

Pastor's Ponderings



Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matt. 28:20)

Summer is well under-way along with some really hot weather. Regularly scheduled activities have paused to allow some time to relax and get away. I'm excited that among your various travels this time of year, you are taking Jesus with you. When I pitched the idea of Flat Jesus to our Faith Formation team I had no idea how much support it would receive. Our Flat Jesus project has really taken off, and Jesus is "on the move!" We've been receiving lots of images of Flat Jesus from golf courses and store trips, to hockey rinks and camp visits, to concerts and sitting quietly with someone reading a daily devotion. This warms my heart because it's more than just a fun faith formation activity; it's a spiritual practice and a daily reminder that Jesus truly is with us wherever we go. It's helpful to have this physical reminder, because it's easy to forget that. We don't usually imagine Jesus is with us. We don't often feel the presence of Him in the every-day mundane parts of our lives.

And in the summer, sadly Jesus is often not invited in on the plans. As Christians, we profess our belief that Jesus is truly risen from the dead. He is alive! If that is indeed true, then He is with us wherever we go. We don't have to imagine Him; we only need to be aware of His presence. Jesus is with us in our most challenging of times and in our joys. He is with us in all the circumstances of our lives and does not take a vacation from us. He is present and available 24/7 to listen, to guide, to strengthen us, and to give us hope. We could not have a better companion!

So this summer I hope Flat Jesus not only sparks joy for you, but also stirs something within you. I hope this practice of taking him everywhere draws you closer to the Savior who gave everything for us. May it strengthen your relationship with the real Jesus and the God who has been made visible through Him. And by the time summer is over, may our entire congregation be renewed in our faith, invigorated by the Spirit, and through our time with Jesus be more courageous, compassionate, and committed disciples than ever before. I can't wait to see more pictures of Flat Jesus' adventures and hear your stories.

Summer Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Edwina



SPECIAL COMBINED SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

July 16th marks the two-year anniversary of the Rome tornado. Despite the destruction of our city and our church building, we have so much to be grateful for, that no lives were lost.

COME AND CELEBRATE SUNDAY JULY 19th-10:00 am (Note different time)

for a special Combined Worship Service with Zion as we give thanks to God for protection, strength, perseverance, and the generosity and hospitality of so many people who are helping us to rebuild the church – both physically and spiritually. Come and worship together with Zion, who has extended such hospitality to us during these past two years. We are stronger together!

Following the service, join us for a special Ice Cream Social event to celebrate National Ice Cream Day



Ice Cream Social



JULY

BIRTHDAYS

Sharon St. John	7/1
Matt Abreu	7/1
Norine Sexton	7/1
Dan Cucura	7/3
Natalie Wrege	7/3
Ginny Semp	7/4
Gage Bates	7/5
Mark Hinman	7/8
Esi Simons	7/9
Sandy Braun	7/10
Carli Ann Griffiths	7/10
Carol Lee	7/12
Anderw Abreu	7/14
Barbara Davidson	7/14
Helen Adsit	7/19
Barbara Tracy	7/20
Betty Warren	7/20
Maddie Shaffer	7/21
Laura Bochniak	7/22
Kathryn Jasiewicz	7/23
Maxine Strong	7/23
Donna Jones	7/24
Kevin Taylor	7/25
Mathew Proper	7/25
Ruth Jokinen	7/25
Margaret Jevens	7/27
Michael Scaccia	7/29
Christian Olney	7/30

ANNIVERSARIES

Kristin & Rich Stolo	7/11
Bill & Jackie Nee	7/17
Paul & Helen Adsit	7/28
Mike & Linda Little	7/28
John & Kim Nethaway	7/29

AUGUST

BIRTHDAYS

Kim Nethaway	8/2
Somphone Keoviengsamay	8/4
Dave McMonagle	8/5
Raymond Tucker	8/7
Wesley Tucker	8/7
Brayton Olney	8/9
Harry Carpenter	8/11
Candy Evans	8/15
Kari Ketchum	8/16
Jay Fish	8/18
Bobbie Foote	8/19
Debbie Slagel	8/20
Sue Storms	8/21
Bill Nee	8/21
Eunice Edwards	8/22
Linnea Linderman	8/22
Rich Linderman	8/26
Sally Hinman	8/25
Chris Hayden	8/27
Lily Kowalski	8/27
Tom McGibbon	8/29
James Mathy	8/30
Nancy Beeman	8/31
Kristin Stolo	8/31



ANNIVERSARIES

Doug & Sue Davidson	8/3
Rob & Helen Tracy	8/6
Mary Lou & Mike Alguire	8/21
Martie Talley & Jane Muehl	8/21
Amber & Bill Laremore	8/24
Nikki & Steve Huntzinger	8/28
Ronald & Barbara Rhodes	8/29

Lay Readers

A special Thank you to everyone that filled in our Layreader list for the year!

July 5 th	Sue Moses	Communion
July 12 th	Gail Tucker	
July 19 th	Mary Yates	Communion
July 26 th	Helen Tracy	
August 2 nd	Gail Tucker	Communion
August 9 th	Jeff Evans	
August 23 rd	Sue Hanson	
August 30 th	Rob Tracy	



CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE UPDATES

Keep up with the latest news on restoration and other events on our website at firstpresrome.com

Facebook at **First Presbyterian Church Rome, NY**

Instagram at [firstpresbyterianchurchromeny](https://www.instagram.com/firstpresbyterianchurchromeny)

Youtube at [@firstpresbyterianchurchofrome](https://www.youtube.com/@firstpresbyterianchurchofrome)

Visit our sites for Worship, present, past, restoration updates & daily news.

Keep up with Presbytery news, events, classifieds, and church information at: thepresbysaver.church

PCUSA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 227th General Assembly of the PCUSA (the highest council of the church) has been meeting in Milwaukee, WI and online June 22 – July 2, 2026. The theme is “Persevering Toward Wholeness.” The assembly consists of 508 commissioners and young adult advisory delegates from 164 presbyteries who – along with theological student advisory delegates and partner advisory delegates – have the responsibility of deliberating the business that comes before the assembly and discerning the mind of Christ, in assembly committee meetings and the plenary sessions. There’s a lot of overtures on the docket including the status of Episcopal Presbyterian Dialogue.

Stay tuned in the coming weeks for news on the final votes and reports.



Rainbows of Faith & Hope Team

RELAY FOR LIFE NEWS

We would like to thank all of the parishioners, friends, and family for their donations, help, encouragement, and success at Relay for Life of CNY. We raised an incredible amount of \$30,000, another record high. We are now at \$240,000, with over 60 teams on the track this year.

The theme was "Decades of Hope". Our "campsite" featured the 50's and 60's. Shari Fish and family created an awesome theme with pictures of survivors and ones that passed of cancer on the inside labels of the old 78 RPM records, with approximately 40-50 records. Thank you, Shari for being so creative. Brenden played music from the 50s and 60s. We were all dancing and enjoying the day. Brenden also had a neat race car track for the kids to win prizes. Thank you to all the church goers that came to get the 430 luminaries ready for the track. There was no rain predicted for the area however, we were not prepared for the wind that started around 5:30. Tents started to blow away as well as some of the raffles. At 6:45, our tents were taken down. The luminaries could not be lit but were placed on the track, and the ceremony took place at 8:30. It was a very nice and moving event especially with all the luminaries from our church. What a show of support. Thank you again for those that helped to set up, walk the track, fill luminaries, take down the campsite, and just being there. Many breakthroughs have happened in the fight to end cancer. There is still more to do. The winners of the Relay are those that will benefit from the American Cancer Society research, education, early detection, and support for all those afflicted with cancer. This was indeed a team event. Bless you.

We could not have achieved such an amazing total if it wasn't for the efforts of Kim Nethaway. Kim has soooo many generous friends that support her as a survivor of cancer. It never ceases to amaze me at the number of friends Kim connects with for over \$14,000 of donations to the American Cancer Society. You are one of the Incredibles.

Thank you!!!
Sue Hanson



WORSHIP & MUSIC NEWS

While our choirs are on hiatus for the summer, special music will be provided by various vocalists and instrumentalists, some from our choir and several guests. There will be a great variety of music, so please come to worship and enjoy!

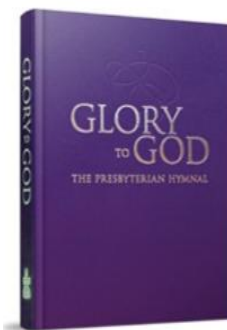
We thank all of the members of our Senior Choir, Joyful Ringers and Youth Choir for their many contributions to our worship services over the last ten months. We are so fortunate at First Presbyterian to have such dedicated choir members and Tina, our wonderful keyboardist, to enrich our worship time together.

If you know someone who would like to join one of our choirs, please have them contact me. Musicians don't have to be First Presbyterian members to participate. We constantly try to reinforce our ranks, so if you can help, we would greatly appreciate it!

Kim Nethaway, Music Director 315-725-8096, knethaway@twcny.rr.com

NEW SUPPLEMENTAL HYMNALS

For quite a few years now, we have been using music in the form of inserts from the Glory to God Presbyterian Hymnal. This hymnal is not new (it came out in 2013) and contains many new and older familiar hymns. The Music & Worship Committee would like to purchase these hymnals and use them – in addition to – our blue Presbyterian Hymnals. Those original hymnals were destroyed in the tornado, and we are grateful for Utica Presbyterian Church for donating their excess copies to us. However, the original ones were purchased in honor or in memory of a loved one.



We are inviting the congregation to **purchase one or more** of these books in **Honor of or In Memory of** a loved one. A special bookplate with this information will be placed in each book. **The cost of each book is \$25.00.** This is a wonderful way to honor their legacy. Thank you for your support!



It's not just for Sundays!

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND ADULT FAITH FORMATION CLASSES

All regularly scheduled faith formation classes are taking a break for the summer, however.....that does not mean faith formation takes a break! There are so many ways to nurture our faith over the summer. The most important is worship – and if you are away, join us online, studying scripture independently, praying, informal faith-filled conversations with family and friends, and many other opportunities.

This summer everyone has been invited to participate in our Flat Jesus Summer Adventure’s Project. See the front page for more information on this. We hope to see many pictures of Flat Jesus’ Adventures!

CONFIRMATION NEWS

Confirmation students are meeting with their mentors this summer to work on specific lessons and learn and grow in faith together.

MATTHEW 25 PILL BOTTLE DONATION PROGRAM

This ongoing youth-led mission project helps recycle colored pill bottles to assist first-aid workers all over the world. These much-needed pill bottles are used to distribute medicine by workers to those in desperate need of medical care. You can donate your empty colored pill bottles – with the labels removed – in the bin located on the table in Clark Hall and make a positive healing difference in the lives of many. Thank you for your support.

NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

Nursery School Open House
August 15, 2026, 10:00 am-Noon

Start date for September 2026:

- 3-year-olds September 10, 2026
- 4-year-olds September 11, 2026



There are limited spots available for the 2026-2027 school year. Call 315-339-7529 or email 1stpresnurseryschool@gmail.com for more information.



KIDS KITS-FORMALLY SCHOOL KITS

Sarah Briggs is collecting items for the Kid Kits. There will be a bin for item donations in the sanctuary or you may make a monetary donation to the project. Take advantage of the summer sales going on now.



Here is what’s required per kit:

- One box of 12 colored pencils (leave in box and **unsharpened**)
- One 2-pocket folder
- One glue stick
- One pair of blunt scissors (rounded tip; remove packaging)
- One 70-page spiral notebook (no loose-leaf or filler paper)
- One 12" / 30 cm ruler
- One hand-held pencil sharpener (remove packaging)
- One large eraser (no pencil-cap erasers)
- 6 new, **unsharpened** pencils with erasers (remove pencils from packaging; secure with a rubber band)
- One box of 24 crayons (must be 24-count)
- One cotton or lightweight canvas bag with handles (12"x14" to 14"x17"; solid color or kid-friendly fabric; no logos, reusable shopping bags, or backpacks)

RESCUE MISSION COOKING

Please see the July and August calendars for the days cooking will take place. Thank you!

THE RESCUE MISSION IS LOOKING FOR A COOKING CAPTAIN-Plan the menu, shop for groceries (you will be reimbursed or use the church credit card) recruit workers for Wednesday morning to help, and make sure food is delivered to the Rescue Mission. Contact Liz if interested at 315-335-0976



FINANCIAL

“When I was hungry, you gave me food, thirsty and you gave me something to drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you gave me clothing, in prison and you visited me... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.” (Matt. 25:40)

These words from Jesus’ parable, are a command as disciples to care for our neighbors through acts of loving service. The PCUSA takes this command seriously, and that is why congregations who take this command to heart, are designated as Matt. 25 Congregations and that includes our congregation. The work we do, is in direct response to this discipleship call. The money you give - your pledges, donations, and special offerings – allow us to carry out the ministry work we are called to do in Christ’s name.

Rescue Mission cooking, CWS Kid Kits, Youth Group activities, cards and gifts to the homebound from our deacons, are a few of the programs that your ministry dollars support. Thank you for your ongoing financial support!



This month’s ministry highlight is the O’Meara Scholarship.

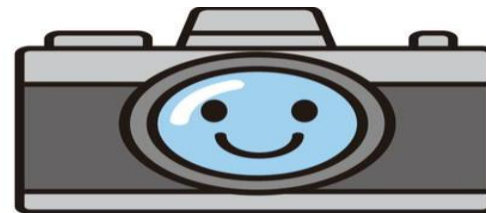
Thanks to your financial generosity, students/adults going into the human services field receive a \$1500.00 scholarship for each year they are enrolled in the program and apply.



Congratulations to Cailyn Armstrong and Cara Yates who received this scholarship this year. Cailyn will be pursuing a career in teaching, and Cara in nursing. We are so proud of them!

SNAPSHOT

FINANCIALS 2026 YEAR-TO-DATE



Operating Budget:	April	Actual	Budget	2026 Budget
Receipts	\$25,955.00	\$154,979.05	\$156,953.55	\$376,688.48
Expenditures	\$(19,260.10)	\$(132,099.23)	\$(147,391.92)	\$(376,688.48)
Change in Net Assets	<u>\$6,694.90</u>	<u>\$22,879.82</u>	<u>\$9,561.63</u>	
May Collections:				
Restoration Fund	\$5,477.00			
May Fund Disbursements				
Restoration Fund-ServPro	\$569,520.88			

RESTORATION FUND NEWS

Thanks to many generous contributions from people locally and across the country, we have received **\$386,729** toward our restoration. Thank you!

ONLINE/DIGITAL GIVING

In addition to checks, envelopes, and loose giving, you can also donate via Venmo. Scan on this QR code or the one on the back of the bulletin.



STEWARDSHIP NEWS

WORKER BEES NEEDED!

We need the gifts of your talents. **There are several tasks that we urgently need help with.** If you can help with something, please let Pastor Edwina know or call the office.



FAITH FORMATION COMMITTEE- Growing in faith is important in being a Christian. Do you have ideas on how we can make our adult and youth faith formation classes better? If this excites you, we need your gifts on this team!

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE- Do you like to talk about money and the ways we can use it to do God's work? We need people to help build a dynamic stewardship program before fall.

RESCUE MISSION COOKING CAPTAIN- We urgently need another Captain to plan the menu, shop for groceries (you will be reimbursed or use the church credit card), recruit workers for Wednesday mornings, and make sure food is delivered to the Rescue Mission. Contact Liz if interested at 315-335-0976

STREAMING/AUDIO & VISUAL HELPERS- Brenden needs help! Currently, he is the only person who is live streaming our services and really needs help and a break from doing it every single week. Once we are back in our own building, we will also need other helpers for sound, cameras, projection-lights, we know there are techy people out there. Let your talent shine and give us a hand!

A FELLOWSHIP COORDINATOR & FELLOWSHIP HELPERS- Someone to coordinate the various fellowship events we have, such as Sunday morning coffee/fellowship time and other meals and events. Bruce Warcup was doing this and can't do it any longer. They would make phone calls to see who can bring food, set up, clean up, etc. You don't need to do all the work; you simply need to coordinate the worker bees.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The 10th Annual "My Pal Spencer" Cure Sanfilippo Event
Teugega Country Club-Rome, NY Monday, July 20th, 2026
 Come and support the Cure Sanfilippo Foundation in honor of Kirk and Linda Hinman's grandson Spencer who is afflicted with Sanfillippo.



Events for Non-Golfers and Golfers

Golf registration starts at 1:30 pm and Shotgun start is at 2:30 pm.

Entry Fee is \$110.00 per player 5:00 pm Non-Golf Events

Cocktails, Heavy Hors D'oeuvre Buffet, Basket Raffle, Silent & Live Auctions, Door Prize, Big 50/50 Raffle

Fee for non-golfers is \$65.00

Reservations due by Friday, July 10th to Kirk and Linda Hinman

See more information on the bulletin board in Clarke Hall.

HONOR AMERICA DAY PARADE

Honor America Days is coming up on Saturday, July 25th. If anyone is interested in helping with a float for this year's parade, please let Pastor Edwina know as soon as possible. The theme this year is Celebrating 250 Years of America.

Strawberry Shortcake Festival July 25th, Noon-3pm

ZION EPISCOPAL CHURCH

140 West Liberty Street

Tickets: \$6.00 Adults 13-54, \$5.50 Seniors 55 and older
 \$4.00 for children 3-12, Children under 3 free



BASKET RAFFLE

3 FOR \$1.00 OR 20 FOR \$5.00

BAKE SALE

PRICES AS MARKED





SHORTCAKE TICKETS ON SALE AT ZION M-F 9 AM TO NOON OR AT JERVIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Bake sale and basket raffle tickets sold on day of event

July 2026 First Presbyterian Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Rejoice	1		3	4 Fourth of July 
5 10:00 am Coffee/ Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service	6 Office will be Closed in observance of July 4th	7 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	8 Sparkle	9	10 10:00 am-Noon Blood Drive Zion	11
12 10:00 am Coffee/ Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service	13 4:00 pm Serenity Squares-Zoom	14 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	15	16 	17	18 Celebrate
19 10:00 am Special Combined Service with Zion Followed by an Ice Cream Social	20 	21 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	22 10:00 am Rescue Mission Cooking-Zion Bruce	23 Shine	24	25 Noon-3:00 pm Zion Strawberry Shortcake Festival at Zion
26 10:00 am Coffee/ Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service	27 4:00 pm Serenity Squares-Zoom 6:30 pm Session Meeting Zion	28 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	29 10:00 am Rescue Mission Cooking-Amy at home and Bruce	30	31 	

August 2026 First Presbyterian Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				Be Kind		1 
2 10:00 am Coffee/ Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service	3 National Watermelon Day	4 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	5	6 6:30 pm Worship & Music (Tentative)	7 10:00 am-Noon Blood Drive at Zion	8
9 10:00 am Coffee/ Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service	10 4:00 pm Serenity Squares-Zoom	11 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	12 	13 5-7 pm Relay for Life Taste of Wine & Beer. Rome Yacht Club	14	15 10:00 am-Noon Nursery School Open House. St John's Lutheran Church E. Chestnut St. Rome
16 10:00 am Coffee/ Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service	17	18 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House Noon Mission Committee at Spressos	19 10:00 am Rescue Mission Cooking-Zion Bruce	20	21 10:00 am-Noon Blood Drive at Zion	22
23 9:30 am Worship Service at a Special Time 10:30 am Zion Worship Service/Picnic	24 4:00 pm Serenity Squares-Zoom 6:30 pm Session Meeting Zion	25 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	26 10:00 am Rescue Mission Cooking-Zion Liz	27 Have Patience	28	29
30 10:00 am Coffee/ Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service	31			