

The Good News

of First Presbyterian Church for August 2020

“How awesome is this place!
This is none other than the house of God...”
(Genesis 28.17)

A message from Rev. T. J. Parlette

There is both sad news and good news afoot. As you know, after many years of service to the church as our treasurer, newsletter editor, bulletin preparer and general fountain of institutional memory – **Carol Evans** retired on July 31. While it is sad for us, I hope it is a joyful thing for Carol and T.C. as they will have more time to visit with family and enjoy retired life. While we will miss her, and she cannot truly be replaced, we wish her well. She has been a good and faithful servant of this congregation. Fortunately for us, she is not really going anywhere and will still be available for questions, but we will respect her time and move on in a different way.

We also say farewell and Godspeed to **Jake Wright**, who has been producing our digital services on Sunday morning. We are very thankful that Jake could step in last March and help us livestream our service at first, and then shift us to the pre-recorded service we have seen since April. He puts far more time into this endeavor than most people realize – a total of ten hours a week for recording, editing and uploading the finished project – and we truly appreciate his efforts. He, too, is not really going anywhere, but with the fall fast approaching, Jake needs to prepare for his teaching duties with the University of Minnesota, Rochester. So as we move forward into fall, **John Stender** and I will be taking over the taping and editing responsibilities. We offer our deepest thanks and wish Jake well.

And now for some good news. I am pleased to announce (if you haven't heard already) that **Cindy Kunzman** has agreed to take over as Office Manager when **Sue Kruger** retires the end of September. Cindy started with us on July 20 and is training under both Sue and Carol so she has a thorough understanding of the workings around the office. Cindy feels confident that she can do some of the duties that Carol used to do as treasurer, but not everything. So our challenge over the next couple of months will be to figure out what she can do and what we will need help to cover. It will no doubt be a work in progress, but God will provide.

May God bless you and bring you peace in these interesting days!

T. J.

Contact: Parlette.TJ@FPCRochester.org

A message from Rev. Jay Rowland

Oh, these luxurious days of summer. Swiftly passing, so quietly and gently, as mesmerizing as those lovely white, cotton-ball clouds floating beneath the magnificent, summer-blue sky. As gently as a summer breeze at dusk. It seems like just last week late May was blending into June. The odd stresses of distance learning came to an end – at least for now.

I was riding my bike nearly every day as a form of prayer as well as exercise. Then along came July. As the temperature moved into the 90s my daily bike rides ended. And July just evaporated.

And now it's August. Now summer feels like a blur. Why does this surprise me? It's like this every year. I guess I expected summer to be different this year. The “summer of COVID19” and other major, real-life losses and gains and crises. Frankly, “gravity” feels heavier this summer due to all of the above-mentioned stuff. I just thought I was going to have time to catch my breath – especially my spiritual breath. But the customary, “normal” companions and signposts of summer have been either invisible to me or “on-hold” or just beyond my grasp.

Time is doing strange things to me this summer. This should not surprise me. Summer always does this. Or rather I should say I always do this to summer. Every summer I expect I will have time to slow down and catch my breath. My expectations must have been ramped up even more than usual. I guess I expected summer to slow down until I can process everything that's changed and is changing ... in my family and in life and in the world. Or until I can breathe a bit more deeply of that eternal-feeling summer evening until I feel a bit less anxious about, or at least a bit more at peace with, the ongoing uncertainty.

Because now it's August and I don't feel like I've caught my breath yet. There's still time to breathe deeply of summer's bountiful beauty, and fragrance, and Life. There is always time to breathe. So let's breathe. Breathe with me. Breathe in the Spirit of God that is breathing in you. Breathe deeply with me and all Creation. And remember that God is alive and well. Remember that Jesus is right here where you are right now. Remember that nothing can separate you or me from that Love, nor from one another. I may not ever catch my breath. But I can breathe. Deeply. Breathe with me. Breathe on Me, Breath of God.

Grace and peace to you,

Jay

Contact: Rowland.Jay@FPCRochester.org



Meet our new office manager, Cindy Kunzman as told by Cindy

I have been a longtime member of First Presbyterian Church, joining soon after I moved to Rochester from Indiana in 1995. I started “adulthood” working in the residence halls of Truman State University as a resident assistant; then on to becoming a residence hall director at Manchester University, a private college in North Manchester, Indiana. While at Manchester, I transitioned to the financial aid office where I helped students through the tricky process of funding their college experience.

Since moving to Rochester, I have had a varied career, including seasonal stints in income tax preparation, as the education manager for a nonprofit membership organization, and as office manager and controller for a local service company. Most recently I worked as the processing manager in the mortgage lending department of Foresight Bank out of Plainview.

I grew up on a farm in southeastern Iowa, the youngest of three daughters. Belonging to FPC reminds me of my roots, of the personal and genuine concern we have for each other. I enjoy our comradery, the spirit of friendship and community we exhibit in all we do. I volunteer for community service through the church, be it helping with summer bible school in North Dakota or cooking meals for Family Promise. I also belong to PEO, a philanthropic educational organization dedicated to helping women reach their highest goals. I was lucky a few years ago to play in the world’s largest handbell choir at the Mall of America with several other members of FPC choirs.

In October of 2019, I adopted 2 kittens, Pippin and Poppy, who frequently join me and provide entertainment on Zoom meetings. It has been a whole new exercise in communication figuring out what is the meaning behind each of their different vocalizations. On weekends, you might find me putting together a jigsaw puzzle, playing with beads or papercrafting, or simply relaxing with my family at the lake cabin or on the banks of a pond.

I am excited to join the staff of FPC and look forward to all the different ways I will be able to interact with fellow members and other associates. Thank you for putting your trust in me to serve you in the position of office manager.

Contact: Cindy.Kunzman@FPCRochester.org

“Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.”

(Hebrews 13:1)

How do you witness the face of God?

For one FPC couple, that was living out their faith at Misión Peniel in Immokalee, Florida.

Early in March, early in the pandemic lockdown, **Fabian** and **Nadine Luna** spent a week in Immokalee. While there, Fabian worked on repairing and renovating a trailer. Nadine helped organize donations and prepare personal hygiene bags that later were distributed along with pantry and fresh food items to a weekly average of 480 farmworkers and their families. This was accomplished while observing social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC.

Additionally, the Lunas delivered donations of clothing items collected from our congregation that later were distributed to those same families.

“Misión Peniel” reflects the spirit of the story of Jacob wrestling with God and his experience of seeing God face to face at the place he called “Peniel” (Genesis 32:30). It is the goal of the mission to share this face of God, Peniel, among all with whom they serve and work as all are deserving of compassion, dignity, and love. We applaud Fabian and Nadine for representing this congregation in sharing God’s blessings with the families in Immokalee.

~ excerpted from a “thank you” letter from Misión Peniel

Hygiene bags sent for students at Bdecan church in North Dakota

Presbyterian Women members of our church collected supplies and donated 52 hygiene kits for the children of the Spirit Lake Reservation in North Dakota (near and including the Bdecan Church)! The kits are for children who must attend residential schools, either because they need extra attention at school or because of difficulties in their home situations. Thanks to donations from PW members we had enough funds to ship the hygiene bags so they will be there in time for the start of school.

If the coronavirus situation does not improve and the residential school does not hold classes this fall, the hygiene bags will be distributed to all the children of the Bdecan church and those that use the clothing and food pantry there (people from the immediate area around the church).

Thank you so much to everyone! Amazing generosity!

~ Marylynn Aalderks and the Bdecan VBS team



Christian Education / Youth Group News

Summer is in full swing! We are continuing to provide the following Christian Education and Youth programming. If your family or children need anything else or have any ideas on how we can better serve the families of FPC, please send Susanna an email!

Susanna Stone
Coordinator of Youth
& Christian Education

Children's "Sunday School"

- **Sunday School Storytime:** Check out the FPC YouTube site or FPC Facebook page for each week's "Sunday School Storytime with Susanna." Each week you'll find a different Sunday School lesson, Bible reading, and craft idea aligning with that week's lesson from the Deep Blue Sunday School curricula.

Other resources: Susanna has a variety of other resources available (coloring pages, devotions, etc.). Please contact Susanna if you would like other resources.

Adult Bible Study:

- **Al Depman** continues to send 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:

- **Google Meet Youth Group Meeting:** We are meeting virtually on Google Meets twice in August: August 5 and August 19, from 5-5:30 p.m. Contact Susanna for the link to join us!

As always, please contact me with any needs, questions, or concerns you have.

2020 VBS:

Great Big Beautiful World

you're INVITED!



Join us for VVBS (VIRTUAL Vacation Bible School) 2020 at FPC, **Monday, August 10-Thursday, August 14.**

Our theme this year is **Great Big Beautiful World** and we will be learning all about God's creation, our faith, and how to be good caretakers of our world. Each day videos will be posted with the day's lesson, craft instructions, and music. Participants will also receive craft supplies and a daily handout with extra games, recreation activities, and snack recipes. Children will be able to experience VBS at home; in fact, the whole family can participate in VBS at whatever time and wherever it is most convenient for their schedule.

Registration is required: Please register before **August 6** in order to receive your supplies in time for the beginning of VBS. Visit the FPC website for the link to the registration form. Contact Susanna with any questions.

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

Good News of First Presbyterian Church - 5 - August 2020



Ministry of Music

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

To all First Players ~ Band Camp is a go!

The First Players band program will have its annual week of Band Camp this summer, but in an altered format. And calling it "Band Camp" is a bit of a misnomer, but it's easier than saying "Instrumental Music Experience Week."

Students and their families are eager for social and musical engagement since so many activities have been cancelled. Having band rehearsals with 20 or so students isn't safe at this time, so instead we will be having small group, hour-long sessions each morning during the week of August 24-28. The safety and health of everyone is paramount during the week. We will wear masks except when playing, 6-foot physically distancing will take place, as will disinfecting equipment.

Percussionists will meet from 9:00-10:00; woodwinds from 10:00-11:00, and brass from 11:00-noon. Each section will work on music as an independent chamber group and get the added expertise of a professional sectional coach for three of the days. Yay! On Friday, each group will play for each other and we'll attempt to have an ice cream social or treat of some sort following the performance. We hope the weather will be accommodating and allow us to have our performance outdoors!

It is my hope that by taking all necessary precautions and having Band Camp in this way, First Players students can come together (but not too together) not only to make music once again, but to connect with one another and maintain personal relationships.

Please keep our young musicians and those who work with them in your thoughts and prayers as we embark on this new format of First Players Band Camp. Your support is so appreciated!

Wishing you peace and good health,

Janine

Contact: FPCFirstPlayers@gmail.com

First Presbyterian Church Financial Statement / June 2020

General Operating Budget

Balance (6/1/2020)	\$ 113,921.32
Receipts (June)	+ 36,031.44
Disbursements (June)	- 66,537.17
Balance (6/30/20)	\$ 83,415.59

Good News of First Presbyterian Church - 6 - August 2020

Come ye and rest a while

One way to stay connected to the church in this time of separation is to visit the church columbarium. **Al Dollerschell** of the Columbarium Committee invites members to stop by, sit on a memorial bench and meditate for a moment, enjoy the beautiful gardens, maybe pull a weed, and look at the names of members who "from their labors rest."

Take a moment to ponder the lives and the contributions the members made to the life and history of our congregation. Perhaps one will spark a memory: a favorite Sunday School teacher, a choir member, a pastor, a builder, an usher, or a friend or loved one. Try coming in the evening when the area is shaded and cooler.

For a brief stay, park in the circle drive on the east side of the church. From there the columbarium is easily accessible for wheelchairs or walkers.

~ Al Dollerschell / Columbarium Committee

from the FPC Parish Nursing program

August is National Breastfeeding Month



In the past few decades, public opinion and scientific evidence has swung towards breastfeeding over formula bottle feeding. God has designed mother's milk to provide optimal nutrition, boost baby's immunity to disease, and increase mother-child bonding. Public breastfeeding is still at times a divisive issue.

How people choose to feed baby should never be an opportunity to embarrass or shame others. Here are a few verses relevant to this:

"Judge not, that you be not judged." (Matthew 7:1, RSV)

Whether you, a friend, or loved one chooses to breast or bottle feed, in public or private, with or without a cover - accept and support that decision.

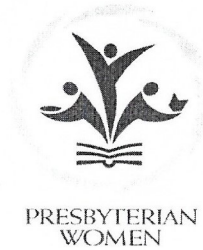
"But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a child quieted at its mother's breast; like a child that is quieted is my soul." (Psalm 131:2, RSV)

Breastfeeding and bottle feeding moms provide calming love to their babies like the calming love we receive from God. We can support new moms by providing calm private places to feed their babies and not embarrassing them or expecting baby to perform or conform.

"Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful." (1 Corinthians 13:4-5, RSV)

However someone feeds their baby, they need help and support. As a breastfeeding mom I leaned on my mom, nurses and experienced friends for help and advice. Bottle-feeding mamas need love and help too as they face the same sleepless nights, endless diapers, and the risk of postpartum depression, and dads need love and support too as they deal with a new "job," supporting their partner, and bonding with the little one.

~ Ariel Boswell / FPC Parish Nurse Coordinator



News from Presbyterian Women

✧ Sylvia Swede, facilitator

FPC members participate in Racial Justice Challenge

Carol Shaffer, Ruth Saling, and I are participating in a Racial Justice Challenge study, sponsored by PW/Synod, via Zoom from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. six designated Mondays from July 29 to August 31. If any FPC member is attending the evening sessions (6:30 to 7:30 p.m.), please let me know. As we strive to create a world that more closely reflects God's love of justice and diversity, it can be helpful to have a shared image to evoke our common hope. Two such images are the Beloved Community (Read 1 John 4:7-8, Ephesians 2:19) and the New Creation (Read Isaiah 65:17-25).

The July 13 session was on Environmental Justice. Some of you might like to look at a short video, "What is Environmental Justice?" You may want to cut and paste the address into your search bar.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dREtUij6_c
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dREtXUij6_c

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has produced an excellent film, "Flint: The Poisoning of an American City," which may be viewed on Amazon Prime.

News about the students PW sponsors

Arly, our **Guatemalan** student, graduated from middle school and has decided not to continue her schooling at the present time. We hope she will rethink this as she gets older. Our students in **Niger** will return to school in October. The NOROC staff in **Romania** have been able to take increasingly more groups on excursions and activities. The NOROC properties and van are back in use nearly every day. NOROC offers safe environments as an alternative to the chaotic life in an institution.

Thank you for your support of these projects.

*Do you know someone who would appreciate a prayer shawl? If so, please contact **Susie McClocklin** (288-7772)*

Contribute to Medical Missions

By now you should have received a Medical Missions letter. If you want to contribute, remember to make your check out to PW and mail it to **Peg Parsons**, PW treasurer, at 2607 Fifth Avenue NW, Rochester 55901.

Prayer Shawl group in August: Yes, August 13 at 1 p.m. in social hall
Card Crafters in August: Probably no. Check with **Mary Huie**.

How we stay in touch in this time of social distancing

We don't know how long social distancing will last, but we'll 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. In the blue banner highlight 'Worship' and below that click on 'sermons' or 'bulletins.' Below the one you want, click on 'read more' and then 'download PDF.'
- » **Sunday worship.** Since March 15 we have presented Sunday worship with T.J., Jay, and John at 10 a.m. on YouTube and Facebook. The pre-recorded service airs at 10 a.m. each Sunday. If you miss it, it will stay on our WEB page and you can watch it later.
- » **Prayer requests.** Because we pre-record the Sunday service, prayer requests should be e-mailed to either Rev. Parlette (814-715-0290) or Rev. Rowland (990-1367) by Thursday noon.
- » **How do I access the services?** The easiest way is on 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 across the top of the screen. If there is, click on it. If there isn't, highlight 'WORSHIP' on the blue banner and click on 'Sunday services.' Now the red banner at the top should pop up. Click on that and then the service should be listed on the left panel. Click on the picture and you should be ready to watch. Until we actually go on the air, the space you get may be blank, so don't panic and please be patient!

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.

First Presbyterian Church
512 3rd Street SW / Rochester, Minnesota 55902
507-282-1618 / www.FPCRochester.org / web@FPCRochester.org

Pastors: Rev. T. J. Parlette, 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 Storytime with Susanna" on our web page.
Office hours: The office is open Mondays and Thursdays.
Call the office (282-1618) when you get to the church and someone will come to the door to help you.
Member Presbyterian Church (USA)

Church Family News

Anniversaries

Congratulations to these couples who will celebrate fiftieth (+) wedding anniversaries in August:

- 8/1: **John and Suzanne Dinusson (50)**
- 8/3: **Charles and Carol Smyrk (69)**
Tony and Judith Smithson (57)
- 8/7: **James and Judith Seward (55)**
- 8/12: **Frank and Lynda Sharbrough (59)**
- 8/18: **Allen and Marcia Dollerschell (58)**
Neil and Marilyn McKay (64)
- 8/25: **Ronald and Nancy MacKenzie (58)**
- 8/27: **Warren and Mary Potter (70)**
John and Ann Mitchell (60)
- 8/29: **H. Bryan and Ingrid Neel (56)**

Birthday

Happy Birthday to **Warren Fay**, who will celebrate his 91st birthday on August 22.

We need your help!



The Stewardship and Finance Committee is working on the Stewardship Drive for 2021. If you have ideas or would be willing to work with the Stewardship Committee, please contact **Sarah Edgerton** (EdgertonSarah@gmail.com) or **Mark Keller** (kellersan@yahoo.com). They'd welcome your help!

The CENTS count!

Since we basically shut down the second week in March, closing many functions of the church and going to on-line worship services, you've been an incredibly generous congregation. Because of that we've been able to pay our bills without having to worry about our resources and we have a decent balance in the checking account. Keep up the good wopek - thanks!

The SENSIBILITY counts too!

Yes, we've had fewer expenses to compensate for less income and for the most part it's balanced out. But we need to be sensible about that! Just because we've had fewer budgeted expenses doesn't mean we should look for nonbudgeted things to spend that reserve on. What we don't spend now will be available in the future. We should have cash flow to meet our needs if we spend carefully.

Thank you for your support through the years. You've been a great congregation to work for and with ... generous in your financial responsibilities, understanding when I make mistakes, and appreciative for what I've done.

Continue to take care of yourself and look out for one another.

Shalom!

~ Carol Evans / *Servant of the Congregation*