

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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PLATTSBURGH, NY 12901

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



The Pulse

April 2018

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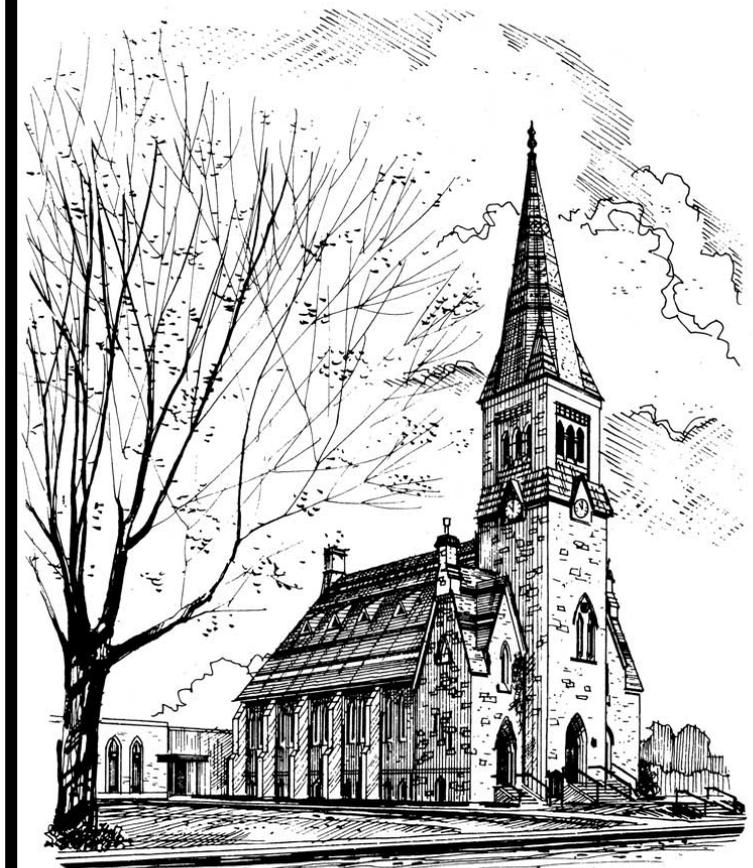
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A Letter From the Pastor | More than Just Survive

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the pivotal event in history for Christians. Everything changed when that stone rolled away, and we learned that life is the victor over death. Because of the resurrection, we have hope beyond what we can see, beyond what we can explain, beyond what we had ever known before. Everything changed.

Perhaps the most dramatic change was what happened to the apostles. In the gospels, we see the apostles as a group who, despite their close proximity to Jesus for three years of His teaching and ministry, continually failed to get the message. They witnessed miracles, and even performed some themselves, yet they squabbled amongst themselves about which one was the greatest. They asked Jesus to give them positions of privilege. They tried to keep the needy away from Jesus. They even wanted to keep children away. Failing that, they thought maybe they could keep Jesus safely tucked away on a mountaintop. Despite pledging their loyalty and even their willingness to die for Jesus, they abandoned Him when He was arrested. After Jesus' death, we see the apostles are either lost and unsure of what to do with themselves, or locked away in a room together out of fear.

We are fortunate that none of us will face such dire consequences in our lives. Nevertheless, we are faced with a question similar to what the apostles faced after the death of Jesus: "Where will we go from here?"

It's no surprise that the Christian church in America is facing a time of turmoil and change. The denominations which used to be referred to as "mainline" have been pushed to the sideline of American life and culture. There are questions and fears about the church's very survival, and no one knows what the answers are. Even conservative churches and megachurches, which initially seemed to withstand the declines seen in the mainline denominations, are now facing similar patterns.

The Session has been wrestling with these realities. We have committed to seeking for specific ways to respond to our particular situation. What is God calling us to do? What are the unique gifts and abilities we have to offer in and through this place? How can we continue to be faithful to the mission of Jesus Christ?

If you were hoping that I had brought the solution with me in a suitcase, just waiting for the right moment to spring it on you... well, unfortunately, I have to disappoint you. I don't know the answer. However, I do know some things that I believe will help.

I think it's important to remember that we are not called to survive. What I mean by that is simple: when the apostles were concerned about their survival, they locked themselves away, out of fear. They tried to protect themselves after Jesus' death because they were afraid. They just wanted to live. It's a natural reaction, of course. Self-preservation is a powerful motivator. But it's not what they were called to do. They were called to go out, to spread the good news through their lives, and, if necessary, through their deaths. It was risky. It was uncertain. It was uncomfortable.

Submissions? Questions? Contacts?

Have some information you'd like to share, questions you'd like answered, or comments you feel would improve our newsletter? Please feel free to email the editor, Amber Baker, for both online and print versions: pulse@presbyplatt.org.

April 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Easter Sunday Worship 10:00 am	2 Church office Closed	3 Personnel Meeting 6:00 pm	4 Bible Study 10:00 am Community Meal 4:00 pm	5 * ‡	6 Church Office Closed	7
8 Worship 10:00am Coffee Fellowship 11:00 am 3cents a meal	9 Deacons meeting 5:00 pm	10 * Interfaith Council meet- ing noon- Seventh day Adventist Church	11† Bible Study 10:00 am Nurture Coun- cil 5:00 pm	12 ‡ * Choir 7:00pm	13 Church Office Closed Panti Project FH 10:00-3:00	14
15 Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 11:00am	16 Deacons meeting 6:00 pm	17 * Interfaith Council Meet- ing noon New Jerusa- lem Baptist Church Local Mission 10:00 pm	18 † Bible Study 10:00 am Financial Meeting 6:00 PM Session Meet- ing 6:00 pm	19 ‡ * Choir 7:00pm	20 Church Office Closed	21
22 Church School 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 11:00am	23	24 * Finance meet- ing 5,30 pm	25 † Bible Study 10:00 am	26 ‡ * Choir 7:00pm	27 Church Office Closed	28
29 Worship 10:00 am 11:00 am 5 th Sunday Luncheon	30					

What motivates us cannot simply be a desire to survive, to increase our membership or attendance numbers. Those are not goals, those are (possible) side effects of faithfulness to the calling of God.

In 1 Corinthians 3, the Apostle Paul wrote:

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labour of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

The only thing we can control is our willingness to be faithful. We must plant and water. We must do our best to build upon that which has been given to us by those who went before us. How will we do that? Where will we go from here? Those are the questions the Session will continue to wrestle with, and we hope that you will too.

Presbyterian pastor and writer Frederick Buechner wrote: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

Seeking out that place is how we can be faithful as a downtown church in Plattsburgh in 2018 and beyond. Please pray that God will reveal that place to us, and feel free to offer your ideas and suggestions to me or any other member of Session. We firmly believe that God has still more and greater things for us. We believe that, despite the fears, doubts, and uncertainties which may surround us, God remains faithful and trustworthy to those who seek to find and follow.

May God continue to bless and guide us in all that we do.

Faithfully,

Your Pastor,

Tim

Session News

Session met in a Special Meeting on March 1, 2018 and in a regular Stated Meeting on March 21, 2018. The next regular meeting of Session will be Wednesday, April 18, 2018. In addition to receiving reports from the various organizations of the church and approving activities that have already occurred or are written up elsewhere in the PULSE, Session:

- At the Special Meeting approved Possible Productions, which is involved in the filming of Ben Stiller and Showtime's "Escape from Dannemora," using Fellowship Hall on Monday, March 5, 2018 as a holding area and lunch area for those involved in the filming, which was taking place downtown that day. Possible Productions compensated the church \$500 for use of the space.
- Began a discussion of developing an overall coordinated ministry strategy for the church as we go forward, noting that there is a significant opportunity for a downtown-focused ministry, and committed to following up on the discussion.
- Approved participating in a joint Vacation Bible School for children with the Lutheran and Methodist churches Monday, August 6th through Thursday, August 9th, 5:30pm to 7:30pm, at the Methodist Church, utilizing the Cokesbury curriculum "The Raging River Rampage." (Parents of children, note these dates on your calendars. Older youth and adults, note that volunteers will be needed to help staff it.)
- Approved a Buildings and Grounds Spring Clean-up day for Saturday, May 12th from 9am to noon. (If you will not be available that day and would like to help, talk to a member of the Buildings and Grounds Council.)
- Learned that Ace Electric is going to rewire the outside light fixture over the red front doors to the Sanctuary, thus preserving the fixture
- Learned that after the March 4th Beartown family fun evening event was cancelled due to lack of snow. The March 18th evening event of family fun bowling that was planned to make up for that cancellation was a success, with more than thirty folks participating.
- Approved giving the Finance Committee authority to independently affect some investment portfolio changes within an account under specific circumstances, and authorized the establishment of an American Funds Money Market Account.

Judy Bunnell

Clerk of Session

Babysitting - Available on Sundays

Reminder to all that babysitters are available during Sunday church school and worship time. Please let everybody know that babysitters are available from 9:00 am until approximately 11:00 am. Children are welcome to stay in the nursery area during church school time or worship service or both!

Please stop by and say "hello" to our babysitters, Pema Dolkar and Kendra Wright. They will be happy to meet you! Welcome and thanks also to our substitute sitters, Sally Blow and Kelsey Hanrahan. We are thankful to have such wonderful babysitters!

Pot-Luck - Sunday, April 29th

Sunday, April 29th will be a Pot-Luck Luncheon following worship service, in lieu of coffee hour. The Hospitality Crew and Board of Deacons welcome you to meet your Deacon. Please bring a dish to share! If you can, come early to help set-up tables and chairs.

Each Deacon has a family list posted on the communication board in Fellowship Hall. This is a wonderful time to visit with friends and make new ones! Join in the fun whether or not you remember or have time to bring a dish!



Fellowship Time

Please consider hosting coffee hour immediately following worship. This is a good way to spend time with a friend or make a new one! Everything needed is in the kitchen. Just bring one quart of half & half on Sunday morning.

Please sign-up on the clipboard hanging on the communications board in fellowship hall or call the church office at 518-561-3140. For additional information or questions, call Linda Voss at 518-563-3057 or Karen Merrill at 518-563-3285.

Check the dates below to see what Sunday may work for you.

April 8 — _____

April 15 — _____

April 22 — _____

April 29 — POT LUCK BRUNCH! Meet Your Deacon Day

Thank you to all who assist with coffee hour from the Hospitality Crew!

April Birthdays

8 April Celeste D'Avignon-Krieg

9 April Beatric Carrick

14 April Hailey Moore

19 April Alan Walker

20 April Lydia Bailey

21 April John Cantwell

22 April Zoe Porter

23 April Steven Bailey

23 April Laren Merrill

23 April jennifer Phillips

25 April Keith Porter

27 April Nancy Collin

28 April Ruth Hollis

30 April Kathleen Cantwell

30 April David Carpenter



From the Deacon's Bench

At our March meeting, the Deacons shared family joys, concerns, and needs, as they do regularly. It is a great joy to help our members, but it is also a concern when we do not know of a situation where we could offer support. When calls are made to tell us of needs, we share that information in confidence with the pastor. All are encouraged to call Pastor Tim Luoma or the Moderator of the Deacons, Anne Bailey, to assist us in reaching out to members. Ed Washburn maintains a prayer tree, where concerns are uplifted amongst those who wish to join. Call the church office to become part of the prayer tree.

New Deacon family lists are now posted in the Fellowship Hall, thanks to Ed Washburn. Do you know your Deacon? Be sure to set aside Sunday, April 29, and stay for the fifth Sunday luncheon after the service. It's a perfect time to sit with your Deacon and enjoy good food and fellowship. We are delighted to celebrate two Baptisms this month. Baby Briget Carey's Baptism is on March 18, and we congratulate her parents Kelley and Ryan. The Deacons traditionally gift infants a cradle cross at their Baptism. Keryn and Rick Rafferty present their children Kolton Thomas and Morgan Joy for Baptism on April 15.

Every Deacons' meeting ends with this simple prayer, also known as the Mizpah Benediction, "May the Lord watch between me and thee, while we are absent, one from another." We extend this blessing to every member in the church, whether we are absent from each other for a day, a week, or a whole season. A happy and healthy spring to all from the Deacons.

Anne Baily

Local Mission

Community Meal

In March our guests were treated to tasty homemade Broccoli Quiche, salad, bread and dessert. The next scheduled meals at Trinity Episcopal Church will be on Wednesdays April 4 and May 2. If you would like to help please call Judy Bunnell at 518-561-8011

Interfaith Food Shelf

The Interfaith Food Shelf continues to be busy and we welcome new clients every day, offering them selections from the Clinton County Health Department's "foods to encourage" with emphasis on foods containing lower salt, fat and sugar. When donating food, please check the expiration date. The Clinton County Cooperative Extension on a monthly basis offers healthy samples and recipes for our clients to try.

FYI In 2017 33% of household members served were under 18 years of age.

Grateful Fed

A “Grate” time was had by all attending. In addition to our “Afternoon Tea” basket you also donated over \$100 to the Food Shelf. Thank you!

Personal Care Items

Thank you for bringing regular size toothpaste, soap, deodorant, shampoo and other personal care items for people in need who come to the church office. These items are not available at the Interfaith Food Shelf.

Community Garden

Our application for Plot # 53 at the Plattsburgh Community Garden has been sent. Now may the snow melt and the soil warm up! As always we will welcome new helpers.

Nancy Olson

Local Mission Council, Chair

A Malawi Mission Sewing Project

The Panti Plus Project

A surprising number of girls in impoverished countries do not have access to underwear. UNICEF reports: "In countries where menstrual hygiene is taboo, girls are typically absent 20% of the school year, jeopardizing their education ". Even if disposable pads with adhesive, or cloth pads with snaps are available, they cannot use them because they do not have underwear. Lack of underwear also makes a girl feel vulnerable to the very real risk of rape.

The Panti Plus design provides women and girls in impoverished countries with underwear and sustainable, washable feminine hygiene products. These products are provided to orphanage school girls, improving their education by reducing the number of classes missed each month. Each packet lasts about 3 years. The packets are inexpensive to make and easy to sew.

If you are interested in learning how to make these packets, you are invited to an upcoming instructional session. You are welcome to bring a friend(s). Bring your sewing machine if you are able.

In Plattsburgh at First Presbyterian Church, Friday April 13th , 10:00am to 3pm in Fellowship Hall. Contact person is Joy Mazur 518-561-3875.

In Peru at the Peru Community Church, Saturday April 14th , 10:00am to 3:00pm in the Fellowship Center. Contact person is Carol Gallagher 518-643-9551

Please bring your lunch. Coffee, tea, and dessert will be provided.

Vacation Bible School

SAVE THE DATES! This summer we will be co-hosting an ecumenical Vacation Bible School in cooperation with the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer and the Plattsburgh United Methodist Church. The dates are August 6th-9th, from 5:30-7:30pm More information will follow, but mark your calendar today!

Nurture Council

The Nurture Council met recently to discuss the new Sunday schedule. Our CE plan for the young families is offering a multi-age class on the 4th Sunday of every month, with no classes on the other Sundays. Brenda Phillips has stepped up to help with the younger group, and the hour will be divided into various activities. The first multi-age CE time was on March 25, Palm Sunday, with pretzel making, a skit, and music. One Great Hour of Sharing "fish boxes" were available to children for a Lenten offering.

Victoria Duley offered to organize an Easter Egg hunt on the West lawn for Easter Sunday, during the Fellowship time. The next family CE hour is scheduled for Sunday, April 22, with an Earth Day theme. The Communicants Class and the Adult Class will continue to meet weekly at the 9 AM hour.

Families enjoyed a fun evening of bowling Sunday, March 18, at 6 PM. Following the very successful Fat Friday night of games and entertainment in early February, the Council would like to continue supporting family evenings. Sunday evening, April 15, was mentioned as another possibility for a family evening of fellowship and games, but nothing firm was planned.

We learned that there will be a Vacation Bible School from August 6 to August 9, from 5:30 to 7:30 PM, at the United Methodist Church in Plattsburgh. Our church, the Methodist Church, and the Lutheran Church are joining forces to plan the program and staff it. We see more young families with babies and toddlers in church this late winter and spring, and we hope to extend our support to them. The next Nurture Council meeting is on Wednesday, April 11, at 5 PM.

Feminine Connection

Presbyterian Women is inviting the ladies of our congregation to join up in their activities. Wishing you had a group to go to in fellowship while knitting up your latest project? Or maybe you've been admiring all the tasty food exhibited at the Tea and Bazaar for years, and you'd love to get closer to the people who make such yummy food? Or maybe you want to reach out into the community?

Well then, now is the time to join! Meetings are generally held on Thursdays at members' homes. Contact Presbyterian Women for more details.