

Pastor's Ponderings



"For you will be His witness to all the world of what you have seen and heard.

And now why do you delay? (Acts 22:15-16a)

The summer faith formation challenge for our congregation was to take Flat Jesus everywhere you went. The hope was that this faith practice not only sparked joy in you, but also drew you closer to the real Savior who gave everything that we may have life and have it abundantly. How did we do? Well, if you've been keeping track on our website firstpresrome.com, you'll see that Flat Jesus has travelled far and wide! You've carried him locally to as far north as Alaska, and as far south as the Bahamas. You've taken him to the beach in Ocean City, MD, horse farms, and shopping. You've brought him to parties, hockey games, kayaking, Pokemo, and disc golfing. You have brought Flat Jesus to all your summer adventures, and it has been a joyous thing to see. How has bringing Flat Jesus everywhere helped you grow in your faith? I'd love to hear your stories!

Now, summer is quickly flying by, and we will soon be entering the season of Autumn. Flat Jesus Adventures culminate on September 6th when we are all back from our summer trips. What happens next? Now that we have practiced taking Flat Jesus with us everywhere, and shared those stories, we are better equipped to share the stories now of how we experience the real Jesus who is with us always. That's what this spiritual exercise was all about. Sharing our faith does not have to be scary or boring. We often wonder where to start, and hopefully, we have learned that we start with the everyday interactions.

Jesus said, "You are witnesses of these things." (Luke 24:48) And the writer of Luke's gospel says, "And now why do you delay?" (Acts 22:16a) We can be just as excited about sharing our real Jesus experiences as we have been about Flat Jesus because everywhere that Flat Jesus went was where the Real Jesus actually went. Jesus is with us even if we don't always acknowledge that or feel His presence. Hopefully, that now has changed. People are waiting to hear our experiences with Jesus. The Church is called to be Jesus' witness, and we can be just as excited about it as we were with the Flat Jesus' stories. In fact, that is a great segway in how to begin our faith conversations.

As we prepare to enter into the season of Autumn or "Fall" let's fall into the practice of continuing to take the Real Jesus everywhere we go and to share or witness that with others. It's how the Church makes disciples and how the Church grows!

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Edwina



Let's Celebrate

September Birthdays

Libby Gleasman	9/2
Rev. Edwina Landry	9/6
Wendy Waters	9/10
Jeff Evans	9/10
Dorothy Houseman	9/11
Abe Huntzinger	9/12
Fenna Tucker	9/14
Jason Tucker	9/17
Evan Griffith	9/20
Linda Hinman	9/22
Mikki Taylor	9/22
Isaiah Sexton	9/22
Jim Kennedy	9/25
Thylia Keoviengsamay	9/26

Anniversaries

Kirk and Linda Hinman	9/14
Dave and Carrie Scaccia	9/17
James and Kerry Furney	9/20
Bob and Julie Denton	9/27



CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE UPDATES

How exciting!!! Did you know that we currently have 953 followers on our Facebook page? Let's see if we can hit 1000. Ask you friends and family to come along and follow us for more exciting posts.

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

HOSPITAL ADMITTANCE

If you or another member one is admitted to the hospital, please note that the hospital no longer contacts Clergy. Please inform Pastor Edwina if anyone enters the hospital so she may visit. Thank you.

Lay Readers

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

September 6	Liz Clough	Communion
September 13	Sue Moses	
September 20	Mary Yates	
September 27	Gail Tucker	



Rainbows of Faith & Hope Team

RELAY FOR LIFE NEWS

The Beer and Wine Tasting was a very fun event. The weather was perfect, there was a large turn out and **\$1,330 was raised** for **The American Cancer Society**. Thank you to everyone who helped make this event a success. Special thanks to David Vickers, Maxine Strong and Debbie Slagel for the lovely reffle baskets. The raffles made almost as much money as the tastings. Also, a thank you to Nancy Schoff for bringing her handmade quilt, just as many tickets were sold for this raffle and the quilt will be raffled off on December 15th.

Again all proceeds will go to **The American Cancer Society**. The event was sponsored by **McCraith and Empire Distributors** who donated the beer and win for the tastings. The **Amodio Catering** was instrumental in setting everything up for this event so a thank you to Tammy and Tony!

The team of **Rainbows of Faith and Hope** continue to strive to "Stomp Out Cancer". A lot of progress has been made to bring better education, early detection, and more intense research to this cause. As we continue the quest to END cancer, the team will continue to raise the necessary funding for **The American Cancer Society**.

Respectfully,
Sue Hanson

QUILT RAFFLE: All Proceeds go to The American Cancer Society for our team-Rainbows of Faith and Hope

Wrap yourself in this cozy and heartfelt quilt



46 X 62 Hand Made Quilted Throw

(Picture does not do this Quilt justice. It is beautiful shades of blues, beiges, browns, white and some red)

\$5 for 1 Ticket \$10 for 3 Tickets

Drawing is December 15, 2026

You will be called when your name is drawn.
All proceeds go to The American Cancer Society



WORSHIP & MUSIC NEWS

While our choirs have been on recess, we have enjoyed a summer of wonderful worship music, provided by choir members and guest musicians. Thanks go out to Tina Toggia, Wesley Tucker, Jason Tucker, Fenna Tucker, Tom McGibbon, John Nethaway, Cailyn Armstrong, Suzie Abreu, Wendy Waters, Candy Evans, Kim Nethaway, Valerie Wood, James Cooper, Holly Buchanan-Wise, Rob Tracy, Helen Tracy, Jim Clough and Bill Thistleton for sharing their musical talents and enhancing our summer worship.

Senior Choir and Joyful Ringers will begin rehearsals on Wed. Sept. 9th. Ringers meet each Wed at 6:15PM and Senior Choir meets at 7PM. Our Youth Tone Chimes will start rehearsing in October.

If you or someone you know would like to join in on the music-making, please contact Kim Nethaway at 315-725-8096.

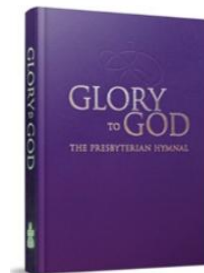
"O come, let us sing to the Lord. Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!" -Psalm 95:1

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

NEW SUPPLEMENTAL HYMNALS-Deadline is November 1,2026

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/bookplate is \$25.00.** This is a wonderful way to honor their legacy. Thank you for your support!

Forms are available on the bulletin board in Clarke Hall.





It's not just for Sundays!

CHILDREN AND YOUTH FAITH FORMATION NEWS

Carrie Scaccia will be leading the Children and Youth Faith Formation activities every Sunday **before worship from 9:30 am to approx. 10:20 am**. Younger children, activities will start at 9:30 am and youth in choir may join in at 9:45 am. A lot of important faith building happens at this time as she brings biblical concepts alive through fun activities based on scripture. The more children we have, the more exciting this class is for everyone. Please bring your children, grandchildren, or invite any children you know to come and spend this brief but meaningful time of faith building on Sunday mornings. **This small seed of faith time will reap a big harvest in their lives for years to come!**

We are in need of another helper for children's activities. Please contact Pastor Edwina if you can help.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION NEWS

Can summer be over so soon? Yikes! **Adult Faith Formation will be starting- and we need you!** The most memorable Adult Faith Formation Forums have been when members shared their interests and hobbies such as photography and poetry, worm-raising, and saving horses, and sharing adventures such as helping disaster victims in Hawaii. Also, some congregational activities and programs would be interesting, like the clothing closet and Crafty Ladies projects. **We invite you to share your talents and adventures-just 30-45 minutes after worship.**

While these are not bible study classes, **we will be tying in scripture to show how we live out our faith** through our talents and the work we do.

Can't think of something? "Card Making," "How a Handbell Rings." Or there's "Why You Should Have Chocolate," "Helping the Bees," Cookies and Diversity." **To volunteer for a specific Sunday, please contact Helen A. at 315-336-6256 or chaucerg2@aol.com**

Our first Adult Faith Forum will be on Sunday, September 20th immediately after worship at 11:30 am or a little earlier. The first topic will focus on our responsibility to protect all creatures. **Martie Talley will be doing a presentation on her recent visit to the Wolf Sanctuary of Central PA.** Wolves have historically and biblically received a bad view. Yet, this is not true and we have a responsibility to protect them.

Genesis 1:26 says, "God spoke:" 'Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, And, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth.'" (The Message Translation) Come and learn about the beauty and intelligence of these beautiful animals.

On **Sunday, September 27th, the Adult Faith Forum presenter will be Tina Toggia who will present us with an overview of how organs work** and even the difference between Zion's organ and the FPC organ. **Psalm 100:1-2** says, "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing." Come and learn about this beautiful instrument from our talented organist who makes a joyful noise every Sunday!

CONFIRMATION NEWS

Confirmation classes resume again on **Sunday, September 20th at 11:45 am** after worship. Students will sit in on the Adult Faith Forum for the first fifteen minutes and then proceed to class until 1:30pm. They only have a few more classes until Confirmation on October 18th! They have been meeting with their mentors monthly and will **meet with mentors on Sunday, 27th** after worship (wherever they wish) to work on a lesson together.

YOUTH GROUP

Stay tuned to see when Youth Group starts up again.

NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

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.

WEEKEND BLESSINGS

This new program of the Mission Committee replaces our work with the national Blessings in a Backpack program and allows us to direct the money and food we receive to serve more children locally in our community. We've recently designed a new flyer to highlight what this program is all about. It includes:

Mission Statement:

Provide nutritious food on weekends to supplement households for 100 children who attend Gansevoort Elementary School (Rome City School District) who are economically disadvantaged.

About Our Program:

The program provides supplemental nutritious food to students who receive free breakfast and lunch throughout the year.

Looking Forward:

We want to double the amount spent on each child, per week from \$1.50 to \$3.00 enabling, us to provide more nutritious food along with more food items. Send 4-5 protein-based items, 1-2 fruit items, 1-2 cereal items and a snack in each child's bag.

Facts of the Program:

- Gansevoort School has an 86% rate of families that are economically disadvantaged and food insecure
- 12% of grades 3-6 scored in proficiency level on the NYS ELA exam
- Only 13% of Gansevoort students are reading at or above grade level.
- Children who do not come to school hungry are more eager and ready to learn along with having better attendance.
- Children that take home food on the weekends feel that they are helping their families and have proud moments when doing so.
- This Program is modeled after Blessings in a Backpack.
- 48% are reading at or above grade level on STAR (Statistics are from Rome City School District 2026)



Thank you for supporting this program with your food and monetary donations. You are improving the lives of children in our community for the better!

Mission News

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)



SPECIAL OFFERING



World Communion Offering Sept. 13-Oct 4, 2026.

This Special Offering (formally known as Peace and Global Witness) supports cultivating reconciliation by supporting racial and gender justice, peacemaking efforts, global witness and nurturing ecumenical and interfaith relations. **These Special Offerings are the single, largest way Presbyterians join together to make a lasting impact in the world. Let's be the Church together.**

MATTHEW 25 PILL BOTTLE DONATION PROGRAM

This ongoing youth-led mission project helps recycle pill bottles to assist first-aid workers all over the world. These much-needed bottles are used to distribute medicine by Red Cross and First Aid workers to those in desperate need of medical care, around the globe. Donate your empty pill bottles – **with the labels removed** – in the bin located on the table in Clark Hall. Thank you for your support.





The Church grows from the gifts and talents of each member and your skills are especially needed in the following areas:



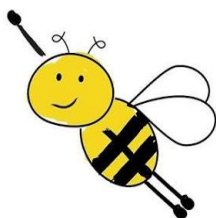
Being helpful is an act of love and your Church family needs the help that you can give. We really need a **Fellowship Coordinator**, which is all about hospitality. Scriptures tell us hospitality is an essential part of being a Christian. People want to feel welcomed. They want to feel they belong and

they want to enjoy themselves. Fellowship is all about these things. Whether it's Sunday Fellowship time, a funeral reception, or even a special Church-wide fun-filled activity – these occasions bring people together and help grow our church.

The **Fellowship Coordinator** calls people and makes sure there are snacks, a person to make coffee, people to set-up and cleanup, and keep track of any supplies we need and inform the office. The Coordinator doesn't need to do all the work- just coordinate it. Please consider being a Fellowship Coordinator and contact Pastor Edwina or the office today! Thank you.

Are you anxious about trying something new? Maybe you're thinking "I don't know if I could do this."

Rescue Mission Cooking Coordinator – FPC cooks for the Rescue Mission the last two Wednesdays of every month (with the exception of December. We don't cook in December, but every Wednesday in January). Liz Clough and Bruce Warcup are the current Cooking Coordinators and they can't do it on their own! **Another Coordinator is really needed!** This person would be in charge of deciding on what to cook, shopping for the ingredients, and contacting helpers to assist that day. (We have a list of people to ask.) Please consider giving this a try; you'll be glad you did! Contact Pastor Edwina or Liz Clough today! Thank you.



Bee brave

Upcoming Events:

October 3rd Saturday at 4:00 pm – All are invited for a short **Blessing of the Animals Service** in Zion's garden area. All pets must be on a leash or in a carrying case. You are invited to bring new pet food or cat litter that will be donated to the Rome Humane Society.



October 4th Sunday at 10:30 am – Every year on the first Sunday of October, churches observe **World Communion Sunday**, celebrating "the oneness of the family of God" as believers from many traditions share in the Lord's Supper together. Come and celebrate this unity together. **World Communion Special Offering due today. Thank you!**

October 10th Saturday from 9am – 3pm & Sunday, October 11th from 11am – 1:00 pm – **Treasure's Sale at Trinity Church** – Come and find some great treasures at this sale.



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.

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!



When we give our pledges and offerings, we declare that our security is not in the wealth of this world, which fades away, but in the eternal kingdom of God. It is the visible way we show our **trust in God** in building up the work of the church.

Do you have skills in talking about money and the ways we can use it to do God's work? We need a **Stewardship Chair to help lead our Stewardship Program in the fall**. Please consider volunteering for this important task so that we can use our money wisely and ensure FPC continues for generations to come. Please contact Pastor Edwina if you are interested.

SNAPSHOT

FINANCIALS 2026 YEAR-TO-DATE



Operating Budget:	July	Actual	Budget	2026 Budget
Receipts	\$ 10,648.00	\$ 176,059.05	\$ 219,734.97	\$ 376,688.48
Expenditures	\$ (24,754.55)	\$ (183,999.44)	\$ (215,608.05)	\$(376,688.48)
Change in Net Assets	(14,106.55)	\$ (7,940.39)	\$ 4,126.92	
July Collections:				
OGHS	\$ 167.00			
Christmas Joy	\$ 167.00			
Restoration Fund	\$ 1,025.00			
July Fund Disbursements				
Restoration Fund-ServPro	\$ 550,000.00			

RESTORATION FUND NEWS

Thanks to many generous contributions from people locally and across the country, we have received **\$387,854** 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.



September 2026 First Presbyterian Church

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House 6:00 pm Faith Formation-Zoom	2	3 6:00 pm Worship & Music-Zion	4	5 Cheese Pizza Day 
6 Flat Jesus Arrives Safely Home 10:00 am Coffee/Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service	7 Labor Day Office is Closed 	8 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	9 6:15 pm Joyful Ringers Rehearsal-Zion 7:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal-Zion	10 6:00 pm Deacons Meeting-Zion	11	12
13 10:00 am Coffee/Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service	14 4:00 pm Serenity Squares-Zoom	15 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House Noon-Mission Meeting Sprezzos	16 6:15 pm Joyful Ringers Rehearsal-Zion 7:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal-Zion	17	18 National Cheeseburger Day 	19
20 9:30 am Children Faith Activities 10:00 am Coffee/Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 11:30 am Adult Faith Formation & Confirmation Classes Resume	21 World Peace Day 	22 First Day of Fall 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House 4:00 pm Stated Meeting of the Presbytery New Hartford	23 10:00 am Rescue Mission Cooking-Home Amy 6:15 pm Joyful Ringers Rehearsal-Zion 7:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal-Zion	24	25 Blood Drive-Zion 10 am-3 pm	26
27 9:30 am Children Faith Activities 10:00 am Coffee/Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 11:30 am Adult Faith Formation & Confirmation Classes Resume	28 4:00 pm Serenity Squares-Zoom 6:30 pm Session Meeting at Zion	29 10:00 am Crafty Ladies at Eunice's House	30 10:00 am Rescue Mission Cooking-Zion Liz 6:15 pm Joyful Ringers Rehearsal-Zion 7:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal-Zion			