership in mission and ministry!

Have you considered electronic giving?

Several of our members have chosen this newer way of giving – how about you? If you wish to make church contributions automatically via electronic transfer, please request an authorization form from Linda Bracht (315-279-1545 or pjb29@cornell.edu).



Dear pastors and church educators,

Grace and peace to you all, from the staff of Camp Whitman!

With the widespread closure of churches over the past several months, we know that many of you have had to radically shift your thinking about what ministry looks and sounds like. We, too, have been trying to think creatively about ways that we can continue the ministry of Camp Whitman in these unique circumstances. To that end, we've designed three new programs that allow us to utilize our physical, human, and spiritual resources to meet the needs of campers and their families. We're reaching out to you in the hope that some of the spiritual formation content that we have created can help you enrich your children's and youth ministries at a local level.

Our Camp Reimagined program is an attempt to provide for all campers of all ages and abilities opportunities to grow -- spiritually, emotionally, socially, and intellectually -- in their own home environments, in their own patches of soil. Our theme is "Grow Where You're Planted," which is *apropos* for campers who cannot be physically present at Camp Whitman! The program combines ecological education, faith formation, and tactile learning through on-demand videos and hands-on, mailed-to-home activities. Our program includes songs, games, arts and crafts projects, nature lessons, cooking tutorials, faith-based devotionals, and book read-a-louds.

We encourage you to consider ways in which this Camp Reimagined content could be used for your children's and youth ministries. These materials could be easily adapted for:

- Sunday School lessons
- Vacation Bible School
- Your local church's day camp
- Summer enrichment for your young members

The Camp Reimagined program can be done at each camper's own pace, on his/her/their own or with the assistance of caregivers. The materials are targeted for campers with an approximate reading level of Grades 4-5, but additional materials for more advanced or more basic readers can be created if the demand exists. We encourage you to reach out to us to discuss custom pricing options and the educational needs of your church community.

This summer, we all need to stay at home, growing where God has planted us. Please reach out to me at rebekafergussonlutz@gmail.com or (585) 404-6248 to brainstorm ways that we can make this summer one of growth and resilience for the children and youth of your community.

All the best,

Becka Fergusson-Lutz , Director, Camp Reimagined

**Presbytery of Geneva
Camp Whitman**



Camp Whitman Capital Campaign: We are excited to announce that the Camp Whitman Capital Campaign exceeded their \$500,000 goal – they have received \$528,895 – this is a wonderful testament to our community’s support of the camp!!!

**Presbytery of Geneva
Letter from our Leadership Team from July 29th**



Dear Friends in our Presbytery,

As has been typical of 2020, it has certainly been an interesting summer. In this region, we’re certainly enjoying some nice weather, and I hope you’re able to enjoy God’s natural world at this time. While we haven’t had a traditional camping season, we hear that Camp Recreate and other programs through Camp Whitman are going very well, and we give thanks.

The Leadership Team of the Presbytery has been monitoring how the pandemic and other events are going. In consultation with the intended host congregations, we’ll be recommending to the General Council that our remaining Presbytery meetings of 2020 be conducted via Zoom. Meeting this way will allow our members and congregations to be comfortable in social distancing, while also making it possible for staff and special denominational guests (such as Rev. Dr. Diane Moffett, Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, in November) to be present with us. We are finding that digital meetings can be meaningful, productive, and uplifting -- and we have even seen a significant increase in attendance! Upon Council’s approval, please watch for future communications about the times and specific information for these meetings.

Our region remains in Phase IV, and while there have still been sporadic COVID-19 cases locally, we continue to do well as a region at controlling the infection rate. Much of this has been due to the care and success our communities have shown each other by socially distancing and masking. As a physician, I urge everyone to continue showing care and courtesy to everyone. Regionally, some congregations have chosen to reopen with carefully crafted social distancing plans, while others have not yet reopened their buildings; many continue to meet virtually and support each other in other ways. To any congregation that is considering reopening their buildings, I recommend studying [the resources posted on our website](#).

As our region is somewhat reopened but also socially distanced, people must still exercise their own personal judgment and avoid those things they consider to be a risk. This is beneficial, as it has helped to reduce our infection rate in the area. Some people feel more comfortable with social situations (including in-person worship) than others do -- even with social distancing

measures in place. This is why we have continued to promote having a virtual option for worship for congregations that have reopened. The question of whether or not someone feels safe in these situations does not just apply to parishioners: it also applies to our pastors. There can be questions about the role of pastoral leaders if they express discomfort with a plan for reopening. In addition, they often face questions about officiating additional services, such as funerals or weddings. These can be especially tricky, because unlike congregational worship services, the pastoral leaders may know only a small number of the attendees, and thus may not know how the gathering will manage or respect social distancing recommendations. We have heard many pastoral leaders feeling conflicted. They have devoted their lives to God and to their flock, but also have concerns that they might be putting themselves, their family members, or the attendees at risk of a potentially dangerous infection. There are also concerns that they could be viewed as avoiding their duties if they express their discomfort and say no. Fortunately, we have clear guidance from our Book of Order:

“God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship.” (F-3.0101)

“That, while under the conviction of the above principle we think it necessary to make effectual provision that all who are admitted as teachers be sound in the faith, we also believe that there are truths and forms with respect to which men of good characters and principles may differ. And in all these we think it the duty both of private Christians and societies to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other.” (F-3.0105)

We must remember that “God alone is Lord of the conscience.” Neither those that participate nor those that refuse to participate in in-person worship or other gatherings are to be judged. Each Session can decide how and if they will provide facilities for in-person gatherings. Both individual members and pastoral leaders must be allowed to choose whether to participate in person or not based upon their personal needs and comfort. Every Session should make reasonable accommodation for pastoral voices that excuse themselves from participating in-person for in-person worship. The Leadership Team of the Presbytery of Geneva encourages all with differing viewpoints to support each other with love and grace. In 1 Corinthians 12:26, the Apostle Paul reminds us: “And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and individually members of it.” We have all suffered during this time of pandemic, and many are continuing to suffer, in several different ways. Let us show each other honor and concern, thinking about how we can minister to each other in love.

The Leadership Team is closely monitoring the status of the pandemic in our region. We will continue to meet and provide updates and guidance as things change. May God watch over us, and may we feel the hopeful presence of the Spirit as we serve with Christ’s love and mercy.

For the Living of These Days,
Rob Anderson MD, Chair, General Council

Members of the Presbytery Leadership Team

Rev. Glenn Kennedy, Moderator
Elder Virginia Champlin, Vice Moderator
Elder Rob Anderson, Chair of General Council
Rev. Amy Loving Austin, Stated Clerk

Elder Tom Bailey, Treasurer
Elder Susan Orr, Presbytery Leader
Elder Susan Orr, Presbytery Leader

PCUSA – General Assembly news

If you are interested in learning about what is happening at the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), you are welcome to go on their website at www.pcusa.org. Click on ‘News & Announcements’ then ‘General Assembly News’.

Kids Corner



Bible Pathway Adventures

WORKSHEET

BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WORD SCRAMBLE

1. NIHTIOARCNS: _____
2. IAAGNLTAS: _____
3. HIPPNLIPIAS: _____
4. BREEHWS: _____
5. STIUT: _____
6. THAMETW: _____
7. IHTTMOY: _____
8. KULE: _____
9. MESJA: _____
10. MRONAS: _____
11. EVIRTLOEAN: _____
12. OLACISNOSS: _____
13. DEJU: _____
14. SELNHASAINOTOS: _____
15. PHAEISNES: _____
16. KMRA: _____



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September 2020

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
		No Trustees mtg until further notice	No exercise or Bible study until further notice	No PathStone or WIC until further notice		No men's Bkfast Or Men's Bible study until further notice
6	Labor Day 7	8	9	10	11	12
10-11 Worship	No exercise until further notice		No exercise, Bible study, or HH mtg until further notice	No PathStone until further notice	No exercise until further notice	
No Deacon's mtg until further notice						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
10-11 Worship	No exercise until further notice		No exercise, Bible study, or Session until further notice	No PathStone or WIC until further notice	No exercise until further notice	
No Girls Scouts until further notice		7PM Book Study				
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
10-11 Worship	No exercise until further notice		No exercise or Bible study	No PathStone until further notice	No exercise until further notice	
		7PM Book Study				
27	28	29	30			
10-11 Worship	No exercise until further notice		No exercise or Bible study			
		7PM Book Study				

First Presbyterian Church
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September 2020

