

AROUND THE CONGREGATION

Birthdays

Jackie Roush..... 12/02
Ron Rhodes..... 12/04
Melissa Hickernell..... 12/06
Martha Burke..... 12/07
Allan Pendergrast 12/07
Terry Burns 12/08
Cille Throop..... 12/09
Ruth Habermann 12/11
Teresa Chase..... 12/12
Ann Hapanowicz..... 12/12
Carol Berger 12/13
David Nolan 12/14
Brittney Cataldo..... 12/14
Linda Kimball 12/18
Mary Townsend..... 12/18
Bob Denton..... 12/21
Danielle Sexton..... 12/21
Kirk Hinman 12/24
Ward Beeman..... 12/25
Valerie Wood 12/25
Darlene Fielding..... 12/27
Carole Maksymczuk..... 12/29
Dori Clark 12/31
Tim Burns..... 01/03
Faith Merrill 01/05
Helen Martin..... 01/07
Andrew Gillander..... 01/08
Herb Thorpe..... 01/09
Sarah Rushton..... 01/10
Minnie Clark..... 01/10
Logan Storms 01/10
Jan Brynlsen 01/10

More Birthdays

Megan Scaccia 01/11
Tyriana Jones 01/11
Leah Sexton 01/11
Nancy Morgan 01/12
Joan Kahler 01/13
Tom Sears 01/14
Sally Adams 01/15
Dylan Dunadee 01/16
Suzie Abreu..... 01/17
Elizabeth Reyes..... 01/18
Ron Pfeuffer 01/19
Maryrose Scaccia..... 01/19
Eric Townsend 01/19
Jean Stocker 01/22
Bob Ketchum 01/22
Vera Noxon..... 01/23
Steve Dunadee 01/26
Gene Millhouse 01/26
Jim Cupples..... 01/26
Tony Kimball..... 01/27
Amy McCormick 01/28
Linda Davis..... 01/30

Anniversaries

Jim & Bev Cupples 12/01
Brian Melissa Hickernell (30).. 12/17
Jack & Mary Grow 12/21
David Kolb & Katrina Schell 12/22
Steve & Jackie Dunadee 12/23
Jim & Pam Henderson 12/27
Mary & Ming-Jer Pan..... 01/01
Jim & Liz Clough..... 01/19
Don & Sue Hanson..... 01/23
Gerry & Sue Storms 01/23
Herb & Jessie Thorpe (56) 01/27

DECEMBER & JANUARY SUNDAY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Communion Setup:.....Dec 03 Sue Hollenbeck/Harold Barry

Dec 24: Sue Hollenbeck / Jan 07: Ann Hapanowicz & Linda Hinman

Communion Servers: Dec 03: Harold Barry, Candy Fay, Vi Head
Kim Oliver, Norine Sexton, Mary Lou Talley

Dec 24: Helen & Paul Adsit, Dave & Muff Engelbert, Carl Longley, Rob Tracy

Jan 07: B Burke, K Butters, Amy Garcia, Carrie & Dave Scaccia, Gail Tucker

Ushers:

Dec 03 – George Vickers
Dec 10 &pm – Kevin Taylor
Dec 17 – Don Hanson
Dec 24 am&pm- Dave Scaccia
Dec 31 – Carl Longley
Jan 07 – George Vickers
Jan 14 – Kevin Taylor
Jan 21 – Don Hanson
Jan 28 – Dave Scaccia

Layreaders

Dec 03 – Heather Tucker
Dec 10 – Carrie Scaccia
Dec 17 – Christmas Pageant
Dec 24am – Mary Grow
Dec 24pm – Evan Griffith
Dec 31 – Congregation Leads Worship
Jan 07 – Helen Adsit
Jan 14 – Mark Hinman
Jan 21 – Liz Clough
Jan 28 – Mary Yates

Worship Recorders

Dec 03 – John Nethaway
Dec 10am – Tom McGibbon
Dec 10pm – Shari Fish
Dec 17 - Sue Davidson
Dec 24am – Jay Fish
Dec 25 pm– Jay Fish
Dec 31 – Valerie Wood
Jan 07 – Katrina Schell
Jan 14 – John Nethaway
Jan 21 – Shari Fish
Jan 28 – Tom McGibbon

Deacons at the Ramp

Dec 03 – Kiki Hinman
Dec 10 &pm – Volunteer Needed
Dec 17 –Bruce Warcup
Dec 24 am&pm – Bonnie Herter
Dec 31– Clay Mowry
Jan 07 – Bonnie Herter
Jan 14 – Mary Davis
Jan 21 –S Storms/Jan 28 – A Garcia

Rescue Mission Cook Captains

Dec 19 – Bruce Warcup (Capt)
Dec 26 – Kari Ketchum (Capt)

Children's Talk

Dec 10 – Mary Grow
Dec 24am – Julie Denton
Jan 14 – Helen Adsit
Jan 28 –Carrie Scaccia

Coffee Break Hosts:

All Dates are open. Please be
sure to help Mary Lou & Linda
pick up

Advent Candle Lighting:

Dec 03 – Charlie Sexton Family
Dec 10 – Denton Family
Dec 17 – Fish Family
Dec 24 –Nethaway am/Scaccia pm

Presbytery Prayer Chain:

Dec 03: 1st Pres Whitesboro; Dec 10: Local Food Pantries; Dec 17: Utica Presbytery
Moderator, Stated Clerk & Staff; Dec 24: Utica Presbytery Missions

Remember our shut-ins this Christmas!

**Contact a Deacon or the church office for names of members & friends
who might enjoy a holiday greeting this season!**

FROM THE PASTOR "GOALS"

On Sunday afternoon, November 19, members of the Session met with Keli Rugenstein, our planning consultant, to analyze the data from the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT). Our work for the day was to look at our church mission statement in relation to the data. We asked, "What do we see in the data that suggests areas for growth, change and improvement?" For instance, a surprising number of people said their involvement in church did not bring new meaning to their lives. Another important observation was the number of people who said that, while faith is important to them there are other, more pressing concerns in their lives. One way to explore this information would be to learn more about people's gifts and needs, what they are seeking, what they may be missing, what "spirituality" or "faith" means to them. Such learning may help us develop new ministries that better connect people and nurture their life of faith.

We broke our mission statement into five parts and compared those five parts to the CAT data, asking about what seems to be a need, and then what we would like to do to learn more or to meet the needs. The result is the list of goals below. They are listed under five headings, each of which is a part of the mission statement. I should say that one reason we used the mission statement to do this was the 86 people who responded to the CAT said the mission statement was fine, and 46 said it needed to be looked at to see if it was still a good guide. So here are the goals.

1. We gather as God's people
 - a) Ask people: "If you could change anything about worship, what would it be?"
 - b) Visit other churches and find out what they do.
 - What is their worship like?
 - How do they welcome visitors?
 - What do they do to build community and relationships?
 - c) How can we discover common interests that groups of people can gather around for learning, sharing, and growth?
2. To deepen our understanding of Christ
 - a) How can we create opportunities for people to apply faith to daily life, life issues, challenges at work and home, ethical issues? What kind of groups can we form?
 - b) How can we help people live out their Christian faith in this increasingly secular world?
3. To spread his word and teachings
 - a) How can we learn the gifts and needs of people in the congregation so we can help people match up gifts and needs?
 - b) How can we develop a more intentional process to involve and incorporate new people and connect them to others?
 - c) Develop a more intentional process to reach out to people who are missing, or who are drifting away from the church.

- d) How can we have existing groups that are life-giving start new groups? (Not get more people into their group, but start new groups for people with different needs and schedules who are at different stages of life.)
4. Reach out to our church family
 - a) Increase fellowship events to build and strengthen relationships.
 - b) Better understand and respond to needs of individuals and groups.
 - c) Learn how to attract and welcome new people.
5. Reach out to the community and world
 - a) Raise our awareness of what "spirituality" is. Explore meanings. Help people discover.
 - b) Conduct a neighborhood survey of needs so we know how to care and support.
 - c) Find ways to use our connection through Blessings in a Backpack at Gansevoort to build relationships and expand our service and support at the school.
6. Goals related to the pastoral transition within the next two to three years are:
 - a) Identify those who want to be more involved and get them involved in the process.
 - b) Identify those who want to take on more responsibilities and work with them to find ways for them to contribute.
 - c) Identify and publicize opportunities for involvement.
 - d) Identify transition costs and budgeting issues.

General questions we have are: What gets people into community? What keeps people involved?

The next step is to have a planning meeting involving more people to develop specific plans for how to do these things. We will set a date for some time in January. About two dozen people responded on the CAT that during a transition they would be willing to be more involved and to take on more responsibilities. If that's you, we hope you will come to the next meeting. The more people we can involve in planning and pursuing the goals, the better. We'll need to set priorities on what to do first. Maybe we'll need to form some temporary work groups to achieve some of the goals.

At this next planning meeting, we will form a long-range planning group that will lead the transition process of work on goals and planning for the next phase of the church's ministry. These will be some from Session and some others. Later on, this group may become part of the pastor search committee (subject to nominating and congregational vote, of course).

The Session asks for your input into goal development and especially into how we achieve these goals. So, if you see a Session member, please ask them more about what they are learning from the CAT data and how you can contribute to planning.

Faithfully, Sam

FINANCIAL UPDATES FROM SUSAN HATZINGER

	<u>Year-to-Date</u>			<u>2017</u>
	<u>Oct Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Operating Budget:				
Receipts	26,042.35	272,320.90	278,094.68	333,478.68
Expenditures	27,590.02	250,938.57	275,556.10	333,478.68
Net Amount	-1,547.67	21,382.33	2,538.58	0.00
Transfer to Founders	0.00	-25,000.00		
Change in Net Assets	-1,547.67	-3,617.67		
Oct Collections:				
Capital Improvement Fund:	344.60			
Peacemaking	160.00			

Per Capita 2018: T Per Capita for 2018 is \$39.42. We appreciate your paying your per capita assessment, especially if you don't otherwise contribute to the church, since we pay this amount for every member on the roll.

2019 Offering Envelopes available in the narthex beginning Sunday, Dec 18

Financial Report: As of November 29 we have received 99 pledges totaling \$241,648. This total includes 7 new pledges for \$ 4904. This is an increase of \$6945 for persons or families pledging who pledged last year.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Your gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering help to provide brighter educational opportunities at historically Presbyterian ethnic schools and colleges. Gifts to the offering also support the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, a fund that assists retired church leaders and their survivors in difficult times. Together, the Christmas Joy Offering supports the leaders of our church, past, present and future. The envelopes will be in the pews for the December 17 Offering. You can go to www.pcusa.org/specialofferings to learn more.

Family Advent devotional calendars are available in the vestibule and Information Center in the hallway by the offices. Please help yourself

JOY NEWS

The JOY Youth Group will serve lunch at Loaves and Fishes in December (TBA) and on Sunday, January 28. We'll walk over to arrive at noon (they've changed the time they serve!) and be back at the church at about 2:30. As they adjust to the new schedule, this time might change, but we'll be able to text parental units in time to arrange rides.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

- **Advent Celebration** in our Dining Hall after Worship on Dec 03 – Fellowship, Fun, Crafts, Refreshments, Cookie Walk – a good time to be had by all!!
- **Christmas Pageant** – Dec 17 during Worship. Join us for “You Are Invited” directed by Carrie Scaccia
- **For Our Families with Young Children:** On Friday, January 12 at 7 PM, our CE committee is sponsoring an Anti-Bullying Seminar by Brian Seetge from Sidekicks Karate. This 45-minute presentation will take place in our dining hall, and is open to children ages 5 and up, and their parents. We would also like our First Pres families to invite friends to take part in this fun and informative evening. Refreshments will be provided. Hope to see you there!
- **Something New:** Our CE committee is ringing in the new year with a new adult education opportunity. Each third Sunday, beginning Jan. 21, we will have offer a new class called “Our Time”. This is open to parents of children (infants through teens), and will take place while the kids are in church school. The first “Our Time” will be a meeting to discuss topics the group is interested in, and we will go from there. Watch for more info in worship bulletins and emails regarding location and infant child care. We hope this will be a fun and helpful forum for our younger parents.
- **Next CE meeting** is Jan. 18, 7 PM (No Dec. meeting)
- **Adult Education:** Beginning January 7 for seven weeks we will use “Living the Questions,” a DVD-based series that includes presentations by 35 of today's leading progressive religious voices to explore new theological thought and explore what's next for Christianity. Each session begins with a 20-minute video presentation leading into discussion. Invite your friends to come explore questions of faith and learn about the movement some call “Progressive Christianity.” Led by Sam Pendergrast
- **Holiday Worship:** Christmas Eve at 10:00 AM will be Sunday morning worship for the 4th Sunday of Advent. Sunday evening at 8:00 PM will be our Christmas Eve communion worship with candlelight.
New Year's Eve Day at 10:00 AM will be Sunday morning worship. Sam will be away, visiting his mother in Georgia. A team of eight people will lead the congregation through worship that day. No sermon. A couple of extra readings for reflection. A Christmas litany. Extra singing.

PRAYER VIGIL

The monthly Peace Vigil will be held Tuesday, December 12. Please plan to join us in the library for a time or prayer and reflection as we seek to be peacemakers in this world.

SERENITY CIRCLE NEWS

- * Circle is held in the church parlor every Tuesday and 7:00PM.
- * The last gathering of 2017 will be held on Tuesday Dec 12th.
- * Meetings will resume (weather permitting) Tuesday January 9th 2018.
- * We will continue our study of The Seat of the Soul, by Gary Zukav.
- * Please feel welcome to contact Michelle 315-886-9456 with any questions.

Serenity Message from Michelle Dolan

Dear Friends,

At this moment we face a time of transition. We celebrate the holidays with loved ones, we reflect on the past year, and anticipate a new beginning in January. This can potentially bring stress as well as intense emotions – whether they are joyful in nature or negative in some way. It is important to be aware of our feelings and thoughts, as well as our intentions and our words. This is an ideal time for prayer, an opportunity to deepen our connection to the Divine.

A purposeful prayer practice can allow us to better understand our experiences, and to make the most life affirming choices in our relationships. It may result in the opening of our hearts, and when the heart is open, not only are we capable of receiving and giving great love, we are equipped to respond to negativity in a more constructive manner.

I invite you try the Suscipe, a radical prayer composed by Ignatius Loyola:

“Take Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. Thou hast given all to me. To Thee, O Lord, I return it.

All is Thine, dispose of it wholly according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and Thy grace,

for this is sufficient for me.”

While individual prayer is powerful, you could also invite your family to compose a 'family prayer.' Each family member can contribute a request or an intention or an offering of gratitude. Perhaps you could make this prayer a daily practice together – at breakfast or at dinner, at bedtime, or in the car on the way to school/work/sports practice/etc. And this prayer will become fluid and grow and change every day as you practice it together.

I wish you a holiday season full of joy and peace, and a wondrous new beginning in 2018.

For additional information you can visit IgnatianSpirituality.com or check out the book The Words We Pray by Amy Welborn

MISSION COMMITTEE NEWS

Heifer Project Holiday Giving Opportunity: Instead of the holiday Alternative Gifts table, the Mission Committee is challenging the congregation to give through Heifer, International. Gifts can include sheep, goats, heifer and llamas among several other choices. Your donation will also fund training on the animals' feeding and care. Table is in between the Bell Choir room & custodial offices

NEWS FROM OUR DEACONS - ONLY 15 TAGS LEFT!!!

Our Project Angel Tree Tags now available with early deadline, December 11

- *There is a green notebook to put your name, child's name, and a number of the tag which is located on the right hand corner. If a tag is lost, it can be replaced.*
- *The Salvation Army is asking for each Angel to receive at least one clothing item and two toys from the child's requests.*
- *Please try to place the items you purchased into one bag along with the Angel Tree tag. There are hundreds of gifts that are placed in corrals and bags can get separated from each other.*
- *The Deacons have put together 100 “stocking bags” with age appropriate items for each child and will be placed in the unsealed bag with the items that were purchased by you.*
- *If you would like, more than one person can sponsor an Angel. Share a recipient with a friend; If you would just like to bring an unwrapped toy, the Salvation Army will give that gift to a needy child as well.*
- *All gifts must be new. No guns.*
- *Please have all gifts brought back to the church by December 11th.*



Thank you for putting a smile on a child's face, a warm coat on his/her back, and belief that Santa does perform miracles. Blessing to all of you

Christmas Caroling on Dec 17. Deacons arrange a quick lunch in the parlor after coffee break and then we'll go out to sing to those in our congregation who can't get out to sing with us in worship

NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

December: Exploring Holiday Celebrations, Making gifts for our families & Christmas Parties

January: Winter Week, Night Week, Bear Week (hibernation & Migration) Music Week (various musical visitors)

NEWS FROM OUR PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Save These Dates:

Dec. 3. Advent Celebration with Crafty Ladies Booth and more. Shop Local and buy from us. If you need something after the 3rd., contact the church and someone can show you what is available or speak to Bev Johnson or Barb Steagall at church on Sundays.

December 11th . Monday at 11 am. PW Coordinating Team in the Parlor for monthly meeting

December 19th at noon at Teddy's Restaurant. The Evening Circle and Crafty Ladies will meet for a Christmas lunch. You may choose the buffet or items from the menu since everyone pays for their own choice. You are welcome to join us. Please let Mary Grow know ahead of time so that there is enough seating. Remember that all women of the church belong to Presbyterian Women. Mary's number is 337-8854 or speak to her at church.

January dates

January 8th at 11:00 am PW Coordinating Team will meet in the Parlor for the monthly meeting.

January 23 at 7:30 Evening Circle. Hostess TBA; PW Bible Lesson #4.

The Utica Presbytery PW will meet in February with the topic of "Little Houses".

DECEMBER & JANUARY MUSIC NOTES

- Our annual Christmas Candlelight Service will be on Sunday, Dec. 10th at 4:00 pm, and will feature all of our choirs. Please invite your families and friends to join us for this inspirational service!
- Bell Choir rehearses Wednesdays at 6:30. After Candlelight, bell rehearsals will resume on Jan 10.
- Senior Choir rehearses Wednesdays at 7:30. After Candlelight, rehearsals will resume on Jan 3.
- Youth Choir rehearses Sundays at 12:00. After Candlelight, rehearsals will resume sometime in January.
- All choirs will rehearse on Saturday, Dec. 9th from 10-12 (youth/children's choir will be done by 11:00)
- Hymn sing on Sunday, Dec. 10th at 9:45 – Please join us for an Advent/Christmas hymn sing before worship.
- Our Christmas Pageant will be during worship on Sunday, Dec. 17th.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA MEMORIALS

 I will choose & deliver my own arrangement by 12/08

In Memory of:

Requested by:

Please Pray: Rev Jeff Courter, Cindy Briggs, Tom & Debbie Sanderson, Dori Clark, Dolly Cieri, Darleen Burke, Betty Conover, Dorothy Houseman, Rob Backstrom son-in-law of the Fieldings, Bob Foote, Shirley Fox & Family, Barb Steagall, Abby Vetter granddaughter of Theresa & Randy Vetter, Julie Sestito friend of Julie Denton, Vi Head, Michael Dolan, Gus St. John, Kay DeSimone, Dawn Brognano, Ron Owens, Stan & Helen Chilkotowsky, Brittney Cataldo, Gene Millhouse, Mike Redmond, Sybil McDonough; and Spencer Robert Smith, grandson of Kirk & Linda Hinman; Michael Scaccia, Dan Carpenter, Kyle Seifert, Samantha Roush, Rich Turner, Erik O'Meara, Logan Storms & all who serve our nation

Support Our Troops: The deacon's would like to start a collection for our military church members. Thanks everyone!! Suggested items include Amazon Gift Cards, Non-Perishable Boxed Products Including Cake, Brownie & Cookie Mixes; Ramen & Mac 'n Cheese

Erik - shaving cream, laundry detergent pods, double AA and triple AAA batteries, duct tape, and plastic hooks that have an adhesive strip on the back of them.

Dan – beef jerky, skittles, Reese's pieces, strawberry pop tarts




Christmas Candlelight Service
Sunday, December 10 at 4pm

Senior Choir – Children's Choir
Joyful Ringers Handbell Choir

First Presbyterian Church of Rome
108 West Court Street

Everyone Welcome – Come Celebrate the Season
Parking in Front & Rear of Church

www.firstpresrome.com firstpresrome@gmail.com

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
December 2017		Merry Christmas from the Staff & Students of the Nursery School!!				
AA meets each Monday evening at 8:00 pm in our Dining Hall/ NA meets each Tuesday evening at 7:30 pm Upstairs					1	2 Church Decorating Book Talk Bell Ringing at Price Chopper
3 10am Worship Communion/Fair Trade Advent Day Celebration in Dining Hall, Youth Choir, 4pm Oneida Chorale	4	5 Piano&Organ Tuning 10am Prayer Shawl 7pm Serenity Circle	6 Wed AM Club rehearse 6:30 Bell Choir 7:30pm Senior Choir	7 3pm Bible Study BIB Packing at Trinity	8 Poinsettia Delivery	9 10am Candlelight Rehearsal
10 9:45 Hymn Sing 10am Worship, Coffee Break, Church School, Youth Choir 4pm Candlelight JOY Party follows	11 Angel Tree Deadline 11am PW Coordinating Team	12 8am Wed AM dress rehearsal 5:30p Prayer Vigil 6pm Serenity Circle Potluck	13 Wed AM Club present In Sanctuary	14 7:30am WPG 3pm Bible Study BIB Packing at Trinity Session 7pm		
17 10am Worship, Christmas Joy Offering, Christmas Pageant No Activity Period Rescue Mission Collection, Coffee Break, Caroling & lunch	18	19 Mission Cook tba Noon – Evening Circle & Crafty Ladies at noon at Teddy's 7pm Trustees meet	20 4:20pm Mission serve BIB Packing at Trinity 6:30 Girl Scout Christmas Party in Dining Hall	21 3pm Bible Study Mom's Club Christmas Party 4:30p	22  Online Giving available thru our church website!!	23
24 10am Worship 8pm Christmas Eve Service No Church School or Choir Activities Happy Holidays	25 Merry Christmas Church Offices Closed for Holiday	26 Mission Cook tba Kari vacation	27 4:20pm Mission serve	28	29 Presbytery Necrology Report Due	30
31 10am Worship	Happy New Year Church Offices Closed for Holiday	Kari Vacation				