

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

"...One thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14)



It's hard to believe that summer is almost over! Where did it go? Church building restoration underway, meetings, preparing for the fall schedule... I find myself wishing I could push a rewind button and go back to the beginning of summer so I could have more time to relax. I'm sure I'm not the only one who feels this way. Maybe you too, have not had as much time to relax as you'd hoped, and you're wishing for more time. It's so easy to look at the past and wish we could go back and change things. Yet, we can't stop time. We can't go back, and we can't jump into the future. The time we need to focus on is now. St. Paul in his Letter to the Church in Philippi says, "...One thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus." He urges us to not remain stuck in the past and to keep moving forward focused on Christ.

Nature models the grace of moving forward so beautifully. Since the tornado changed my garden landscape, I now have a new variety of flowers and plants to begin filling in the large areas where the trees once stood. I remember the garden as it once looked while now moving forward. This mixture of old and new plants all bloom and grow in their own season. The same flowers that bloom in the spring die off, re-seed, and new ones bloom. It's like an ongoing symphony, each one playing their own part at just the right time. That is how it is for us in life too with different blessings at different times and seasons.

We can even dwell on past mistakes in the same way, and become so focused on what we did wrong that we can't move forward. It's why we begin our worship services with the Confession and Pardon because we admit where we've gone wrong, and receiving God's forgiveness we move forward. The forgiveness and grace that God pours out on us is what we can hold onto. Holding onto the past mistakes, the "what if's" and "should haves" only block the grace that is given to us. It only keeps us stuck in the past unable to move forward in the direction God's Spirit is moving us. And that direction - like the plants and flowers in nature - is to constantly reach toward the Son.

By straining forward toward the Son of God we grow and bloom and spread the love and compassion and the grace of God to all. In the challenging times we live in, this is needed now more than ever.

Yes, summer is quickly winding down and a new season will soon be here, but there's no need to push the re-wind button. We can take time right now and enjoy the beauty of each day. We can set aside a little more time for relaxing now. What better way than to savor our Sundays by setting aside an hour or so each week to come together and worship and pray as a community of faith. A time where collectively we can ask for strength to be Christ's hands and feet in this world in order to ease the burdens of others so that all of us can breathe a little easier and relax a little deeper.

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Edwina



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Libby Gleasman	09/02
Rev. Edwina Landry	09/06
Dorothy Houseman	09/11
Abe Huntzinger	09/12
Fenna Tucker	09/14
Grace Engelbert	09/16
Jason Tucker	09/17
Evan Griffith	09/20
Linda Hinman	09/22
Mikki Taylor	09/22
Isaiah Sexton	09/22
Megan Mahosky	09/23
Jim Kennedy	09/25
Thylia Keoviengsmay	09/26
Shari Fish	09/27
Ron Yingling	09/30

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Kirk & Linda Hinman	09/14
Dave & Carrie Scaccia	09/17
Bob & Julie Denton	09/27



NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

Nursery School September news:

Classes begin: 3 yr olds- Thursday Sept. 4
4 yr olds- Friday Sept. 5

The Nursery School will continue to be located at St. John's Lutheran Church for the 2025-2026 school

year and classes are already full! Fall classes will start September 4th for the 3 year olds and September 5th for the 4 year olds.

WORSHIP & MUSIC NEWS

We are grateful for the many musicians who enhanced summer worship services while our choirs enjoyed some time off. Thank you to Valerie Wood-MacCrae, Sue Moses, Katrina Schell, Kim Nethaway, John Nethaway, Amanda Yeoman, Jim Clough, Suzie Abreu, Wendy Waters, Tom McGibbon, Helen Tracy, Rob Tracy, James Cooper, Holly Buchanan-Wise, Cailyn Armstrong, Wes Tucker and Leah Sexton for sharing their talents with us. In addition, kudos to our fabulous organist/pianist Tina Toggia for her continual expertise at the keyboard.



Our choirs will resume in September. Senior Choir will rehearse Wednesdays at 7 PM, starting Sept. 3. Our Adult Chime Choir will rehearse Wednesdays at 6:15 PM, beginning Sept. 10. Our Youth Choir will start up in October (date TBD).

If you or anyone you know would like to participate in

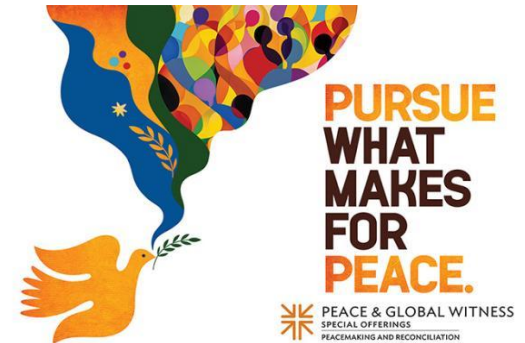
our music program, contact Kim Nethaway at 315-725-8096, or knethaway@twcny.rr.com. We always welcome new members!

MISSION NEWS

Rescue Mission Cooking continues on the last two Wednesdays of the month in September: September 17-Bruce & September 24-Amy.

The Special Offering beginning September 7th and continuing through October 5th will be the **Peace and Global Witness** Offering. This offering enables the Church to promote the Peace of Christ by

addressing systems of conflict and injustice across the world. Through the Peace & Global Witness Offering, congregations are encouraged and equipped to find and address the anxiety and discord that is prevalent throughout this broken and sinful world. 25% of the money raised stays to help those locally in our community. Last year the money raised was used for the Blessings in a Backpack Ministry. Please prayerfully consider donating to this special offering. Liz Clough will share news on both of these ministries on Sept. 7th during our announcements before worship.



RELAY FOR LIFE NEWS

TEAM OF RAINBOWS OF FAITH & HOPE

Thank you to everyone that came to support the American Cancer Society to The Delta Lake Yacht Club.. It was a beautiful evening for wine and beer tasting as well as good food, companionship, and a lot of laughs. The



hit of the evening was the drawing for the raffles. The door prize for the cutting boards handmade and donated by David Vickers created a lot of tickets. The cutting boards were an artistic creation, and many wanted to win them. The winner was Sandy Barnard, Lenora Merithew's sister. The event raised over \$1,000.00 for the American Cancer Society. It is the start of the 2026 Relay for Life of

CNY. There will be many more events coming during the year. Your support is a blessing. Thank you so much!!!!

Sue Hanson

SERENITY MESSAGE FROM MICHELLE

Serenity Circle will resume gathering in September after Labor Day.
Have a great summer!

Dear Friends,
God finds us. Even when we try to hide, when we believe we aren't worthy, when we aren't looking. The wisdom that existed before the world was created is infused into every molecule of our being. And when we start to notice God's presence – that wisdom is activated!

What makes it so surprising is that it's not what we picture wisdom to be in this modern world. It's not some aged person, long white hair, wearing a flowing robe, sitting stoically on a mountain top, possessing great knowledge, speaking softly, their words sparse and solemn and mysterious.

Wisdom is joyful! Celebratory! Delights in life! Wisdom is in our hearts – not our minds! When we are young, we are taught that we should be prudent, approach things intellectually, be discerning. Good rules to live by, reasonable, sensible ... But where's the joy in that? Where's the heart? Can you be truly discerning by only using your intellect?

By only relying on knowledge? ... God calls us to throw our hearts into it!! Like when a coach says, "put your back into it!" "Put your heart into it!!" That's what makes us stronger. Because - if our hearts aren't in it – then, what's the point?!

The only way to bring peace to the world is to lead from the heart. Especially now. There's so much suffering in the world, in our country and in our communities. When wisdom guides your life, there is no room for despair, or indifference. When you stand on the foundation of wisdom, you are grounded in God's love. You stand strong in your faith, you are not overcome, you don't become cynical. Everything you see is filtered through the lens of your heart, not just your mind and your intellect.

Kindness emerges and ripples out into the world. Then it is harder to disrespect your neighbors, it's impossible to dehumanize marginalized people. Kindness diminishes fear, it pushes back against hatred. Wisdom breeds joy, kindness and love. It creates space for hope, it nurtures peace.

Wisdom was here before the world was created, before people existed, before people began making a mess and hurting each other... and wisdom will remain after all this is gone. When we choose to live with compassion, when we choose to see the value and dignity of every person, without exception – love and kindness grow stronger, and the reach of God's light moves further and further into our world.

Michelle Dolan

FAITH FORMATION

(Formerly known as Sunday School; because it's not just for Sundays!)

It's that time again! Faith Formation Classes for children and adults will begin on Sunday September 28th. Stay tuned for more info on what we'll be doing this year.

If anyone has any ideas they would like to either present or study for Adult Faith Formation classes, please contact Helen

Adsit at (chaucerg2@aol.com or 315-336-6256



LAY READERS FOR SEPTEMBER

<u>09/07</u>	<u>Gail Tucker</u>	<u>Communion</u>
<u>09/14</u>	<u>Sue Hanson</u>	
<u>09/21</u>	<u>Bill Nee</u>	
<u>09/28</u>	<u>Raymond Tucker</u>	

MONTHLY FINANCIALS

OFFERINGS/PLEDGES

Please continue to give your offerings and pledges as the church's work continues wherever we are. Remember, your financial support can also be paid via Venmo.



ENVELOPES New plain envelopes, stamped with our address, are now available for your offering. A box will be placed on the table in the sanctuary each week. If you would like some to be sent to you, please let Susan Hatzinger know, and we will mail some to you.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

In addition to your regular pledge/giving, here are some Special Offerings to consider:

- **Holidays** – Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve/Christmas.
- **PCUSA Specific Offerings** – One Great Hour of Sharing, **Peace & Global Witness**, Pentecost, Christmas Joy (See pcusa.org for more details on each).
- **Per Capita** – Used to support ministries of the Presbytery, Synod, and Wider Church, including grants, leadership & mission development (see synodne.org and presbyteryofutica.org for more details).
The Per Capita for 2025 is \$46 per member.
- **Capital Improvements.**
- **Restoration Fund.**

GO GREEN! Would you like to receive your quarterly financial statements via email and help save the environment? Contact Susan at fpcfinancial@gmail.com, and she'll make that happen for you!

ONLINE DONATE BUTTONS – We now have **donate buttons right on our website** to donate online via credit/bank card to the General Fund or the Restoration Fund. Check out our website today at firstpresrome.com



Make a General Donation

Fuel our faith community with a donation to our general fund.



Support the Restoration Project

Join us in restoring the beauty and integrity of our sacred space.

RESTORATION FUND NEWS... Thanks to Bev Johnson & family for the beautiful handcrafted church donation box for our Restoration Fund; located in the Zion sanctuary on Sunday Morning!

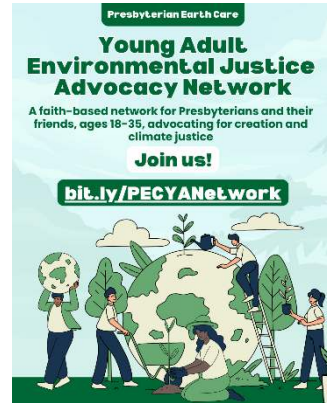
FINANCIALS

2025 YEAR-TO-DATE

<u>OPERATING BUDGET</u>	<u>JULY</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>2025 BUDGET</u>
<u>Receipts</u>	<u>\$15,225.50</u>	<u>\$175,963.11</u>	<u>\$209,884.43</u>	<u>\$359,801.91</u>
<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>\$(28,270.07)</u>	<u>\$(168,400.26)</u>	<u>\$(204,860.65)</u>	<u>(359,801.91)</u>
<u>Change in Net Assets</u>	<u>\$(13,044.57)</u>	<u>\$7,562.85</u>	<u>\$5,023.78</u>	
<u>July Collections:</u>				
Capital Improvement	<u>\$50.00</u>			
Restoration Fund	<u>\$1050.00</u>			
Pentecost	<u>\$178.08</u>			
OGHS	<u>\$25.00</u>			
Peace & Global	<u>\$25.00</u>			
JULY FUND DISBURSEMENTS				

PRESBYTERY NEWS

Calling all young adults (18-35) who are passionate about climate justice and creation care! Presbyterians for Earth Care is building a faith-based network of young people who are leading the way in environmental advocacy - from local congregations to the PC(USA) to the national stage. Is that you? Or does it describe someone you know? Join us by completing our interest form: bit.ly/PECYANetwork. Then, tag a friend who's ready to take action and share this with your community.



Our Abolitionist Roots

Do you have documentation or information on Presbyterian churches in the anti-slavery movement? Contact Steve Smits, Lead Researcher at stephensmits@gmail.com, 315 832- 0484.

Transformational Trails

Engaging in trauma-informed care is not a program to complete or a certificate to display—it is a way of being in the world. It shapes how we see, experience, and engage with people, systems, and communities. Learning what trauma is, how to recognize it, and how it impacts people is valuable, but that is trauma awareness. Trauma-informed care goes further: it asks us to embody a different way of being that is grounded in curiosity, compassion, and active listening. You are personally invited to join the Transformational Trails community on ZOOM to learn more.

Session Details:

What: Bi-Weekly ZOOM Learning Session (1 hour)

Focus: Making Curiosity, Compassion, and Active Listening real in practice.

When: Tuesday, September 2, 16 and 30

Register: email uticastatedclerk@gmail.com for the ZOOM link to join the sessions

Plentiful Gifts

You might be wondering -- "What's going on with Plentiful Gifts? We haven't heard anything for a while."

Well, it's been summer, and you know how church routines slow down in summer.

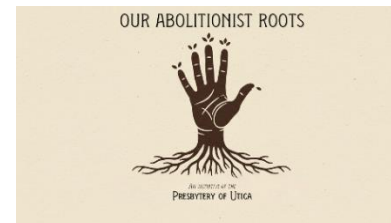
Congregational mentors have been meeting with the church leaders to interpret the surveys and draw out implications for identifying gifts and needs, and to clarify training interests.

Along with Plentiful Gifts leaders at Dubuque Seminary, we're putting together a menu of training opportunities that the congregations can choose from over the coming months. When the menu is formed we will publicize the opportunities to the whole presbytery. Some of the options will be open to leaders from across the entire presbytery.

I hope you've had a good summer, with some opportunity for rest and refreshment.

Sam Pendergrast

Indigenous Peoples/Earth Care



Michelle Bosma at the Fenimore Art Museum facilitates a series of open-air gatherings on Haudenosaunee culture. The gatherings are free and last from 11-12.

Dates and topics below:

September 11. Traditional crafts, eg basket weaving, beading

September 25. Haudenosaunee Sovereignty: legal battles and land rights

Indigenous Peoples/Earth Care

To learn more about the PCUSA Earth Care Congregation initiative, visit <https://qrco.de/bg21OK/>

Weaving Home ministry new blog post at <https://qrco.de/bg21QE>

FACEBOOK & WEBSITE PAGES

WEBSITE: <https://firstpresrome.com/>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/RomeFirstPresbyterian>

Mailing Address: PO Box 33 – Rome, NY - 13442

Email: firstpresrome@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS:



Susan Hatzinger's new craft store - Craftability - is opening in September!

The calendar will be up soon at craftabilityrome.com.

You can sign up on the website to receive an email with information on upcoming classes and events. If you would like to have a tour of Craftability, just

send her an email at craftabilityrome@gmail.com to set it up!

The **Women's Association of Stone Presbyterian Church**, 8 So. Park Row, Clinton, will hold a **DRIVE-THRU PIE SALE** from 10am to 2pm on Saturday, September 27th, 2025. We will have several different kinds of homemade pies available for your shopping pleasure, with the emphasis being on apple! You can drive up to the curb and purchase a pie without leaving your vehicle. Come visit us, you won't regret it! For more information, contact Ceil Gilbert (315-853-8289), ceilgilbert@yahoo.com or Donna Goodfriend (315-749-4085).



- Sunday, September 14-Restoration update after worship in Zion Sanctuary.
- Sunday, September 21-Congregational meeting to vote on restoration items after worship in Zion sanctuary
- Saturday, October 4-Blessings of the animals service with Zion; time TBA.
- Sunday, October 5-World Communion Sunday

September 2025-FPC

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Happy Labor Day- Offices Closed	2 10 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	3 7 PM Choir Rehearsal @ Zion	4 7 PM-Worship & Music Committee Mtg. @ Zion	5	6
7 – 10 am- Coffee/Fellowship 10:30am-Worship Service/Communion	8	9 10 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	10 6:15 PM Chimes Rehearsal @ Zion 7 PM Choir Rehearsal @ Zion	11 7 PM-Deacon's meeting (Rescheduled From September)	12	13
14 – 10 am- Coffee/Fellowship 10:30am-Worship Service Restoration Update after worship	15 3 PM Nursery School Meeting @ St. John's Lutheran 6 PM FF Meeting on Zoom	16 10 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	17 10 am-Rescue Mission Cooking – Bruce 6:15 PM Chimes 7 PM Choir Rehearsal @ Zion	18	19	20
21- 10 am- Coffee/Fellowship 10:30am-Worship Service Congregational meeting after worship- restoration vote	22 6:30 pm – Session Meeting at Zion.	23 10 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House 4 PM-Stated meeting of the Presbyterian- Whitesboro	24 10 am-Rescue Mission Cooking – Amy 6:15 PM Chimes 7 PM Choir Rehearsal @ Zion	25	26	27
28 - 10 am- Coffee/Fellowship 10:30am-Worship Service	29	30 10 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House				