

## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

*"The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Mark 1:1*

Our gospel readings this church year come from the book of Mark. It was the first gospel to be written and right from the beginning of his account he makes a bold claim that Jesus is the Son of God. Again, at the end of Mark's gospel, the centurion soldier at the foot of the cross of Jesus will make the same claim. Mark poses a question for us to ponder during this Lenten season. What does it mean for us that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah/Savior) the Son of God? To make this confession requires a journey deep within. Lent is the perfect time to journey into what this faith statement means. It is a time to journey into the heart of God. And journeys of all kinds require some kind of change. It's what the word repentance means, to change or turn around.

Pondering on this journey of Lent, I thought about Henry Nouwen, Dutch Catholic priest, professor, writer, theologian, and a writer who has been a spiritual mentor of mine. His own spiritual journey was filled with a lot of change. One particular life-changing event was his involvement in the Daybreak L'Arche community in Trosly, France. L'Arche, meaning the Ark was initially formed in the French commune of Trosly-Breuil in 1964 by Jean Vanier, Raphaël Simi, and Philip Seux as a reaction and community-based alternative to the ill-treatment and dismal living conditions in the psychiatric institutions of the 1960s. Since then, it has expanded to over 150 communities in 38 countries worldwide. Henry Nouwen was first invited to visit there for about six weeks in 1985. After returning to his teaching position at Harvard, he felt called to resign and spend another year at L'Arche and eventually stayed there until his death in 1996. That initial visit was life-changing, and it taught him to slow down, and as he said, to "draw closer to the heart of God" through life in community.

Leaving his position at Harvard wasn't a decision he expected and shook quite a few people up, but he heard that call from God and answered. Our amazing secretary Kari's retirement announcement has shaken us up too. But when you hear the call of God to change directions, you need to answer that call. God is with us through the changes in our life and throughout our journey. That's why this Lent we will be learning a new song entitled, "Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song." The song was created in 1961 by members of Les Petites Soeurs de Jésus ("The Little Sisters of Jesus"), a global contemplative order that "seeks to be a sign of love to people who are rejected." The hymn also has associations with the L'Arche communities that changed Henry Nouwen's life. It is both a promise to bear witness to the love of Christ, and a prayer for courage throughout life's journey. I hope you will come to love it as much as I do.

Continued....

## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS Continued

As we journey closer to the heart of God this Lent through community as Nouwen did, may this song take root in us so that we will be able to experience and share with certainty that Jesus truly is the Christ, the Son of God. *"Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey; I'll tell everybody about you wherever I go: you alone are our life and our peace and our love. Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey."*

Blessings and Peace, Pastor Edwina

## AROUND THE CONGREGATION

### Birthdays

Maegan Fish ..... 02/04  
Bonnie Herter ..... 02/05  
Kyle Sexton ..... 02/09  
Armen Roubian..... 02/10  
Ann Cianfrocco ..... 02/10  
Kiki Hinman..... 02/13  
Nikki Huntzinger ..... 02/14  
Heather Tucker ..... 02/16  
Calvin Reed ..... 02/18  
Sharri Hartwell..... 02/19  
Sue Seubert ..... 02/19  
Bob Alessi ..... 02/22  
Carrie Scaccia..... 02/22  
Noah Sexton ..... 02/22  
Susan Hatzinger ..... 02/23  
Barbara Rhodes ..... 02/26  
Dan Ferens..... 02/26

### Anniversaries

Jay & Shari Fish ..... 02/14  
Laura & Ken Dutton ..... 02/17  
Harry & Cathy Carpenter ..... 02/29



**Lent begins on February 14. Ash Wednesday service begins at 7pm. The "Local Pilgrim" Lenten Devotionals are on the back sanctuary tables.**

- *New Room Number for Jaonie Lewis – 117*
- *Would you like to receive a large print version of the Friday email? Contact the church office*
- *Congratulations Ryan Fish; Clarkson Fall Semester Presidential Scholar!*

## FEBRUARY SUNDAY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Date	Layreader	Special Note
4-Feb	Danielle Sexton	Annual Meeting
11-Feb	Mellony Spinelli	
18-Feb	Gail Tucker	
25-Feb	Noah Sexton	
3-Mar	Mary Yates	Holy Communion

## MORE AROUND THE CONGREGATION

Cailyn Is selling Girl Scout Cookies...Lemon Ups · Trefoils · Do-Si-Dos · Samoas, Adventurefuls & more! \$5 Per Box - See Cailyn Before Or After Worship or Text Or Call Lenora & Cailyn at (315) 225-1350

**Zoom Broadcast:** We'll be moving our Sunday Worship Service broadcast to Zoom in the late spring. To most of us this will be "old hat" as we use Zoom for committee meetings, Faith Formation classes and Serenity Circle. For those of you who will be using Zoom for the first time, please contact the church office to let us know. When the time nears, we'll contact you to help setup your account so that things run smoothly. We will continue to post our services to Youtube, and will begin to post to Facebook, so that you are still able to watch the videos about an hour after the service concludes! We're excited and hope you are too!!

**Annual Meeting News:** Please take a copy of the 2023 Annual Report from the back sanctuary tables if you haven't done so already. Our Annual Meeting will be held at 11:15 on Sun Feb 04.

**Please keep Martie Talley** in your prayers!! She leaves on her mission disaster relief trip to Hawaii on Monday morning, Feb 5 & returns on the 27<sup>th</sup>

**The Funeral Service for Herb Thorpe** is Saturday, Feb 10 at Noon; here at First Pres. A Luncheon Reception follows in our Dining Hall. Calling Hours are private but the service will be broadcast on Facebook. The Memorial Service for Howard Sears will be held here on Saturday, April 27th at 11am. Additional details to follow. Please continue to hold both families in your prayers

*Thank you Herb for  
your friendship and  
leadership in our  
community.*



Photo Courtesy of Daily Sentinel / Thanks Andrea for sharing

## 🎵 FEBRUARY MUSIC NOTES 🎵

- Bells rehearse Feb 7, 21 and 28 (not 14th...Ash Wednesday)..6:20
- Senior choir rehearses each Wed. in Feb...7:30

Our Music Department has lots of exciting plans for 2024. We are pleased to welcome Tina Toglia as our organist/pianist. Kim Nethaway is leading the Senior Choir, Joyful Ringers and Youth Choir.

Rehearsals for our Senior Choir and Joyful Ringers are in full swing. We are always looking for additional members. If you would like to be involved, contact Kim Nethaway at [knethaway@twcny.rr.com](mailto:knethaway@twcny.rr.com), text at 315-725-8096, or speak to her after worship.

Joyful Ringers will be playing in our February 11th worship service, and again on Palm Sunday.

On March 17th, Andrea Falvo will be our guest musician during worship.

Senior Choir will present "And the Son Arose", an Easter cantata, on March 31st. This beautiful collection of songs includes narrations/dramatizations of the events leading up to Easter. Singers and readers are needed. Contact Kim if you would like to be involved.

Stay tuned for Youth Choir news. This spring we would like to form a tone chime choir and play in worship.

Thank you all for supporting our musicians! We hope our music enriches your faith journey. ....Kim Nethaway, Music Director

## RELAY FOR LIFE NEW!

If you have already registered for this year's Relay For Life of Central NY - thank you! Take a moment to reach out to any team members that haven't registered yet and urge them to sign up in the next couple days. Every participant counts! Also, remind any cancer survivors who normally walk to get registered now, too! (This also ensures they will get their free survivor t-shirt before the event!)

If you haven't registered yet, please take a moment to [click this link and sign up](#). You can use your same user name and password from last year! If you'd rather sign up via phone, just call 1.800.227.2345 and they will sign you up that way. Either way counts and will help us win the challenge!

Every Relay in the nation is watching this challenge to see who has the most 'purple mojo' - and we know Central NY is passionate, dedicated and **purple** through and through!

## NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

- Healthy Heart Week
- Friendship & Valentine's Week
- Dental Health week
- Gertrude Hawk Fundraiser

The Nursery School of the First Presbyterian Church is proud to offer scholarships, through the Mary Mowry Fund, to families in need in our community. It is hard to make the choice between groceries, rent or education for a child. Young families and one-income households are still struggling with the after effects of Covid. PLEASE continue to donate to the Mary Mowry Scholarship Fund throughout the year and as we look toward the coming semesters, now is the time! Envelopes are in the pews. Please note "Mowry Scholarship" in the memo line.

You are also welcome to support the Nursery School programs, their current fundraiser is "Gertrude Hawk Chocolate Sales" – just in time for Easter....who doesn't like dark chocolate lava cake smidgens, chocolate covered peanut butter eggs, jelly beans & more! Order forms in sanctuary entryway & parlor. Checks payable to 1<sup>st</sup> Pres with *Nursery School* in the memo line – Deadline 02/14

Is our Nursery School important to our children? Just ask the Townsends, the Taylors, the Sextons, the Hatzingers, the Olney's.....you get the picture....Your support is greatly appreciated

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

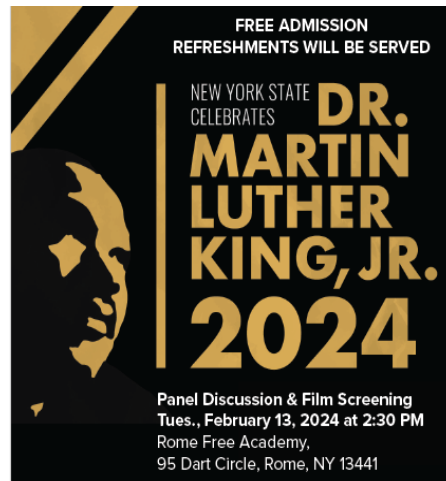
**February 13, 2024** – Dr Martin Luther King Jr Short Film and Panel Discussion  
2:30pm to 4:30pm RFA

The Panel will have Dr. Clemmie Harris and 2 Rome Free Academy Students to share their perspective regarding Dr. King. There will be refreshments, and this is open to the public. The Flyer is attached. This is done in Partnership with the MV-NYS Hate and Bias Prevention Council, NYS General Services Office, Rome Free Academy and The Rome NAACP Education Committee

**February 21, 2024** – Black History Month  
Story Time and Health Fair

10:30am Jervis Public Library Rome NY

Story books by Black Authors read to students by Members of the NAACP Youth Council and RFA Black History Club. Open to the public



## LENTEN LUNCHEON SERIES

### 12 - 1 pm • Every Thursday in Lent

Join together in Christian fellowship for a brief Lenten Devotion followed by a delicious meal.

**February 15**...First Presbyterian Church  
108 W Court St, Rome - Rev. Edwina Landry

**February 22**..Trinity Church  
215 W Court St., Rome- Pastor Karen Marshall

**February 29** St. Joseph's Catholic Church  
5748 Stokes Lee Center Rd., Fr. Bob Kelly

**March 7** .....St. Paul's Church  
1807 Bedford St, Rome, NY - Fr. Bob Kelly

**March 14**.....First Baptist Church  
301 W Embargo St, Rome - Pastor Letta Palmer

**March 21**.....First Methodist Church  
400 N George St., Rome - Pastor Shari Mahar



## NEWS FROM OUR DEACONS

Deacons meet February 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. Welcome new Deacons Jerry Gleasman, Sally Hinman, Debbie Slagel, Helen Tracy. Special thanks to outgoing Deacons Mary Grow, Ron Rhodes, George Vickers, Candy Warner

**A Very Busy December....**

- Salvation Army Bell Ringing – We rang at Price Chopper/Market 32 with all slots taken
- Angel Tree Gifts – As always, thank you for your support!!



## SERENITY MESSAGE FROM MICHELLE DOLAN

Serenity Circle meets each Monday at 4pm via Zoom until the weather turns nicer 😊 Contact Michelle Dolan to receive the link or to be added to the email list.

There are some people in this world who are like  
beacons for your lost soul  
sunshine for your dark days  
and bandages for your deepest wounds.

*Look for them.*

Find the people who pour light into the shadows they didn't create.  
The people who help heal the parts of you they didn't break  
and who shelter you from storms they didn't summon.

*Look for them.*

Because there are people in your world who will do all of this. Quietly.  
Unassumingly. Sometimes without even realizing.

*Look for them. Find them. Let them.*

And then do the same for them.

*Because these are your people* ❤️

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Becky Hemsley 2024

Beautiful artwork by  
Otto Kim  
@ottokim on Instagram



## FAITH FORMATION NEWS

**Sunday Faith Formation Changes:** The Children's Class will be led by some of the parents including Danielle Sexton, Raymond & Heather Tucker, and Jillian Olney. Carrie Scaccia will work with the teens and youths. Helen and Pastor Edwina will try a new approach with the Adult Classes meeting in the parlor during fellowship hour using an Adult Forum approach. Various questions and topics depending on what people would like to talk about will be discussed in a relaxed atmosphere while enjoying fellowship. We're looking forward to trying new things and always growing in our faith

**Ecumenical Youth Group** meets next on Sun, Feb 25 at Trinity from 5 - 7:30pm

**Save the Date: Coming in March – Heritage Sunday**

## JOIN US FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP AT 10AM

\*In Person at 108 West Court

\*Tune to 97.5FM from Our Parking Lots & Neighboring Streets

\*Broadcast on [Facebook Live](#)

\*Recording posted to our church [YouTube Channel](#)

\*Link emailed to those who request it

- Our Court Street Sanctuary doors are the only ones to remain unlocked for Worship entrance
- Take your bulletin home or discard in blue recycling containers

## FINANCIAL NEWS FROM SUSAN HATZINGER

	December	2023 Year-to-Date		2023
		Actual	Budget	Budget
<b>Operating Budget:</b>				
Receipts	\$ 27,316.46	\$ 359,868.08	\$ 382,764.58	\$ 382,764.58
Expenditures	\$ (29,741.84)	\$ (354,496.62)	\$ (382,764.58)	\$ (382,764.58)
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ (2,425.38)</b>	<b>\$ 5,371.46</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>December Collections:</b>				
Capital Improvement Fund	\$ 205.00			
Christmas JOY	\$ 938.00			
<b>December Fund Disbursements</b>				
Memorials - Flameless candles	\$ 120.65			

**Per Capita 2024  
\$45.00  
per active member**



Scan this code to pay

## GOOD NEWS LUNCHEON - DEACON DAN REYNOLDS DIVINE COMEDY

**Thursday, March 7th 11 AM-1 PM**

Is it okay to be religious AND humorous? Does God grant us the grace to be a humorous people? I say absolutely yes. After all, We are "religioUS", "humoroUS", and we believe in "Jes"US"! AND He created "US" in His Image, too, right? How wonderoUS! Through this presentation, the deacon shows how humor can affect our faith lives, and we can use a smile to give ourselves a "FAITH" lift.

The cost is \$15 per person, \$12 for 1992/300 Club Members. Reservations requested by March 1st. Please call 315-735-6210 Monday-Friday 8:30 AM-4:30 PM to register or email [info@thegoodnewscenter.org](mailto:info@thegoodnewscenter.org).

## MISSION COMMITTEE NEWS

**Thank You** to all who donated food to our food pantry. We have many who come to our Mission Closet who also have food insecurity. The congregation was very generous in replenishing our supplies.

**On-Going Food Collection for our Emergency Pantry :** Always appreciated – peanut butter, jams & jellies, ramen noodles, sauces & pasta, cereal, breakfast bars, oatmeal, canned fruits & vegetables (especially snack size-applesauce, etc)

Cleaning out your house or garage? We will accept donations for the closet and/or June Rummage Sale. Please place donation outside the closet room rather than inside it!

**Community Closet:** We can always use donations of sheets (especially twin sheets) blankets, towels, and children's & men's casual clothes and shoes. Thank you

**Rescue Mission Cooking** is on the 20<sup>th</sup> (Liz) and 27<sup>th</sup> (Amy) this month – Meal details & times to follow. We're always looking for more help with cooking - call or talk to Liz if you can help. We can adjust cooking times to fit your schedule!!

**It's Hygiene Kit Time!** In the face of natural disasters, violence, or grinding poverty, hygiene kits can mean the difference between sickness and health for struggling families. Because we have so many items carried over from last years' Church World Service collection, **please consider a monetary donation to Sarah Briggs**. We've found that it is much easier to purchase the contents in bulk quantities.

However, we welcome donations of any of the following items enclosed in a Ziplock gallon bag: hand towels, wash clothes, large tooth combs, single-wrapped bars of soap, toothbrushes and nail clippers. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

**Thanks to your generosity**, the Mission Committee purchased the following items for Presbyterian World Missions: a piglet, a family of chickens, farm tools and an "Educate a Child" package



The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope. Envelopes are in the pews through Easter

## MORE GOOD THINGS TO KNOW

Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team meets next on Tues, Mar 19 at 9:30am in the Chapel/Music Room

### **FOR SALE BY THE CRAFTY LADIES**

#### **Need a Nice, Quick Gift?**

Towel holders, cell phone holders, microwave bowls.  
Available to purchase for \$6 each.  
If interested

please see Lenora or Gail 😊



Congratulations Navay Junior ROTC  
Commanding Officer, Isaiah Sexton!  
Isaiah poses at Notre Dame  
Junior/Senior High School in Utica

*Gail Burrows Siegel is the sister of Cherly Sexton and the daughter of longtime congregation member Joy Burrows, now deceased*



*Gail is in immediate need of a kidney transplant. An excerpt from her Facebook page reads: "Thank you to everyone who has supported me on my kidney journey so far. From offers to donate, sharing my posts, check ins and prayers you have all been amazing.... please share my posts, ask your friends about organ donation*

*Please find Gail on Facebook and like and share her news. If you'd like to have more information on the kidney transplant process or to donate visit*

<https://upstate.donorscreen.org/register/now>

### **ASH WEDNESDAY / VALENTINE'S DAY DINNER**

Rome Veteran's Support Group & Rome Refugee Services  
Wed Feb 14 – Here at 1<sup>st</sup> Pres Rome in our Dining Hall  
Stuffed Pasta with Sauce (No Meat), Salad, Bread & Drink  
\$12 Fundraiser – Dine In or Take Out – 4:30 to 6:30pm  
Reservations by Noon on the 13<sup>th</sup> at (315) 617-8226

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>FEB 2024</b>				<b>1</b> Community Closet 9:30 to Noon 10:30 pm BIB packing 6:30pm W&M meets	Please remember that we ar gifted discount tickets for events at the <b>CAPITOL ARTS COMPLEX</b> Thank you Gail & Ray Tucker Tickets outside of the Church Office !	
<b>4</b> 10am Worship Holy Communion Annual Meeting Potluck Luncheon	<b>5</b> PEO Mtg & Lunch 4 pm Serenity via Zoom	<b>6</b> Community Closet 9:30 to Noon Crafty Ladies	<b>7</b> 6:20 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Senior Choir	<b>8</b> Community Closet 9:30 to Noon 10:30 BIB packing 7pm Deacons meet	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Funeral & Luncheon for Herb Thorpe
<b>11</b> 10am Worship <b>Joyful Ringers</b> Coffee Break Faith Formation	<b>12</b> 4 pm Serenity via Zoom	<b>13</b> Community Closet 9:30 to Noon 5pm Rome Caregivers	<b>14</b> <b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b> <b>Pasta Dinner</b> <b>4:30- -6:30 pm</b> 7:30pm Senior Choir Nursery School Fundraiser Deadline	<b>15</b> Community Closet 9:30 to Noon 10am Bible Study 10:30 BIB packing <b>LENTEN LUNCHEON</b> <b>SERIES STARTS HERE</b> <b>NOON</b>	<b>16</b> 	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> 10am Worship Coffee Break Faith Formation	<b>19</b> <b>Church Offices</b> <b>Closed for</b> <b>President's Day</b> 4 pm Serenity via Zoom	<b>20</b> <b>March Copperspire</b> <b>Deadline</b> Community Closet 9:30 to Noon Rescue Mission Cook 1pm Mission meets 5pm Bldg & Grounds	<b>21</b> 6:20 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Senior Choir	<b>22</b> Community Closet 9:30 to Noon 10:30 BIB packing <b>LENTEN LUNCHEON</b> <b>Trinity Church Noon</b>	<b>Our Nursery School and ESL Classes are on hiatus for Winter Break from 02/17 through 02/25. Chico will be working in the upstairs hallway.</b>	
<b>25</b> 10am Worship Coffee Break Faith Formation Youth Group at Trinity	<b>26</b> 4 pm Serenity via Zoom 6:30 pm Session meets	<b>27</b> Rescue Mission Cook Community Closet 9:30 to Noon NAACP Healthy Heart Crafty Ladies	<b>28</b> 6:20 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Senior Choir	<b>29</b> Community Closet 9:30 to Noon 10:30 BIB packing	AA meets Monday evenings at 8:00 pm in our Dining Hall Rome Care Givers Group meets 2nd Tuesdays at 5pm in the parlor NA meets Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm Upstairs Girl Scouts meet Thursdays from 4-5:30pm	