

## How we stay in touch in this time of social distancing

We don't know how long social distancing will last, but we will let you know when we 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](http://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](mailto:Parlette.TJ@fpcrochester.org)) or Rev. Rowland ([Rowland.Jay@fpcrochester.org](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.FPCRochester.org) / [web@FPCRochester.org](mailto:web@FPCRochester.org)

Head 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: See "Sunday School with Susanna" on our web page.  
Office hours: Mondays & Thursdays, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Call the office at 282-1618 for entry into the church

Member: Presbyterian Church USA



## The Good News of First Presbyterian Church For October 2020

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

Mary Oliver has written a poem called "Mindful" that has a good message for these pandemic days:

*Every day  
I see or hear  
something  
that more or less  
kills me  
with delight,  
that leaves me like  
a needle In the haystack  
of light.*

Parker Palmer reflected on this Mary Oliver poem in one his blogs in 2017, writing,

"This poem carries a reminder that I can use every day: look and listen all the time for whatever it is that will "kill me with delight," that will instruct me in joy and acclamation, that will help me grow wise.

It takes no special talent to look around our world and point out things that are numbing, depressing, or death-dealing. But becoming keenly and consistently aware of what's good, true, and beautiful demands a discipline: we must open our eyes, minds and, hearts, and keep them open.

As we open up, we begin to see beauty everywhere, not only in nature but in human nature. There's a lot of bad news out there, but there's good news as well. Pass the word and help keep hope alive!"

Even though his blog was written 3 years ago, his words could not be more true as we struggle with life disrupted by a virus. I hear a lot about "branding" these days, as in it's good for brand, or I have to do what's right for my brand. I'm never quite sure what this means when I hear it, but it does make me wonder – what is the church's brand? What should we be known for? I think a large part of our "brand" would include **hope**. We are a people of **hope**. And everyday we should be on the look out for something that more or less *kills us delight*. So keep your eyes open!

Peace,

Contact: [Parlette.TJ@FPCRochester.org](mailto:Parlette.TJ@FPCRochester.org)  
Phone: (814) 715-0290

## A message from Rev. Jay Rowland

October is the month when the bright autumn colors reach their peak, then “suddenly” begin to fall from the trees. Then lie about inert. Lining every outdoor surface until they’re raked, scooped, gathered and bagged. Or mulched. Or blown away by brisk October winds to some other place.



Apparently it’s also the month when a certain pastor waxes melancholy and philosophical. Perhaps that’s why I want to share with you now that I am optimistic about the future.

“Say what? Has Jay gone bonkers?” That’s a fair question given everything that’s happened these past six months. I assure you I have all of my faculties--to the extent that I ever had any. I’m “all there”. I’m painfully aware of all the grave realities and situations which continue spinning before us like plates set to spinning by some magician/showman/showwoman who keeps the audience transfixed by this thrilling demonstration of controlled chaos.

I have no proof to back up my optimism. I can only point to fleeting moments when I feel a shimmering in my spirit. I remember feeling that same shimmering many years ago when my life was thrown into flux. I had just moved to Los Angeles which was about as far away from my hometown of Minneapolis as another city ever was. I had lived there only a few months when one day at work there were murmurings that we were all about to be laid off. Before the end of that day. And we were.

It was a shock. It was not something for which I was prepared. In the days and weeks that followed I was scared and concerned and anxious about my immediate future. I wondered if this meant the end of my life in Los Angeles.

Except that there was that inexplicable shimmering, like a whisper, good will come of this. I could not have conjured this myself. It wasn’t anything I could trace to my imagination or a coping mechanism. It was simply there in the center of my body. It was not overpowering or prolific. Just a tiny sparkle. Persistent. Like breathing. Whenever anxiety would rise up like a tidal surge, the tiny sparkle emanated.

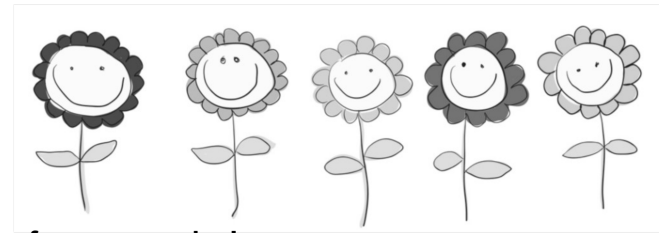
I don’t have space here to explain all that transpired. Suffice it to say that good did indeed come out of that unexpected crisis. I had every reason to doubt. Getting laid-off wasn’t in my plans. But if it had not happened, I don’t know where I’d be today. All I do know is that the years that immediately followed were good years. Very very good.

I’m not saying the current predicaments will all resolve and we’ll all live happily ever after. “Happiness” is not what that barely-detectable sparkle in my spirit was about. All these years later I think it was about joy. The assurance of joy. Joy that couldn’t be suppressed. Joy in the midst of a mind-numbing crisis. Looking back I now see it was a flickering reminder that God was involved.

I suppose that’s why I’m optimistic. I have no doubt that God is involved. This may all get worse before it gets better. But God is involved and I’ve learned to trust God in those larger-than-life- moments when I cannot change what’s happening. That fleeting, inexplicable anticipation that God is bringing good from this even though outward appearances powerfully proclaim otherwise seems foolish. I’m sure many would justifiably respond, “whatever God may be ‘doing’ lately, it sure ain’t enough.”

I won’t argue with that. But I’ve got that strange, uninvited, inexplicable sparkle again. When pangs of anxiety and woe overcome me, it persists; whispering fleeting assurances, joy, Presence. I don’t know how all of this ends. But I’m certain that God is involved. And in spite of all else, that’s Good.

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



### Thank you for your service!

2020 has been an unusual year for all of us. The flowers and grasses were planted as usual. Thank you to Ruth Saling, Bev Lewis, and Terry Narr for helping to maintain them this summer. Several people from Gift of Life House came to sit on our patio and enjoy the peacefulness there, as well as in our columbarium.

*Submitted by Judy Felten*

### First Presbyterian Church Financial Statement / August 2020

Balance (7/31/20)	\$56,992.01
Receipts (August 2020)	73,326.29
Disbursements (August 2020)	<u>66,138.00</u>
Balance (8/31/20)	<u>\$64,181.30</u>



## Music Program

*John Stender, Director of Music*

*Katie Kuisle, Calvin and Cherub Choir director*

*Janine Yanisch, First Players*

Looking ahead to fall festivals is something I would normally anticipate with vigorous planning, research, exploration of new (or new to me) music, and eagerness. As I write this mid-way through September I cannot help but feel like the past six months haven't *really* happened. Because of the great boulder in the 2020 stream, we diverted around other liturgical peaks and valleys in new ways earlier this year. This season of time after Pentecost seems long each year—that is certainly true regarding this calendar cycle. I am most thankful for the liturgical calendar, though, as it helps me to focus my mind and make goals for seeing the glass as 'half-full.' I look forward to special dates like the last Sunday in October when each year we commemorate the anniversary of the Reformation. This year we'll attempt some festivity in worship with guest trumpeter, Jon Ailabouni. Jon was an upper-classmate of mine at Luther (and now teaches adjunct there) and he is deep into the jazz world of our region.

The dual feasts of All Saints' (November 1<sup>st</sup>) and All Souls' (November 2<sup>nd</sup>), even Veterans' Day (November 11<sup>th</sup>), are important as we remember the cloud of witnesses whom we revere and seek both to imitate and to join someday. Music is always rich for days like this, and that will be true again this year. Perhaps we'll look at these feasts in the new reality of loss and hardship that we face as a community.

Then, of course, there's Advent. A deeply moving season which, along with Hallmark movies, leads us toward Jesus in expected and also (hopefully) unpredictable ways. Advent is about longing, waiting, and centering. I suspect we've all learned a lot about these things lately- and I pray that this Advent may be an especially edifying season for us. Preparation for all this has already begun.

There's so much music and musical experience to be planned, re-imagined, and enjoyed in these fall and winter seasons. Christmas may look very different to us in ways perhaps more affecting than our experience of Easter was some months ago. I am looking forward to digging into worship and living in community with you all in thoughtful and necessarily creative ways.

## Christian Education & Youth Group News

*Susanna Stone, Coordinator of Youth  
and Christian Education*



Welcome to fall! Though the church building remains closed through October we are pleased to provide new Christian Education and Youth Group programming. See below for all the details!

**NEW! Live Zoom Sunday School!** Beginning this month, we will be providing Sunday School for ages Pre-k through 5th grade. We will meet on Sunday mornings at 9:30 am virtually on Zoom to provide a "One Room Zoom Sunday School." Each week we will meet for 15-20 minutes and be done in time to watch church at 10 am. We will hear the week's Bible lesson, have live fellowship with one another, complete activities/crafts, and even have music time! If you are interested in Zoom Sunday School and have not yet received the Zoom link, please contact Susanna.

**Sunday School Video option:** If your family is unable to attend the live Zoom Sunday School, each week's Bible lesson and discussion questions will be recorded with the video uploaded to a private YouTube page. Contact Susanna for the link to the videos.

**Sunday School supplies:** In late September, a Sunday School supply pick-up was held for families to drive-by church and pick up supplies to be used with the week's Sunday School lesson. If you did not attend the pick-up and would like Sunday School supplies, please let Susanna know.

**Adult Bible Study:** Al Depman continues to send out a creative, thought-provoking, enjoyable weekly email with a short Bible Study topic (and many funny comics). Please contact Susanna or Al if you'd like to be added to the email list.

### Youth Group:

**NEW! In-person Youth Group:** On Wednesday, October 14 and Wednesday October 28, from 4:15-5:15pm, the FPC Youth Group will be meeting outside at church (as long as it is not raining) for socially distant activities with masks required. These meetings are dependent on good weather and any cancellations will be communicated by 8pm the night before via email, Text in Church, and Facebook. FPC Youth Group is open to ANY student in grades 6-12 and friends/new members are always welcome!

As always, please get in touch with any needs, questions, or concerns you may have.

Susanna





## MISSIONS AND THE PANDEMIC

In March, Presbyterian World Mission gave mission co-workers the choice of returning to the United States or remaining where they were. The majority of the workers we support were evacuated, but four of them remained in their mission fields: Josh Heikkila (Ghana), Dori

Hjalmarson (Honduras), Karla Koll (Costa Rica), and Jim McGill (Niger). \$4000 was sent for the Shared Mission Fund used to relocate/evacuate mission co-workers. Regardless of where they are currently located, all of the co-workers remain engaged in close communication and ministry with their partners. All continue to receive full salary and benefits.

Our partner church in Jaguey Grande has a new pastor, Rev. Leticia Ramos Portieles. We have sent \$1000 to support their Elderly Breakfast Project.

130 years of Presbyterianism in Cuba was celebrated in June. The Synod has 33 churches and 21 missions. In August, churches (except for in Havana) and the seminary at Matanzas have been allowed to reopen. The economic situation continues to be dire: severe shortages continue with long lines for food, hygiene supplies, medicines, and other essentials. Churches provide for their communities however they can. For example, the seminary has been offering clean water and produce from their campus garden and internet access.

June 16 the Cuban Council of Churches issued the following statement: "The present administration of the United States has falsely accused Cuba of restraining religious freedom by placing our country in a list of countries where - according to them - there is no religious freedom. Moreover they have approved 50 million dollars to this end, with the justification that there is a serious situation in Cuba in this matter and paying individuals and groups to articulate such false discourse. All these manifestations and actions completely ignore the reality of the society and of religions in Cuba."

Your mission committee continues to work via e-mail. Thanks for your support.

*Sylvia Swede, Mission Committee*

### We have also supported:

- ◆ Medical Benevolence Foundation
  - ◇ \$2,000 Covid-19 Relief
- ◆ Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Puerto Rico
  - ◇ \$1,000 earthquake relief
  - ◇ \$2,000 Covid-19 relief
- ◆ Bdecan Church, Spirit Lake Nation, North Dakota
  - ◇ \$2,000 food pantry
- ◆ IPRC (Presbyterian) Synod, Cuba
  - ◇ \$1,000 Covid-19 relief

## Take your costumes for a test drive! We're having a virtual Halloween Party!



Join us via Zoom on Friday October 30 at 6:30 pm.

We are still working out the details (and would love to hear YOUR ideas) but we're thinking costume contest, treat and craft demos, and lots of fun and laughter.

Watch for details in the newsletter and bulletin.

Email Allyson Maurer at [allyson227@yahoo.com](mailto:allyson227@yahoo.com) if you plan to attend so we can send you a link.

*~Hosted by Welcoming and Nurturing Committee*

### Put Some Pumpkin Spice in Your Life

Some love it, some don't, but for many people pumpkin spice has become the flavor of fall. Pumpkin spice lattes made with sugary syrup may not be so healthy—but what about the actual spice mixture?



Pumpkin spice is made of cinnamon, cloves, ginger, allspice and nutmeg.

- ◆ Cinnamon helps improve flavor without salt or sugar. Some research suggest cinnamon may help with blood sugar control. However the most common type of cinnamon has coumarin, a chemical that can be toxic in large quantities.
- ◆ Cloves have many antioxidants and provide manganese, great for bone health.
- ◆ Ginger helps with nausea and digestion and can soothe muscle cramps.
- ◆ Allspice (made from dried berries) is also traditionally used for digestion and muscle cramps.
- ◆ Nutmeg (in small doses) has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, among other benefits.
- ◆ Pumpkin itself is packed with Vitamin A, which is great for eye health and immune function. The seeds are rich in protein, fiber, magnesium, and zinc.

Get real pumpkin and real pumpkin spice in your diet this fall. I like to put a can of pumpkin and a little pumpkin spice in my chili! Bon appétit!

*Arial Boswell, Parish Nursing Program*



## News from Presbyterian Women

Sylvia Swede, Coordinator

### ⇒ **\$5,700 for Medical Missions**

Thanks to all the women who contributed to Medical Missions, part of the PW national *Thank Offering*. In 1888, Elisa Clockkey of Ohio urged each woman to give a dollar over and above her usual contribution to the Women's General Missionary Society as a "thank offering to her Lord". The women responded, and the *Thank Offering* was born. The women were credited with saving the worldwide missionary movement of the church at that time. Since 1988, Presbyterian Women have granted more than \$26 million to nearly 1,700 different projects worldwide through this offering.

Thirteen projects in the United States and two international projects were awarded funding this year. More than 40% are related to health ministries. These projects are listed in the July/August issue of HORIZONS magazine on pages 26-29. Each circle has a copy.

### ⇒ **Prayer Shawls to Romania**

FPC's Prayer Shawl Ministry provided prayer shawls and lap robes to the New Opportunities for Romanian Orphan Children (NOROC) ministry in Tulcea, Romania. The weather is very cold and the cement buildings are old. Each year, NOROC youth present a Christmas pageant to older folks living in county government homes and the shawls and lap robes are given as gifts. Older teens also visit those who cannot get out of bed. Carol Schempp, a former member of FPC in the 70's and 80's, is currently serving in Romania.

### ⇒ **Bible Study**

The 2020-2021 Bible study is "Into the Light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament", a very appropriate topic for this time. Copies are available to order by calling (800)533-4371. The cost is \$10 plus shipping.

### ⇒ **Circle News**

Esther Circle will not meet on October 19, 2020. Please keep in touch with each other in your own way and pray for all. *Margie Schaaf and Alice Kerr*

Priscilla Circle plans to meet in person on October 21st in the Social Hall unless we are blessed with nice fall weather on that day.

Ruth Circle does not plan to meet until the church has reopened.



## Church Family News

### *Anniversaries*

Congratulations to these couples who will celebrate 50+ wedding anniversaries in September:

- 10/6 \_\_ William J. and Judy Haas (58)
- 10/12 \_ William and Sharon Nichols (57)
- 10/24 \_ Peter and Carol Carryer (50)

### *Birthdays*

Happy Birthday to **Ruth Guy**, who will celebrate her 96th birthday on October 5.

Happy Birthday to **Charlene Kyle**, who will celebrate her 90th birthday on October 5

Happy Birthday to **Joan Rockwell**, who will celebrate his 94th birthday on October 10.

Happy Birthday to **Jane Destro**, who will celebrate her 93rd birthday on October 11.

Happy Birthday to **Peter Dyck**, who will celebrate his 93rd birthday on October 20.

Happy Birthday to **Patricia Talen**, who will celebrate her 98th birthday on October 29.

### *Deaths*

We extend our condolences to Zoe Abrahamson and her family on the death of Lyle Abrahamson on September 15.

# We will miss you, Sue!

## Sue Kruger is retiring!

Sue Kruger is retiring after twenty+ years at First Presbyterian Church. Everyone is invited to a drive-by retirement party for her on Sunday, October 4 from 1-3 p.m. Please enter the church parking lot from 6th Avenue SW and drive by the Atrium doors. You will exit onto 3rd Street SW.

We are receiving donations for a retirement gift "purse" for Sue. If you would like to contribute, you may send a check to the church with "Sue Kruger" written on the memo line.

Hope to see you there!