



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
34 Brinkerhoff Street
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

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CHURCH FAMILY PICNIC WITH OUTDOOR VESPER SERVICE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7
POINT AU ROCHE STATE PARK
4:00 TO 7:00 P.M.

Bring your lawn Chair, Frisbee, football, etc., and a dish to share.
Drinks and place setting will be provided.
We will end with a service and singing at the chapel.

Come and Welcome our Interim Pastor, Virginia Murray!



pulse

September 2008

First Presbyterian Church
34 Brinkerhoff Street
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518.561.3140

Interim Pastor
Rev. Virginia Murray
Pulse Editor
Jennifer Booth

We are looking forward to the arrival of our Interim Pastor Virginia Murray the first week of September. The Reverend Murray is also eager to meet our members; in corporate worship, as working Councils and Committees, and individually. Communication is very important. Here is note from Virginia:

You may be reading this before I even arrive in Plattsburgh but it is never too early to clarify lines of communication! I was invited to write a note for the newsletter so this seemed like a useful topic.

First of all, I want you to feel free to contact me anytime you have a need or just want to chat. That means that if you need me in the middle of the night or on my day off you call. I want to be available when the need is critical. I do not have home and cell phone numbers yet but I will give them to you as soon as I arrive in September. Customarily I have both phone numbers published in the weekly bulletins and the newsletter so that you always know where to find them.

If you would like to talk to me in person in the office please call ahead and make sure I will be available when you arrive. I don't want you to make a useless trip if I am going to be tied up in a meeting or out of the office. If you are having an emergency please tell Nancy and she will track me down for you. I try to make sure that office staff always know where I am. Cell phones have become a huge blessing in this regard!!

I keep regular office hours from about 8:00 a.m. to closing Monday through Thursday. Friday is my traditional "day off." Saturdays are a day to catch up loose ends. On Sundays I try to arrive at the church no later than 7:00 a.m. and frequently am in by 6:00 a.m. just to make sure all is in order for the worship services. If I can make any other arrangements to facilitate communication just let me know. It is so important that we stay in touch to make our ministry as efficient and effective as possible.

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I (and my dog, "Jasper") are looking forward to meeting you all!

Virginia Murray

Who is Virginia Murray?

Virginia is a graduate of Columbia Theological Seminary with a Certificate of Advanced Studies, and Colgate Rochester Divinity School, with a Masters of Divinity. She began her calling as a PCUSA pastor in E. Bethany NY, from 1991 to 1995. She comes to us from a two year Interim Pastorate in Rock Island, Illinois. Virginia has worked in the North Country in the past, as an Interim Pastor both in Ogdensburg and Potsdam, NY. She looks forward to returning to our region.

With seven years experience in Interim Pastor positions, Virginia is well acquainted with the particular needs of this ministry. Her continuing education training includes two seminars at Princeton University, specifically for Interim Ministry Training. In describing her leadership style, Virginia says her style is "collegial."

"I strive to be open-minded and compassionate--someone who and (and will) lead when needed, but who can also walk side by side with the community of faith." When asked how the theological issues currently facing the church and society shape her ministry, she affirms that churches who surmount the inherent difficulties of working and living together are able to establish vibrant dynamic ministries that are a faithful witness to Christ.

We greet the Rev. Murray as she comes to our church and community. All members are invited to extend a very warm welcome to her on Sunday, September 7, her first Sunday in the pulpit.

We will also be holding a Church Family Picnic on Point Au Roche State Park on that Sunday from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Good Things to Know

- The most useless thing to do.....Worry*
- The greatest joy.....Giving*
- The greatest loss.....Loss of self - respect*
- The most satisfying workHelping others*
- The ugliest personality traitSelfishness*
- The most endangered speciesDedicated leaders*
- The greatest "shot in the arm"Encouragement*
- The greatest problem to overcomeFear*
- Most effective sleeping pillPeace of mind*
- The most crippling failure disease.....Excuses*
- The most powerful force in life.....Love*
- The most dangerous pariah.....A gossip*
- The world's most incredible computer.....The brain*
- The worst thing to be without.....Hope*
- The deadliest weapon.....The tongue*
- The two most power-filled words.....I can*
- The greatest asset.....Faith*
- The most worthless emotion.....Self-pity*
- The most prized possession.....Integrity*
- The most beautiful attire.....A smile*
- The most powerful channel of communicationPrayer*
- The most contagious spirit.....Enthusiasm*
- The most important thing in life.....God*



Youth Activities

Rally Day Invitation

Sunday, September 7th officially kicks off our new church school year! Come meet your teacher, register for church school and enjoy some treats at coffee hour. We look forward to a great year. Friends are always welcome.

Youth Group Organizational Meeting

We will also be having an organizational meeting for youth groups, on Sunday September 7th immediately following the second service. We will be discussing the meeting times and dates for each group to be sure we are still serving the most with our meetings. Additionally we will discuss events that we have in the works and any new ideas you may have. Although we want to keep the meeting brief, feel free to bring something to eat and a parental figure because they know your calendar better than you do. If you can not attend, let Marianne know.

Thank you to everyone who made going camping this summer possible for the youth and youth at heart. Our biggest thank you goes to the Blacks who loaned out lifejackets, paddles, and their beautiful canoe. Molly and Marianne took the Senior High group from Upper Saranac Lake to Follensby Clear Pond and back for a three night trip. Highlights from the trip were star gazing two of the nights from the beach and canoes, singing, stick fishing, games at night, Lucky, and laughing heartily. Matt and Marianne took the younger group to Green Island on Upper Saranac Lake for a two night trip. They learned to paddle a bit, swamp their canoes, and rescue each other. Highlights from the trip were playing games during the day, swamping the boats, the box oven, campfire singing show, Hailey catching a first fish, and Marianne being directionally challenged and everyone else being right. Will they go again? We get a resounding YES!!! Now they want longer trips, better equipment for some, and more marshmallows and cookies for all.

A Word from the Clerk of Session

Dear Members and Friends,

Happy Labor Day! At this time in the life of the First Presbyterian Church, we are ready to welcome the Pastor Virginia Murray to guide and lead us in the months ahead. Looking back at the summer weeks, it's time to recognize all of our members for their participation, leadership and faithful work on behalf of our congregation.

We are blessed with a congregation that takes charge and takes care of a myriad of tasks that contribute to the well being of the community of faith. Some members are visible on Sunday morning, but many others simply do the work behind the scenes. Indeed, the whole body of the First Presbyterian Church has been working in the name of Christ to keep our church active and vibrant in these months awaiting our new Interim Pastor.

Special thanks go to Elder Margaret Searing for her faithful leadership of the Second Service and to our dedicated staff: Marianne Wilson who led the summer youth programs with energy and good cheer, and Nancy Groves helped us to stay the course, with her friendly and efficient presence in the office. In the new fall season, with a new Interim Pastor, we invite all to "Come, labor on, Claim the high calling angels cannot share, To young and old the gospel gladness bear."

Thank you one and all.

Your Clerk of Session, Anne Bailey

Adult Christian Education

The ***Spiritual Classics*** group will start meeting again at 10:40 am following Fellowship time on the 14th of September. We focus on a different writer each week and new participants are always welcome. The weekly readings are 4-5 pages of text by a religious or spiritual writer followed by 2 or 3 discussion questions. Nancy Groves will make 2 or 3 copies of the current selection and these may be picked up in the church office or at the class. Additional books can be ordered for a nominal cost. Our current focus is on the Corporate discipline of Worship.

In order our next readings will be:

21st - G. K. Chesterton, "Enjoying the Floods and Other Disasters"

28th - Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, "At the Wedding of Odette Bucot and Jean Teilhard d'Ery"

Future readings will include: John Wesley and Christina Rossetti. If one or more of these writers pique your interest please join us for a unique series of religious works. With the new worship format you may be able to fit this interesting study group into your spiritual life and our life together. Please join with us on Sunday. Bring your coffee and a friend.

Battle of Plattsburgh Worship Service

Our 4th annual Battle of Plattsburgh 1814 Order of Service will take place on Sunday, September 14, 2008. Because this will be Pastor Murray's second Sunday, we'll be observing it less formally than in the past. Now is the time to dust off those 1814 outfits your packed away last year and get them ready for our abridged Order of Service.

Remember the Tea and Bazaar is coming.....

please be working on your crafts and storing up your items for the white elephant table.

leaks out underneath, the soft tire looks more deflated, and a 5 liter water jug lies squashed to death on the driveway. As the dust settles, the wall looks as if it has been hit by a mortar. (See picture below)

We assess for damage. No one is hurt, no luggage is lost, the brick wall is repairable. The truck struggles out of the rubble and will make it into the repair shop where the "beaters" will mend the tailgate and the mechanics will repair the brakes and tire.

Yes, we really did make it. With God's grace we have safely arrived at our new place of service. This much we can say already—the orphaned and abandoned babies in northern Malawi are being well cared for by a competent and compassionate Malawian Staff.

But they (we) can't do it alone. There is a great need for volunteers (both local and international) to hold, feed, change, and play with the babies. We need a continuous supply of **plastic pants, cloth and disposable diapers, baby wipes, and plastic gloves**. What's more, within the year we must build our own Nursery facility on land we have already purchased. Our landlord will not sell the house we are renting, and Social Services insists that we cannot continue to rent because the possibility of eviction puts the program at risk.

So as you go about God's business in your daily life, we thank you for remembering us here in Malawi, Africa as we go about God's business of caring for His most vulnerable ones. We treasure your prayers. We treasure your concern. And we treasure your support.

Grace & Peace,
Darlene & Paul

P.S. Our desired capacity is 15 infants but we are now stretched to the max with 18.

We need your prayers on a daily basis for the ministry here.

Every child deserves a family!



News from Malawi

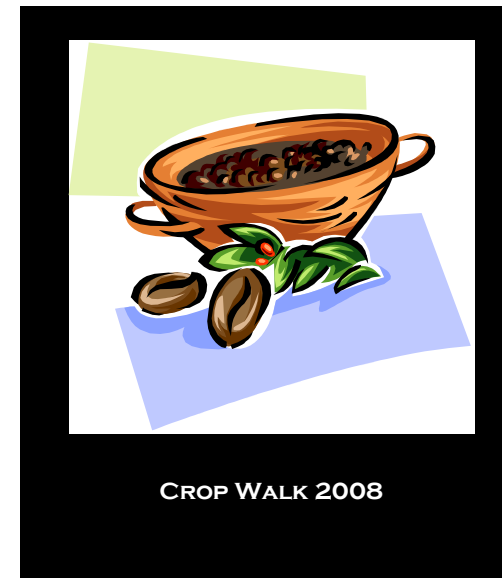
The trip to Africa is a long one. New York City to Johannesburg is 17 hours 50 minutes. From Johannesburg to Lilongwe is another 2½ hour flight. Lines for boarding passes, security checks, luggage weighing, baggage claim, and customs all add to the length of the journey. Once on the ground in Malawi, with our cases loaded on the roof of the Land Cruiser, it is a 5 hour ride to Mzuzu, our final destination.

The road is paved, but narrow, with dogs, goats, ox carts, bicycles and pedestrians scattered along the route. We wind through the enchanting African countryside for hours. There is one stop between Lilongwe and Mzuzu where we get Cokes and yogurt. We brought apples along with us so we call it lunch. There are some "fast food" vendors along the side of the road offering "mick-on-a-stick" (mouse kabobs) but we demure.

Augustine (our driver and the Crisis Nursery Administrative Assistant) suddenly pulls over, saying the brakes feel soft. He adds about a quart of brake fluid, and notices on his way back to the trunk that the tire is soft. He says it had been pulling to the left. Paul & I use this opportunity to get out of the vehicle and go into the bush to "kill a lion." We start out again, black diesel smoke belching out the back. I ask if we will make it. "Oh, we'll make it", he says. I hope he is right.

In another hour we are groaning up the hill to our new house, trunks perched on top and luggage stuffed inside. I can smell hot brake fluid as we struggle the last few feet up the driveway and lumber past the gate of our typically walled Malawi compound.

Luggage is unloaded and trunks are handed down. I feel relieved and grateful. We really did make it! Just then, as the last piece is handed down from the roof, the truck starts to roll backwards down a steep embankment. Screams go up and everyone stands back. Charles (our boss who accompanied us) vaults off the roof, and lunges onto the front seat, as the vehicle picks up momentum. Before he is able to apply the brakes, the truck crashes into the brick wall at the side of the driveway. It is drama in slow motion as bricks and mortar fall and the wall collapses. The truck's tailgate is smashed, hot brake fluid



Crop Walk 2008
Sunday, September 28th

Plattsburgh United
Methodist Church

CROP Walk 2008 will be held on September 28th. The walk will start and end from the Methodist Church. Walkers can get their sponsor sheets from Marianne Wilson. This year the walk is dedicated in honor of Paul and Darlene Heller and their work in the past with the Interfaith Council and the current work in Malawi. We need to be the top group to show our support. Last year we had 25 walkers, 68 donors and collected \$1,394. This year we would like to have 30 walkers with an average of \$50 per walker in donations or \$1,500.



Thanking God in Fellowship

TGIF will be meeting again in September. Plans for this month's meeting were not finalized at the time of the Pulse publication. Please check the bulletin for updates on time and date.