

First Presbyterian Church
512 3rd Street SW
Rochester, Minnesota 55902

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FEBRUARY 2021

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How we stay in touch in this time of social distancing

We don't know when we will start scheduling meetings and events again. In the meantime, we'll keep you informed through various options, including:

Sunday bulletins and sermons on our web page. Go to www.FPCRochester.org. In the blue banner, highlight [WORSHIP] and follow >SERMONS or >BULLETINS. Below the option you choose, click on [READ MORE] and then [DOWNLOAD PDF].

Sunday worship. We present Sunday worship with T.J., Jay, and John at 10 a.m. on YouTube and Facebook. The pre-recorded service premieres at 10 a.m. each Sunday. If you miss it, you can view it later via access through our web page.

Prayer requests. Because we pre-record the Sunday service, prayer requests should be e-mailed to either Rev. Parlette (Parlette.TJ@fpcrochester.org) or Rev. Rowland (Rowland.Jay@fpcrochester.org) by Thursday noon.

How do I access the services? The easiest way is through our church's web page:

- 1) Go to www.FPCRochester.org. You may need to click on "First Presbyterian Church—located near Mayo Clinic." Wait until the FPC page loads.
- 2) There should be a red banner that appears across the top of the page. There is sometimes a delay before it loads. Click on the red banner to go to the church's YouTube channel. Available service uploads will appear on your screen. Click on the service you would like to watch.

First Presbyterian Church

512 3rd Street SW / Rochester, MN 55902

507-282-1618 / www.FPCRochester.org / web@FPCRochester.org

Senior Pastor: Rev. T.J. Parlette

Associate Pastor: Rev. Jay P. Rowland

Director of Music: John E. Stender

Coordinator of Youth and Christian Education: Susanna L. Stone

Sunday worship at 10 a.m. on YouTube and Facebook

Education classes: Sunday School One Room Zoom at 9:30 a.m.; also a weekly video with a Bible story is available on YouTube.

Office hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Ring the bell or call the office at 282-1618 for entry into the church.

Member: Presbyterian Church USA



The Good News of First Presbyterian Church for February 2021

Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste. Marie in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, has carved out a distinctive niche for themselves in our culture. Every year they release a list of 10 words (or phrases) that they would like to banish from our national vocabulary. It's no surprise that this year's list is dominated by words associated with the Pandemic.

The top 7 words banished for 2021 are:

- 1) Covid 19, covid, coronavirus and rona – mostly because we're all sick of this pandemic!
- 2) Social Distancing
- 3) We're all in this together.
- 4) In an abundance of caution (and all its various phrasings)
- 5) In these uncertain times (and all related phrasings)
- 6) Pivot – a word that should only be used in a basketball connotation in my opinion.
- 7) Unprecedented – as I've said before, I am looking forward to some "precedented" times.

The other words that round out the top 10 are:

- 8) Karen.
- 9) Sus – a video game term, I guess? I don't get it either.
- 10) I know, right?

I'm sort of embarrassed to admit I've used all these words and phrases a lot this year (with the exception of "sus", of course- I don't play video games), but I am happy to banish them from my vocabulary for 2021!

All of which got me thinking about other words or emotions we might consider banishing from our spiritual lives. My first choice for banishment would be "fear," and all its various cousins. 1st John 4: 18 tells us "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love."

After I wrote that sentence, I googled synonyms for "fear", and I got an interesting list: terror, fright, horror, alarm, panic, agitation, trepidation, dread, anxiety, dismay, despair, unease and nervousness are all considered synonyms for fear.

As 1st John reminds us, "perfect love casts out fear," and I think all of its aforementioned cousins. So at the start of 2021, let us cast out and banish fear in all its forms, because through the love of God, we find hope in all circumstances.

Peace and Blessings be upon all of you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T.J.' with a flourish at the end.

As a follower of Jesus I aspire to the community, that is, the kingdom that Jesus Christ lived and died to reveal. As I write this I'm very upset about the state of our nation and the attack on January 6. Our national "politics" has now crossed the line between serving the public trust and betraying it. I can only wonder when and where this new form of "politics" will strike

next--how many will be injured or killed by it. I write this in mid-January, before the inauguration of our 46th President. And I'm nervous. If there was any doubt that we are a broken sin-soaked people who desperately need the wisdom and mercy of a supremely loving God, I don't know what else could make that any clearer or urgent. How shall we as people of faith, followers of Jesus Christ, respond faithfully to this latest crisis? How shall we know, let alone practice peace, after witnessing the sheer terror unleashed by and ascribed to by our fellow citizens? The moderator of my clergy cohort group, Rev. David Feltman shared a meditation which I hope might offer some guidance worth considering and practicing:

"... (avoid responding to) emotional upset with emotional upset. Try to keep calm in all circumstances. Try not to fight back. *Call on the grace of God* to calm you when you feel like retaliating. *Look to God* for the inner strength to drop ... resentments that drag you down. If you are (so) burdened ... you will lose your inward peace and the spirit of God will be shut out. Try to keep peace within. ***Prayer for the day: I pray that I may do the things that make for peace. I pray that I may have a mission of conciliation. Amen.***" (From *24 Hours A Day*, September 4th. Emphasis mine)

We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. We can practice peace. God will help us when we ask. God will see us through this.

Contact: Rowland.Jay@FPCRochester.org
Phone: (507) 990-1367

Christian Education & Youth Group News

Susanna Stone, Coordinator of Youth
and Christian Education



Though the church building remains closed through February, we are pleased to provide the following Christian Education and Youth Group programming. See below for all the details!

+ Live Zoom Sunday School!

+ **Pre-k through Grade 5:** Join us on Zoom on **Sunday mornings at 9:30 am** virtually for a "One Room Zoom Sunday School." Each week we meet for about 15 minutes and have a "Show and Tell" activity, reading from the Bible, discussion based on the week's Bible reading, and live fellowship with one another. The Zoom link is sent out via email, so if you are not on the Sunday School email list, please let Susanna know.

+ **Middle and High School:** Jean Marvin leads the middle and high school students in their own Zoom Sunday School every **Sunday morning at 9:30 am**. Contact Susanna or Jean for the Zoom link to join in on the fun!

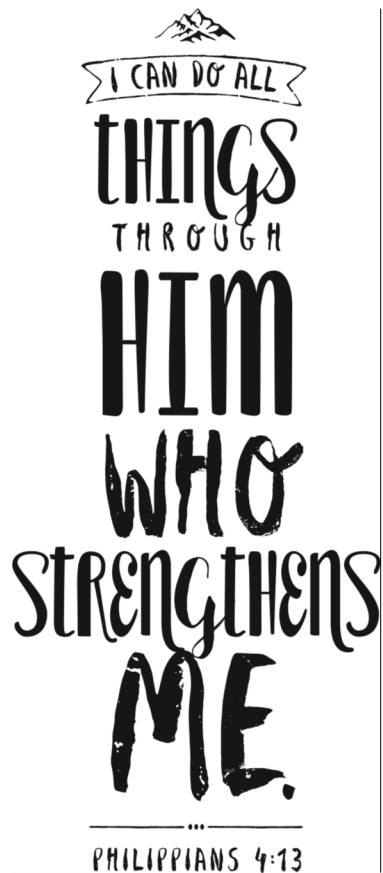
+ **Sunday School video option:** For families who cannot attend the live Zoom Sunday School, short (~5 minute) videos with each week's Bible lesson and discussion questions are being recorded and uploaded to YouTube. Contact Susanna for the link to the videos.

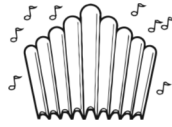
+ **Adult Christian Education:** Al Depman continues to send out a creative, thought-provoking, enjoyable weekly email with a short Bible Study topic (and many funny comics). There is also a weekly Zoom gathering (alternating topics between Bible study and Current Events). Please contact Susanna or Al if you'd like to be added to the email list or join the Zoom meetings.

+ **Youth Group:** The Youth Group (Grades 6-12) has been meeting virtually since mid-November. We spent January locked in fierce virtual games, battles of wit, and a few games of Among Us. To stay up-to-date on Youth Group planning, join the Youth Group email list. Emails are only sent when activities are planned and to communicate any changes/cancellations (expect less than one per week).

Ajay

Susanna





John Stender, Director of Music

Out of practice

That's how I feel! Music has been made, sure, some things have continued reasonably well, sure. But, gee, lately I've been feeling out of practice. And I'm not just talking about time spent on the organ bench. If you're like me, there are many facets of life that have changed drastically (even if it doesn't seem like much has changed). I'm talking about everything- there are so many muscles that haven't been exercised well in so long. When I think about what I used to gain from the coffee hour between church services, I realize how socializing in that way, staying 'up' on what's going on with people—I'm out of practice. Yes, there are different ways to stay in touch and care about people, but you can't replace a real-life coffee hour with a Zoom call. Not the same. Notes, calls, etc. are most valuable, yes! But not the same. Don't get me started on how I feel out of practice when it comes to leading musical rehearsals. There were lots of efforts made in November and December and much music was experienced here in our sanctuary and processed for digital consumption, sure! But, gee, I'm feeling out of practice when it comes to the mechanics of making music in groups. I sit and find myself wondering whether I have lost the ability, or the edge. Maybe I need to read the stacks and stacks of books that have migrated from shelf to desk with different sections earmarked for future relevancy. The list goes on: I'm out of practice when it comes to going about town. I know my four-year-old is out of practice on the subject of "how to behave in public." Before shutdown times, that was a muscle that received regular exercise and frequent gentle nudges. Not just Daniel, but me too—out of practice.

So, not to whine and whine and make you think you need to send the WAAHHHmbulance, I think I've found the way through to other side. Oddly enough, 'practicing' doesn't seem like the answer to feeling out of practice—at least, not directly. Reading seems to be a good answer to feeling out of practice. It exercises thinking muscles wonderfully but it is a very 'filling' pursuit. But in this day and age when you're stuck in your house, you have to make yourself put down the smart-remote (and the wine glass) and pick up the book!

That's just one example—the thing is I think there's a lot of acceptance that I need to focus on. I need to accept (finally) that things are very different, they're staying that way, and they'll probably not ever 'return' to 'normal.' I need to accept that the things that are very different—much of my job has become audio/visual editing and so on. Rather than loathe it: I've been trying to embrace the innovation, learning, and continued tweaks and new methods I discover each week. I believe I'm finally able (now almost a year in) to look at the new reality as something that can produce its own positives and valuable lessons—I'm not trying to compare backwards in time quite as much. Hard to do—takes practice!

But it's not just big things and major learning opportunities. As I look forward to the discipline the Lenten season can offer, it's the simple things, too. Take time to dwell with hymn texts, scripture, and what it means to you. Tell me about it-let's practice being in touch again! Practice what is present.

Ok, I'll give that a try.

First Presbyterian Church celebrates 160th anniversary, recognizes 50+-year members

Carol Evans

The First Presbyterian Church of Rochester was founded on February 17, 1861, by Sheldon Jackson. Since then we have traveled the roads of 160 years. Some of these roads have been rough, some smooth, some straight, some winding, but each one has helped reveal to us the love of God working through our lives.

On February 16 we will honor and say "thank you" to 95 "golden" people who have been members for at least 50 years. Their names have been in our bulletins and newsletters as Sunday School teachers, ushers, choir members, stewardship campaign workers, elders, and deacons. Many of them still appear on the church's doorstep regularly as volunteers.

Our most senior member, Ursula Thedens, was confirmed at First Presbyterian in 1942. Our oldest "golden," Ruth Pexton, joined in 1960. Our youngest "golden," Ruth Seaquist, was confirmed in 1970.

70+ members

Lonnie Martin
Lowell Meyer
Daniel Moore
Marilyn Postier
Donald Scholz
Ursula Thedens

60+ members

Louise Bastron
John Brandrup
Nancy Brandrup
Elaine Davis
Jane Destro
Lynn Ferschweiler
William Haas
Melvin Hicks
Janet Purnell
Ruby Rose
Mary Sheridan
Naomi Spiekerman

Ralph Spiekerman
Jon Thiem
Elmer VanDerHeyden
Mary VanDerHeyden

50+-year members

Gail Baker
George Bayrd
Corene Bernatz
Mary Beyerle
Kay Boege
Titus Evans
Ann Groover
Robert Groover
Mary Jo Harper
Kenneth Iroin
Laura Iroin
Nancy Kreinbring
Ronald Kreinbring
Judy Kruesel
Jacqueline Kruger

James Martin
Robert McClocklin
Susan McClocklin
Peter McConahey
Marilyn McKay
Neil McKay
Patricia Milam
James Miner
Jean Miner
Douglas Nelson
Joyce Nelson
Norman Nelson
Ardith Ottman
Donald Ottman
Robert Pettitt
Ruth Pexton
Mary Ress
Cynthia Sannes
Robert Sannes
Lucy Schmidt

Ruth Seaquist
Shirley Service
Martha Sessler
Frank Sharbrough
Lynda Sharbrough
Roger Shepherd
Carol Smyrk
Charles Smyrk
David Smyrk
Sylvia Swede
Kiyomi Takekawa
Patricia Talen
Marilyn Theismann
Johnson Thistle
Judith Thistle
Jane Tietjen
Dan Tolman
Suzanne Tolman
Donald Wiegert

Congratulations and thank you for your part in shaping our church! You are an inspiration to all of us. When the rest of us have been members for 50 years, may yet newer members look on us as gratefully and appreciatively as we look on you



PTCA Anti-Racism Pilgrimage Update

Allyson Maurer

Last September I decided to participate in the PTCA Anti Racism Pilgrimage. I wanted to do something substantial to learn (or relearn) about systemic racism in our country and what I could do about it.

The study is organized in Cycles:

- ~ **Cycle One** started with *Origins*. We explored the indigenous history of North America with specific emphasis on Minnesota and Wisconsin. We looked at the Ojibwa creation story and the ethic of the honorable harvest. We studied first encounters of indigenous people with Europeans and the spiritual and ethical dimensions of colonization. Our actions for Cycle One included understanding and creating Land Acknowledgements, advocating for the end of the Dakota Access Pipeline 3 or donating to the Little Earth Urban housing community. We were challenged to pick one of these actions.
- ~ **Cycle Two** was called "*Fragile Reign: Colonization, Repression and Resistance*." We learned about the language of treaties and how they were often translated unfairly. We learned about the US~Dakota War and the complicated history of Fort Snelling. We started looking at Black Minnesotans and slavery's social and economic influences in Minnesota, including Christian complicity with racism in the era after emancipation. We also looked at Chinese immigration and racism experienced by Asian people in Minnesota. Actions for Cycle Two included Moral Budget reflections, starting a book study on "*Decolonizing Wealth*" by Edgar Villanueva, or joining a Liberated Wealth giving circle.
- ~ We are now in **Cycle Three**, titled "*Making a Way from No Way: Activism and Advocacy*." We have been studying Fredrick McGhee and other Black activists of the early 20th century. We are learning that early Black and Indigenous activists were also advocating for women's suffrage. Woven into the whole study have been Anti-Racist Spiritual Practices. Each week we contemplate a different spiritual practice and learn how white people and BIPOC experience the practice differently. Examples are Attention & Curiosity, Embodiment, Humility, Courage and Resilience.

I have been humbled and challenged by this pilgrimage. Mostly I realize how much I don't know and don't understand about our history, and I still haven't found a clear path for what to do. But I am glad to be on the journey.

You may have heard ~

Harry Coleman, Facilities Manager

We recently evicted a homeless person from an outside closet on the East side of the building. The building is secure and there is no way anyone could have gained access from the closet. The door had been locked but the catch was broken and there were signs of forced entry. A locksmith installed a new deadbolt lock on the door.

We had a report from the Rochester Police Department that there was a closet or shed used during an assault. Upon investigation, we discovered a different person living in the closet. A trespass order has been filed against the person. The perpetrator of the assault has been arrested.

Classes of 2020 earn "Thanks" for jobs well done

As we look for the first unsung heroes of 2021, some very special people come to mind—the elders, deacons, and other elected officers completing terms of active service in 2020. You were equal to the task of leading the church in a time of unparalleled challenges. Your accomplishments are many and your caring unequalled.

We don't bid you farewell, but we do say "Thanks" for jobs well done. You have enriched our lives by your faithfulness and we hope your lives have grown by the service you have given us. Thank you!

Elders / Class of 2020

Lucinda Clements :Lucinda Cutrer Sarah Edgerton
Gregg Erickson James Sessler

Deacons / Class of 2020

Mary Beyerle Allen Dollerschell Terry Narr
Roger Ring Margie Schaaf Laury Schalau
Shelley Steger

Endowment Committee/ Class of 2020

James Sessler, Lead Elder Tim Smith

Nominating Committee / Class of 2020

Lucinda Cutrer (Lead Elder) Joe Doppler
Katie Lenn, Elder Gabe Perkins, Elder
Shelley Steger Melissa Wobig
Lindsay Zetsche Andrew Thoreson, Deacon

First Presbyterian Church

Financial Statement / December 2020

General Operating Budget

Balance (11/30/2020)	\$53,292.36
Receipts (December 2020)	71,256.13
Disbursements (December 2020)	<u>91,689.45</u>
Balance (12/31/2020)	<u>\$32,859.04</u>



News from Presbyterian Women

Sylvia Swede, Coordinator



How about a winter retreat?

Clearwater Chrysalis is a women's retreat at Presbyterian Clearwater Forest. Retreats are held in the winter and summer. Each year there is a speaker with talks at least once daily, discussion groups around topics ranging from book discussions to cooking; physical activity (from yoga to zumba); and nature walks. Because of the pandemic, this winter's Chrysalis will be virtual on Saturday, February 20, from 9 to 11:30 AM. The theme is "Fruits of the Spirit." There will be work shops related to cooking and a book discussion. Everyone will also have an opportunity to complete a craft. If you have questions or wish to register for the retreat, please contact Jean Abels (abelsjean@gmail.com). There is a \$10 fee for the morning.

World Day of Prayer

First Presbyterian was scheduled to host the 2021 World Day of Prayer this March. Because of the pandemic, this year's ecumenical gathering has been cancelled. Instead, FPC will be the host church on March 4, 2022.

Ruth Circle

Ruth Circle will meet on February 20, 2021, at 10 a.m. via Zoom and discuss Lesson #6 in "Into The light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament."

What We Want

by guest columnist Yuri Hart

From my apex, I am so thankful to write this article. As Valentine's Day approaches, I know many are thinking about how to show love to others. There will be a lot of racing and skipped beats as texts are exchanged and gifts are given. But what's the best gift you can give us hearts, the ones who keep ticking even when other humans try to break us?

- I. Everybody has a hungry heart, as Bruce Springsteen crooned, and we are not hungry for pasta, wine and chocolate. We want salad, salad and salad. Olive oil if you must. Lean healthy protein - although a vegetarian diet is really best for us.
- II. We want to dance with you. And run with you and walk, hike, snow shovel, any kind of aerobic activity. Of course if you haven't exercised us that way for awhile start slow. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.
- III. We want you to take care of us. That means no smoking, limited alcohol, getting to a healthy weight, and controlling your cholesterol and blood pressure. I know that's a long list, so take it one step at a time like we do. We're working for you 24/7.

Can't you do a little for us?

Thanks for taking a beat to read this, I wholeheartedly appreciate it. Make 2021 be the year you focus on the heart of the matter. "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." Proverbs 4:23 NIV We mean that both figuratively and literally- take care of us, and take care who you share your romantic heart with too!

XOXOX, *Yuri Hart*

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Betty Dobyms, who died on January 6.

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Dr. Donald Scholz, who died on January 9.

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Ruth Pexton, who died on January 20.

Grief and Mourning Basics

Nationally recognized grief expert Dr. Alan Wolfelt defines **grief** as whatever you think and feel inside about the death or loss. Any thoughts, emotions, physical symptoms, and even unexpected behaviors you are experiencing because of the death or loss are part of your grief.

Sometimes people think of grief as sadness. Actually, grief is much more than that. Grief is often a combination of feelings such as shock, confusion, anxiety, anger, regret, and sadness. The mixture of feelings can change from minute to minute or from day to day.

Your mind is trying to understand the death. Your body experiences grief as well. You may be behaving differently. Your interactions with others may be out of character. Whatever you are thinking, feeling, or experiencing, as long as you are not hurting yourself or someone else, it's OK. It's all a normal and necessary part of your grief.

Mourning is when you express grief outside of yourself. Mourning is grief inside out. Mourning is showing and doing.

When you cry, you are mourning. When you talk to someone else about the death or loss you are mourning. When you write in a journal, put together a photo display, or write a thank-you note for a casserole you received, you are mourning.

We all naturally grieve when someone we love dies, but it is also essential to mourn. Mourning is how you move toward hope and healing. See www.centerforloss.com for more information from Dr. Wolfelt.

Mayo and Seasons Hospice both offer groups for people who are grieving and mourning. Mayo is offering an 8-week Zoom Adult Grief Support Group on Monday evenings beginning March 1. Registration for this Zoom grief group is required by February 8, 2021. For information and registration, please call Phone 507-284-4002 | 1-800-679-9084 or email

RSTHOSPICEBEREAVEMENT@mayo.edu.

For more information about Seasons grief support groups, please call 507-285-1930 and ask for grief support or visit <https://www.seasonshospice.org/grief-support>.

Valentines Day

WORD SEARCH

C H O C O L A T E G U
E S Y V Y P M B I I U
M N R D W G D U C G D
D Q I E N G W O C E B
F O I T W A L O V E B
W I M P N O C E W D H
C G T R L E L U M I P
H E A R T S I F O P E
X K I S S F N A P U G
E M W O R R A S V C C
D R A C M E Q U I V



FLOWERS
HEARTS
KISS
LOVE
VALENTINE

ARROW
CANDY
CARD
CHOCOLATE
CUPID