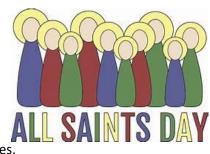
PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith." (Hebrews 12:1-2a)

The beginning of November pulls our attention closer to the celebration of Thanksgiving. Yet, I'd like to pause, and look back at Halloween and the very beginning of November. Halloween actually marks the beginning of a three-day triduum with a significant emphasis on life and death. The scary faces carved into pumpkins were originally made to ward off evil spirits. They remind us of our mortality. The word Halloween derives its meaning from All Hallows Eve. Hallows is an Old English word meaning holy or sanctified and was used because the next day, November 1st the Church traditionally celebrate All Saints Day, followed by All Souls Day on November 2nd. Today, these festivals have all merged together when we celebrate All Saints Day to incorporate all the saints of God – those who have died and also we, the living saints. Individuals have a hard time thinking of themselves as saints because they often think of saints as those special people who have died and did amazing things on earth. While these special individuals are saints, they are not the only ones.

The word "saint" comes from the Greek word hagios, which means "holy, sacred, or consecrated by God." There are many examples in scripture that refer to all the people of God as saints. For example, St. Paul, writing to the church in ancient Corinth began his letter, "To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Here St. Paul clearly states that all people who are united in Christ through baptism are saints of God because we have been consecrated, or set aside, to do the work of God. The Church therefore, is filled with the saints of God. And as the reformer, Martin Luther, often said, we are both sinners and saints. We are not perfect, but if we are truly repentant, God forgives us our sins and the Holy Spirit is constantly working in us to make us more and more aligned with the heart of God.

Life can be quite difficult. There are times when we may grow weary in doing what is right when it seems like evil is increasing around us. Yet, St. Paul again urges us to let go of the weight of the burden of sin and to persevere in doing what is right because God is with us. Jesus showed us how to persevere in faith. Our ancestors and others in the Church have shown us how to persevere in faith despite overwhelming obstacles.



So "let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up." (Galatians 6:9) Remember that we are "surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses" both past and present who are cheering us on as workers in the kingdom of God. This is something we can be most thankful for every day.

Blessings and Peace, Pastor Edwina



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Taylor Sreca	11/03
Zak Taylor	11/07
Camille Wrege	11/08
Megan Mahosky	11/19
Chad Sexton	11/19
Amelia Kowalski	11/21
Rick O'Meara	11/23
Gail Bostwick	11/25
Jackie Dundee	11/29

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Candy & John Fay	11/18
Jim & Dianne Griffith	11/19
Ray & Gail Tucker	11/22
Sam & Cindy Pendergast	11/26

NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

Classes are going well. We will talk about using good manners and what it means to be thankful this month! (Pictures from pumpkin carving in October.)





WORSHIP & MUSIC NEWS

We welcomed violinist Haley Rudolph to our Oct. 19th worship service. She joined our choir on the anthem entitled "The Journey", and also performed a solo during the service. Haley is a strings teacher for the Rome City Schools.



Our choirs started rehearsing last month for our annual Candlelight Service, planned for Sunday,

Dec. 14th at 4PM. If you or someone you know would like to join our Senior Choir for this event, please contact Kim Nethaway for more info. (315-725-8096, or knethaway@twcny.rr.com) Candlelight rehearsals take place each Wed. evening at 7PM.. We will be presenting the cantata "Love Came Down At Christmas" by Joel Raney, celebrating God's hope, peace, love and joy felt during the Advent season.

Youth Choir began weekly rehearsals in October and continues into December. We leave worship during the last hymn for our 20-minute practice. We look forward to playing at Candlelight and in worship in December.

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!

ECUMENICAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Sunday, November 16 at 1:30 pm, there will be an Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service at Trinity UCC Church on W. Court St. Kim Nethaway will lead a combined Ecumenical Choir-who will rehearse at 12:30 pm at Trinity. Come to Trinity's sauerbraten dinner at 11:30 am,



then stay for the service. Please let Pastor Edwina know if you plan on coming to the dinner so Trinity has a count for food. This is a special service that focuses on gratitude for all God has done for us. Please bring a non-perishable item for the local food pantries. Also, if you have special bread you'd like blessed for your Thanksgiving meal, please bring it.

MISSION NEWS

Blessings in a Backpack – Thanks to your generosity we are off to a great start for the season. We have received many monetary and food donations to make the meals sent home more nutritious. Suggested donations are; canned soup, canned vegetables, Ramen soup mix, macaroni and cheese (boxed mix) Rice (boxed mix), individual fruit cups, individual applesauce cups, granola bars, individual envelopes of instant oatmeal.

Peace and Global Witness Offering – Through your generosity, with a little help from the Mission Committee we were able to donate \$100 to the Mary Mowry Scholarship Fund.

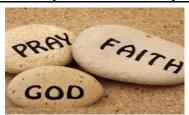
Stuffed Animal Donation – As a Christmas treat we give "Beanie Baby" sized stuffed animals to the Blessing in a Backpack program. We are in need of 20 more by mid-December.

Rescue Mission Cooking – We are cooking November 19th (Amy at home) in November and December 3rd (in lieu of Thanksgiving Eve) at Zion Church from 10-noon. Bruce will be captain.

RACC Holiday House – Once again the Mission Committee will be partnering with the Presbyterian Women to have a table at the Rome Art and Community Center Holiday House held November 14th-16th and November 21st-23rd. Please support our church as well as the Rome Art and Community Center.

FAITH FORMATION

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



The Faith Formation Committee met on October 20, 2025 on Zoom. The Pastor will have a meeting with the Zion Church to determine the dates for December Advent activities and a candlelight service. We also discussed

ideas for the Christmas pageant. The JOY youth group will reconvene in January. The committee noted a lack of involvement and attendance for Faith Formation lessons and activities.

TREE OF LIGHTS

The tree lighting ceremony and reception will take place in the main lobby of Rome Health, on **December 7, 2025 beginning at 6:30 pm.** Rome Health Hospital has its annual "Tree of Lights" campaign that honors or memorializes a loved one. If you would like to have a light lit for a loved one, please send \$5.00 to Rome Twigs, c/o Rome Health, 1500 N. James St., Rome, NY 13440. Contributions can also be made online at https://rome-twigs-gift-shop.square.site Proceeds goes toward buying equipment for the hospital. **Donations need to be received by November 21, 2025.**

RELAY FOR LIFE NEWS TEAM OF RAINBOWS OF FAITH & HOPE

On **November 4th from 6-8 pm** The Songbyrd Street Studio will host another cut glass class. The cost will be \$10.00 plus whatever you make with the glass (Items range from \$25 up) Gail Tucker will be the hostess and there will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. We would have the same types of items: ornaments, night lights, tea lights, small art pieces, pendants, trinket dishes. You are only



limited by your creativity! Check out their Facebook page for inspiration! All proceeds will go to the Relay for Life Teams.

The 12 Days of Hope Prize Calendar for Relay for Life

Each calendar is a \$5.00 donation to the American Cancer Society. One drawing will take place each of the first 12 days of December. Winner of each day will be placed back in the mix for future drawings. Calendar Tickets must be purchased before Thanksgiving so they can be returned and entered into the drawing. Great prizes! See Sue Hanson to purchase a calendar ticket today!

On **November 23, Buy-a-Pie** will be hosted by the team of Rainbows of Faith and Hope. If you are willing to bake a pie, please bring it in on Sunday before church or call Sue Hanson for a pick up. If you have a



special item that you would like to bake, please bring it in as well. This fundraiser is not restricted to pies; however, pies do sell fast. Most pies will be \$15.00 with small being \$5.00. All proceeds will go directly to the American Cancer Society.

Christmas is just around the corner. Each year First Presbyterian Church sponsors the **Angel Tree project** for families qualified by the Salvation Army. **The tree will be set up on November 20**th in the sanctuary of Zion Church. There will be 80 tags from which you may choose. The ages vary from newborns to 12 years of age. After you have



chosen the children's tags, please, please, enter the child's name and number into the green book that will be place next to the tree. If any of the tags get misplaced, a new one can be made so that child receives the gifts. Please remember, place two new toys and a clothing item in an unwrapped bag so the Salvation Army packers know exactly what is being given to that child.

An age-appropriate stocking bag with little goodies will also be placed in the bag for that specific child. Thank you for helping to make Christmas an unforgettable blessing for many children in our community. If you have any questions, please call Sue Hanson, 315-338-1473.

MONTHLY FINANCIALS

OFFERINGS/PLEDGES

Please prayerfully consider increasing your pledge this year as we have more expenses than usual due to rising costs and the restoration of the church building. 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



Scan this code to pay

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, 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!

<u>ONLINE DONATE BUTTONS</u> – 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

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Make a General Donation

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

<u>§</u>

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

	OPERATING BUDGET	<u>September</u>	ACTUAL	BUDGET	2025 BUDGET
	<u>Receipts</u>	\$16,101.00	<u>\$205,837.11</u>	\$269,851.41	\$359,801.91
,	Expenditures	<u>\$(33,398.10)</u>	<u>\$(218,692.62)</u>	<u>\$(266,036.64)</u>	<u>\$(359,801.91)</u>
, L	Change in Net Assets	\$(17,297.10)	<u>\$(12,855.51)</u>	\$3,814.77	
9	August Collections:				
	Capital Improvement	\$50.00			
_	Peace & Global	\$250.00			
	Restoration Fund	\$10,927.75			
5	Memorial				
τ	Mary Mowry Scholarship	\$2,000.00			
_	SEPTEMBER FUND				
	DISBURSEMENTS				

STEWARDSHIP NEWS





If the weather stays warm and not too wet, we may see the roof rise on the sanctuary—a big step closer to being home again. Through the rebuilding process, the Session has thought about what we will do when we get there, and the answer is tasks. Tasks are small things—one-and-done things, short-term things, occasional things, seasonal things. Tasks are things you choose to do to share your interests and skills. These tasks may already be things we've done or are doing or they may be something new we've not tried yet. For example,

- lead a book discussion
- lead a Faith Formation class
- join the choir for Candlelight
- bake for a coffee hour
- lead a craft
- cook for Rescue Mission
- help decorate and un-decorate the church for Christmas
- picture directory coordinator, photographers, format people
- website help
- help with youth group
- help with Advent event
- be a confirmation mentor
- help with ushering
- be a lay reader
- sound and/or video help

and so much more!—It all depends on your imagination!
Remember that God asks for our time, talents, and treasure, and our church needs all three, so please prayerfully think. And these tasks can be done now at Zion too. While reimagining church, imagine what task you could do and share, because part of the joy of being the church is being together and working together.

LAY READERS FOR NOVEMBER

11/00		
<u>11/02</u>	<u>Carrie Scarccia</u>	<u>Communion</u>
11/09	Sue Hanson	
<u>11/16</u>	Gail Tucker	
11/23	Mark Hinman	Combined Service
		<u>w/Zion</u>
11/30	Mary Grow	

HONORING VETERANS

We'll be honoring Veterans during the worship service on Sunday,. November 9. We will list the names of any veterans that you would like honored. Below are the names that we currently have. Please contact the church office (email) by Wed. Nov 3rd if a friend or loved one is not included below we'll gladly add them to the list.



Air Force

Bob Alessi, Shea Bert, Marjorie J'nell Butterworth, Edgar E. Butterworth, Michael Corbett, Damian Curreri*, Wilbert Dunlap, Dan Ferens, Jay Fish, Shari Fish, Gerald Gleasman, Brian Hickernell, Frank Jokinen, Bob Ketchum, Ralph Pezzula, Ed Pilok, Ron Rhodes, Samantha Roush, Logan Storms*, Ray Tucker, Patricia Sutter

Army

Dan Carpenter, Jack Grow, Michael Scaccia, Robert Walker, Ron Yingling, Army & Navy, Deborah Head, Army Air Forces, Lyle Walker

Army National Guard:

Paul Adsit

Navy

Brian Burke, Julian Curreri, Jeffrey Kimball, Jack Morgan, Erik O'Meara *, Dick Simons, Anthony Spinelli, Isaiah Sexton*

^{*} Currently Serving

STAY CONNECTED

See the latest news and events. We are the Church together!



First Presbyterian Church of Rome, NY WEBSITE: https://firstpresrome.com/

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

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

Email: firstpresrome@gmail.com

Presbyteryofutica.org Synodne.org Pcusa.org

Transformational Trails

Compassion is a way of engaging with imperfection — in ourselves, others, and the systems we inhabit — without turning away from responsibility or truth. For example, I can have compassion for a parent who grew



up in a home where discipline was harsh or rooted in fear, and who therefore learned that control or punishment was the only way to keep order. Compassion helps us understand where those patterns come from while still holding people accountable to choose differently and protect those in their care.

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.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 11 at 3:00 PM

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

sessions

Reducing/Eliminating Fossil Fuels

NYSERDA Energy Audits. ReWire will coordinate level one energy audits with an NYSERDA certified auditor at no cost to congregations of the Presbytery of Utica. The audit report will help congregations determine recommended energy improvements make the most sense for the congregation.

Community Solar Program. ReWire has organized a program whereby congregations can purchase their electricity from a local solar farm. There is no cost to join the program, and no additional equipment needed. First Presbyterian Church of Holland Patent is the first congregation to commit to participating in the community solar program; while there will be incremental dollar savings over the course of the year, the church will reduce its carbon footprint by approximately 6.6 metric tons of CO₂ annually.

As more congregations join the program, the churches of the Presbytery of Utica can have a tremendous impact on reducing the amount of carbon dioxide we introduce into the atmosphere—and increase shalom for ourselves and for the land.

For more information or to schedule an energy audit, contact Larry Beasley at uticastatedclerk@gmail.com or 315-794-9124.







RING A BELL TO SUPPORT THE SALVATION ARMY

On **Saturday, December 6th from 10 am to 6 pm** our church will be ringing the Salvation Army bell inside Price Chopper on Black River Blvd. The slots are an hour long, and there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Please consider donating an hour to help this worthwhile cause.

DECK THE HALLS

Come and join together with Zion members to decorate Zion's sanctuary; **December 6**th **or 13**th-**TBA**. After we are finished decorating there will be an Advent Craft Event followed by a light lunch.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

On **Sunday, December 7**th, at about 12:45/1:00 pm we are going to be caroling to our homebound members. Pizza and salad will be provided for all who are caroling before we go. You don't have to be a great singer to participate in this yearly event that really brightens our homebound members lives. Sign up sheets will be put out soon.

CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

On **Sunday, December 14**th at 4pm we will be having our annual Christmas Candlelight Service. The music is always fantastic so please tell your family and friends about this wonderful service to experience the spirit of Christmas.

LONGEST NIGHT/BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

The holidays are not always easy, especially for those who grieve. This is a quiet service that gives space for the sadness that can often be felt at this time of year. This ecumenical service will take place this year at First Baptist Church in Rome on **Thursday**, **December 18th**. The time is usually at 7pm, and we will keep you posted if that changes.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

The Faith Formation team is putting together another unique Christmas Pageant this year focusing on the them of Jesus, the Light of the World. Stay tuned for more details. The pageant will take place during our 10:30 am Sunday worship service on **December 21**st. You don't want to miss this!

ZION'S MESSIAH SING

Zion's Annual Messiah Sing will take place on **Sunday, December 21st at 3pm**. All are invited to come and participate in this beautiful time to unite in song!

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

FPC & Zion will be celebrating a combined Christmas Eve Service on **Wednesday, December 24**th **at 4pm**. This is the culminating service of our Christmas season with scripture, music, prayer, Communion, and that special moment of singing Silent Night together in the glow of candlelight. Don't miss this celebration of Jesus' birth!

FPC-November 2025

3	4	_			1 SET YOUR CLOCKS BACK 1 HOUR
	4	_	i	1	
4:00 pm Serenity Circle on Zoom 6:00 pm Holiday planning mtg. w/Zlon	10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House6-8 PM Songbyrd Glass Fundraiser	5 6:15 PM Chimes Rehearsal @ Zion 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal @ Zion	6 7:00 pm-Worship & Music Meeting	7	8
4:00 pm Serenity Circle on Zoom 6:00 pm Faith Foundation Meeting on Zoom	10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House 3:00 pm Transf. Trails	6:15 pm Chimes Rehearsal @ Zion 7:00 pm Choir	7:00 pm Deacons Meeting	RACC Holiday House (Nov. 14, 15, 16)	RACC Holiday House
17 3:00 pm Nursery School Meeting 4:00 pm Serenity Circle 6:30 pm Session Mtg/Zion	Eunice's House 10:00 am Stated Mtg. of the Presbytery/Springfield 12:00 Mission Committee	Mission Cooking – Amy 6:15 pm Chimes Rehearsal @ Zion 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	20 Angel tree set-up	21 RACC Holiday House (Nov. 21, 22, 23)	22 RACC Holiday House
24 4:00 pm Serenity Circle on Zoom	10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	Mission Cooking 6:15 pm Chimes Rehearsal @ Zion 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	Happy Thanksgiving	28	29
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10 am- Coffee/Fellowship

10:30am-Worship Service

11:20 Youth Choir

11:30 Adult Faith Formation

11:45 Confirmation class