

# The Good News

## of First Presbyterian Church for April 2020

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,  
that whoever believes in him shall ... have eternal life.

*(John 3.16 [NIV])*

### A message from Rev. T. J. Parlette:

There is a well-known professor named Gianpiero Petriglieri who works in the field of management who has said something very profound about our times of suffering, such as we are living through right now. He says, "There's some pain that needs a solution, and some pain that needs a story." We are all praying for some sort of a solution to our current crisis: a miracle vaccine perhaps or the perfect pandemic plan maybe. Something that will help get our lives back to normal. We beg God for a solution. But what if God wants to give us a story instead?

I am not for a minute suggesting that God sent this virus on us for a reason. But I am saying that God can use the suffering that we are enduring right now. There are good stories that can come from this seismic shift in our lifestyles. For instance, we now know how to live stream our worship service (and learning something new each week). Plans are coming together to connect to our members in a new and exciting way that I hope to be able to present to you soon. We all have been forced to do church differently. We can't meet and worship together physically right now, but we are finding other ways to live out our faith. That's a good story to tell!

So keep joining us for our live stream on Sunday mornings at 10:00. You can also view the replay on our website. Hope to be able to see you in person again soon!

Peace, *T. J.*

Contact: Parlette.TJ@FPCRochester.org



## Ministry of Music

*John Stender, Director of Music  
Katie Kuisle, Cherub and Calvin Choirs  
Janine Yanisch, First Players*

*The aim and final end of all music should be none other  
than the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul.  
(J. S. Bach)*

The Stender family sends well wishes and prayers for all of you in the FPC community! We have so many people to pray for who have and are dealing with death, illness, recovery, etc. Thank you also for care and thoughtfulness of our soon-to-be-growing family. We hope that life together with new boundaries may provide opportunity for thinking about Sabbath in new ways. In Romans, Paul writes, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

I shared on Facebook that I have struggled with the digitizing of so many things in life. With hope, I am focusing on planning ahead for the time when we can come into the new normal and be on the ground together again. I am also working on a few musical projects which I hope may provide useful ministry for you now.

I'm working on a program focused on memory of loved ones and eternal rest. Our community has recently experienced much loss, pandemic aside. My heart goes out to grieving church family members who are in states of 'postponement' or great difficulty in the circumstance. I'm greatly inspired by Judy Smithson's book on FPC's stained glass and I hope to create a program that aids reflection through these windows; especially, since you haven't been able to enjoy them in person lately.

Lastly, I'm looking forward to sharing some liturgical resources for use at home. Worshipping with intention together as a family apart from Sunday mornings is something our streaming-minded "more is more" culture has somewhat lost. But the early Christian Church grew from the home. Perhaps promoting a "less can be more," Sabbath-minded culture and worshipping more intimately with your immediate family could be one of the most valuable but deeply challenging efforts of this unprecedented time.

*~ John Stender*

Contact: Stender.John@FPCRochester.org

Good News of First Presbyterian Church - 2 - April 2020



**Susanna Stone**  
Coordinator of Youth  
& Christian Education

## Christian Education and Youth Group News

Blessings to all of you during this time of uncertainty and ambiguity. While we are adjusting to our new reality, our intention is to remain connected (albeit virtually) and provide some programming and educational opportunities. To that end, here is what we are currently doing:

### Children's "Sunday School":

- **Bible Storytime:** We will be posting a weekly "Bible Storytime" to the FPC Facebook page and YouTube site, using the week's lesson from the Deep Blue Sunday School curricula.
- **Sunday School Packets:** We can put together packets of Sunday School material to send to you to work on from home. If you are interested in receiving a packet, please let Susanna know!
- **Other resources:** Susanna has a variety of other resources available (coloring pages, devotions, etc.). We will post some of these to our Facebook page, but please contact Susanna if you would like other resources.

### Adult Bible Study:

- In the absence of weekly Wednesday Bible Study, **Al Depman** will be sending out a weekly email with a short Bible Study topic to read and respond to. Please contact Susanna or Al if you'd like to be added to the e-mail list.

### Youth Group:

- **Google Meet, Wednesdays, 5:45-6 p.m.:** Each week, the Youth Group will meet online for 15 minutes to check-in with one other, touch base, and share a quick devotional. The link for these meetings was sent to the Youth Group e-mail list; please contact Susanna if you need the link.

*If you have any ideas for other ways to connect, please contact Susanna. And as always, please get in touch with any needs, questions, or concerns you may have.*

Contact: Stone.Susanna@FPCRochester.org  
AlDepman@aol.com

Good News of First Presbyterian Church - 3 - April 2020

from the FPC Parish Nursing program

## Five verses for a pandemic

The coronavirus has taken over the news, our plans, our communications, and our schedules. As we work in a new reality of social distancing, what does the Bible tell us?

1. "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:9 RSV)



While this is the first pandemic many of us have known, epidemics have flourished from the Plagues of Egypt to the Black Death and the Spanish flu.

2. "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; ... a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing..."

(Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, 5 RSV)

This season of distance and separation too shall pass.

3. "Thus says the Lord of hosts, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy each to his brother, do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor; and let none of you devise evil against his brother in your heart." (Zechariah 7:9-10 RSV)

How easily xenophobia and fear of others flourish in these times. Our natural reaction is to draw away (and certainly it is a time to be careful!) Yet let us not forget those who are most affected in times of sickness and recession - those struggling to make ends meet. May our hands be sanitized and open!

4. "For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence;" (Psalms 91:3 RSV)

Our God is far mightier than any opposition we face, whether human or viral.

5. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." (John 14:27 RSV)

Our anxieties often take over in normal circumstances, much more in this time of trouble and change! Only God's peace can give us calm in the storm. No matter what, He will be with you.

~ Ariel Boswell / FPC Parish Nurse Coordinator

"In normal life we hardly realize how much more we receive than we give, and life cannot be rich without such gratitude. It is so easy to overestimate the importance of our own achievements compared with what we owe to the help of others."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Letters and Papers from Prison)

Good News of First Presbyterian Church - 4 - April 2020



## Greetings from First Players!



Janine Yanisch  
First Players  
Director

As I write this I am about to embark on my first ever remote music lesson! I have a feeling that Zoom will be our good friend in the First Players program:-)

Yes, I am offering lessons to all First Players students (from both bands) via the internet. We are used to improvising in our music making, and that's what we are doing right now as we deal with the present pandemic.

When the church and the schools open up, then First Players will as well. Until then, we'll make the best music we can, whenever we can, however we can.

Peace!

Janine (contact:FPCFirstPlayers@gmail.com)

## Ways you can \$upport the church

Please remember that even though we aren't having services, we still have bills to pay. There are several ways you can help us:

1. Mail your check to the church or bring your check or cash to the church office.
2. Use your own bank's online bill pay to send a payment to the church.
3. Give electronically through Vanco (Giveplus app). Go to the church's WEB page. Scroll to the bottom and click on 'donate' in the left column. You'll get a red button with DONATE on it. Click and you'll get to the donation page. You will have to set up an account with Vanco but after that you can access the donation page through either the WEB page or directly through Vanco (or GivePlus) for current and future donations.
4. Sign up for ACH (automated clearing house similar to electronic funds transfer) from your checking or savings account and have your offering deducted from your checking account each month or quarter and deposited in the church's account. Get a sign up form in the church office or call us or e-mail us and we'll e-mail you a form.

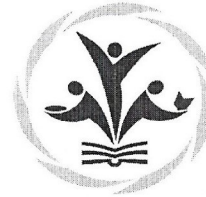
## And another one bites the dust...

When I started at First Presbyterian Church in December of 1997, I was typing checks on the typewriter and entering each transaction by hand in a ledger. In the past 22 ½ years we have moved into the computer generation and I was happy to be a part of that. Unfortunately, all good things must come to an end. I will be retiring the end of September, with very mixed emotions!

I will miss all of you, this has been an amazing place to work. I felt like part of the "family" from day one. But, I am looking forward to having more time for crafts, baking, reading, family and some volunteer work. I will still see you as I won't miss the Cantata, Lessons & Carols and many Festival of Music Concerts.

~ Sue Kruger / Financial Secretary and Office Administrator

Good News of First Presbyterian Church - 5 - April 2020



PRESBYTERIAN  
WOMEN

## News from Presbyterian Women

\* Sylvia Swede, facilitator

Twenty-eight women attended the "Leap of Faith" retreat at the church on February 29. Besides study based on Matthew 25:31-46, yoga, lunch fellowship, and communion, the women completed a service project, putting together kits for the young mothers at the Alternative Learning Center and for their children. Many thanks to the organizers **Ruth Saling, Cindy Kunzman, Elizabeth Remfert, Lea Jennings, Karen Sessler, Carol Shaffer, and Susie McClocklin.**

## Church Family News

### Birth

Congratulations to **Andrew, Nicole, and Brynn Thoreson** and **Calista Younge** on the birth of their daughter and sister, **Willow Grace Thoreson**, March 3.

### Birthdays

Happy Birthday to **Clyde Newton** who will celebrate his 95th birthday April 21.  
Happy Birthday to **Connie Bowen** who will celebrate her 100th birthday April 27.  
Happy Birthday to **Jennie Orvis** who will celebrate her 99th birthday April 21.  
Happy Birthday to **Don Scholz** who will celebrate his 99th birthday April 30.

### Deaths

*Memorial Services for many of these loved ones will be held at later dates.*

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of **Carolyn Burt**, who died February 20.

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of **Margaret (Peg) Harris**, who died February 24 at the age of 109.

We extend our condolences to **Shirley Service** on the death of her husband, **F. John Service**, February 28.

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of **Shirley Gove**, who died February 29 (one day short of her 100th birthday) in Dublin, Ohio.

We extend our condolences to **Kiyomi Takekawa** on the death of her husband, **Thomas Takekawa**, March 6.

We extend our condolences to **Martha, Karen, and James Sessler** on the death of Martha's husband and Karen and Jim's father, **Alan Sessler**, March 18.

Good News of First Presbyterian Church - 6 - April 2020

## How we stay in touch in this time of separation

Missing in this month's Good News is the calendar - because as of Friday, March 13 (how appropriate) everything was canceled due to the COVID-19 crisis. We don't know for how long this will be in effect, but we'll let you know when we start scheduling meetings and events again. In the meantime, we'll keep you informed through various means »

- » **Sunday bulletins and sermons on our web page.** Go to [www.FPCRochester.org](http://www.FPCRochester.org). Below the top banner is 'Worship @ FPC' and below that click on 'Learn More'. That will bring up a choice of sermons (click one and click 'read more') and bulletins (click a date, read more, and download PDF).
- » **Sunday worship.** Since March 15 we have live-streamed an informal Sunday worship service with T.J., Jay, and John at 10 a.m. on YouTube and Facebook. Please note this is a 'closed service' and open only to the participants. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, other members of the congregation are not permitted to attend the actual service. In addition to Sundays, we considering live-streaming a Maundy Thursday (April 9) service at 7 p.m. and a Good Friday (April 10) service at noon.
- » **How do I access the services?** The easiest way is on our church's WEB page:
  1. Go to [www.FPCRochester.org](http://www.FPCRochester.org). Depending on how you access that, you may need to click on 'First Presbyterian Church - located near Mayo Clinic.'
  2. There should be a red banner across the top of the screen. If there is, click on that. If there isn't, scroll down to 'Highlighted Events' and click on the left panel. The link to live stream is under the picture. Click on the link and you should be ready to watch. Until we actually go on the air, the space you get may be blank or something else, so don't panic!
- » **Good News in Brief.** If you aren't now on the GNB e-mailing list, call the church office or send an e-mail to [evans.carol512@gmail.com](mailto:evans.carol512@gmail.com). GNB is a weekly newsletter we e-mail each Wednesday or Thursday. This is an 'opt-in' newsletter - you have to let us know you want to get it.
- » **TextInChurch.** If you're on this app, watch your cellphone/Smartphone for special announcements. To be contacted, text keyword "connect" to 507-200-3175.
- » Anything else we can tell you (other than when things will be back to normal)?

*In these challenging times, supporting one another means more than ever. We'll communicate information as it becomes available. For now, please continue to take care of yourself and look out for one another.*

## Stewardship Alive!

### First Presbyterian Church Financial Statement February 2020

#### General Operating Budget

Balance (2/1/2020)	\$ 101,327.08
Receipts (February)	+ 79,927.85
Disbursements (February)	- 62,155.14
Balance (2/29/20)	\$ 119,089.79



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The Good News is published the first of each month for members and friends of First Presbyterian Church (FPC).

The newsletter tells the story of the church, promotes its programs, and publicizes opportunities to live out one's faith.

Deadline for submission of material is the fifteenth of the preceding month.

#### Church Staff

Pastor	Thomas J. (T.J.) Parlette
Associate Pastor	Jay P. Rowland
Director of Music	John E. Stender
Director of Music Emeritus	Lee J. Afdahl
Coordinator of Youth and Christian Education	Susanna L. Stone
Office Administrator	Susan K. Kruger
Facility Manager	Harry E. Coleman
Custodian	Tyler Sczurek
Part-time music assistants	Katie Kuisle (Calvin and Cherub Choirs) Janine Yanisch (First Players)
Part-time custodians/security	Than Boutelle, Vera Brooks, Sally Evans, Tami Rinn
Child Care Workers	Amy Elliott, Maria Alma Candido, Esther Lebron, Brenda Thorson
Newsletter Editor	Carol J. Evans
Parish Associates	Roger Ring, Carol Shaffer, James Walker

Sunday services of worship at 8:30 and 11 a.m.  
Education classes: Sundays at 9:40 a.m.  
Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.;  
Friday, 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.-noon  
Visit our WEB site at [www.FPCRochester.org](http://www.FPCRochester.org).

**The mission of First Presbyterian Church of Rochester  
is to reflect God's love for all people  
by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**