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Good News

First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca

315 N. Cayuga Street • Ithaca, NY, 14850 • 607-272-2800 • Rev. Kirianne Weaver, Senior Pastor • Rev. Cynthia A. Weaver, Pastoral Supply

Need to Submit an Article? Please send it to the office: church.fpci@gmail.com by the due date. We print and mail the Good News on a monthly basis. Email subscriptions also available.

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Worship Schedule: May 2024

May 5, 10am: Communion

The Easter season continues as spring rises up around us. The Deacons will meet following Adult Education.

May 19, 10am: Pentecost Sunday!

Join us for the Wind and Flame Banner, and a celebration of the Holy Spirit among us! Pentecost is a great day to wear RED as the liturgical color red comes to rest on our communion table and pulpit!

May 12, 10am: Special Music Sunday!

This year's theme is water—a Biblical theme that runs from the beginning of Genesis through the end of Revelation! We are also planning a baptism for that day, and hope you can join us!

May 26, 10am: The First Sunday after Pentecost.

It's Memorial Day weekend, but the church will be full of music and joy—and two baptisms, as well!

May 13: Kendal Communion.

Conference Room C, 3pm.

Dear friends,

I have found myself thinking, recently, about the importance of having the best material as we build. I am using “build” in a very broad way, as it seems to me to be applicable to many more abstract efforts we face: building a career, building a family, building a set of values. In all of these, we do best when we start with good material: maybe not the flashiest stuff, or the most eye-catching, but the material that will brave time and the weather, come what may.

If you really want to read about why I've been thinking about material science, you can jump straight ahead to page 8 and read about it there. But the meaning of this contemplation to me deserves a page of its own.

I was not a good builder as a child. In the same way as I loved sugar (not a good fuel for building a strong body), I also liked to make intricate castles out of cut paper, which of course all yellowed with age and fell apart. I remember one summer when our Vermont house was being constructed and my parents challenged my brother and me to build bookshelves. I came back a day later with a variety of bits of discarded wood which, I showed our parents proudly, would look rather nice set side by side on an imaginary bookshelf. My brother then set before us a simple but sturdy cube with two shelves, which we still used for books decades later. He was two years older, in my defense.

It's the same with faith. Sometimes Christians can approach faith as a decoration—something

Found Within:

- Elders Matching Game! - page 5
- Deacons Student Awards - page 6
- FPCI Supporting Refugees - page 7

that is aesthetically beautiful but unconsidered, or a label that adorns us with a kind of sheen of goodness. There are those who treat faith like a sugar rush: they may have strong spiritual feelings at times, or even pray hard in a moment of fear, but never do the slow, steady work of building up faith in an everyday kind of way. This sort of faith is full of air, like Wonderbread or cotton candy—a castle made of paper, without strength or stamina.

The faith of a worshiping church, which gathers on a schedule and does not neglect learning, singing, and prayer, is a faith that is well-built. It is the kind of faith that we can depend on in life, the kind of faith that stays with us in trouble. When it is tended with our time, its roots grow deep within our hearts, and we may find ourselves remembering it at the most miraculous moments: a prayer we know returns to us, or a hymn we love appears in our thoughts and reminds us to hope. It is the work of the wise, this well-built faith.

Ah, the world is exciting, and there are so many things to do at any given moment! But I entreat you: stay the course, and don't fall away from building well. The day will come when our virtues will be put to the test, and then, your sturdy heart will be glad, and ready.

Be well, pray often, and do it all with love.

From Pastor Cindy

Dear Friends,

Each year the arrival of gardening season brings with it for me a reminder of the first two verses of John 15 which are, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.” As a child this concerned me. It wasn’t the bearing fruit that worried me, but the anticipated pruning. With the help of Sunday School teachers I came to understand this, however correctly or not, to mean that I should work on changing or pruning some of my less-than-ideal behaviors – perhaps sharing my toys more readily with my siblings, etc.

What I didn’t realize at the time was that I was also worried about what the promised new growth would be like. I thought it was up to me to make sure it was far better than what had been pruned. Fortunately, at some point, it dawned on me that this was a pressure I didn’t need to apply to myself as fully as I had been. Curbing and pruning our bad habits, whether in thought or deed, is important work for us, and prayer is probably the most helpful tool to use. We confess our sins and are forgiven. We are free to begin again, and even though this good news is not new news to us, it is often forgotten news.

Once some pruning has been done, it can be hard for us to allow the new growth to follow its own design. We tend to think we need to control it and plan a rigid schedule for the pattern of our self-improved new growth. I contend this means we may miss a chance to branch out in new directions led by the Holy Spirit and risk regrowing what has just been pruned. So, I’d like to suggest that the next time we offer a prayer of pruning, we also ask to be open to letting the Holy Spirit guide our new growth in ways we cannot begin to imagine.

May your new growth be fruitful,

Church Garden Plot

We decided to try something new, and get a church garden plot at Ithaca Community Gardens! Ithaca Community Gardens is located North of route 13, between B&W warehouse and the new Guthrie Medical building. They have recently expanded and created new plots, and one of them is ours to grow!

We have some people who have already expressed their interest, and we are gearing up now. We don’t have firm plans, but here are some things that it could be fun to think about:

- Growing vegetables and fresh herbs to take home for volunteers, and also to offer for free at Fellowship Time;
- Growing some flowers which we could use in church services over the summer;
- Creating signs about Jesus’ parables about growing—some of my favorite passages in the Bible!
- Bringing veggie dishes to our summertime Wednesday Night Picnics, from the church garden to church fellowship.
- Expanding our commitment to taking care of the earth by reducing food packaging and shipping—and avoiding commercial chemicals—by growing food organically, right here.
- Creating community by working together!

We’ll have fun this summer growing veggies and flowers together, and we invite you to join us! Please contact Kirianne to learn more and to get involved: kirianne.fpci@gmail.com—and thank you!



Announcements and Reminders

Church Picnic: June 2!

Plan to stay after church on Sunday, June 2, for the Church Picnic in Dewitt Park! Bring a dish to pass if you would like to—and most importantly, come and join the fellowship and fun!

The Church Picnic is the start of our church summer, but soon to follow are the Wednesday Night Picnics our church loves! If you would like to host a Wednesday Night Picnic, talk to Marilyn Ewing who organizes the dates for us – and like the picnic, mostly we want to see you there with us all!

The Service Auction is Coming!

Find a service auction card online or at Sunday worship and be sure to turn them in by Sunday, May 26.

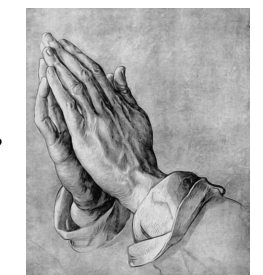
ANNOUNCEMENT: The service auction will be transitioning to a bi-annual event. That means that after this year, our next service auction will be held in June of 2026. So be sure that you submit your service auction cards. The catalogue of service auction items and services will be available on June 2 at the church picnic.

The Service Auction will be held after church on June 9.

We hold in our daily prayer:

David Brown; Elmer Ewing; Carolyn Grulich; Tom Hurst; Betsy Mann; Mark Radice; Vivian and Jim Russell; Marj Smart; Bob Stull;

and Tinny Oey, back at Cayuga Rehab; Stella and her family, following the death after a sudden heart attack of her nephew, Ken; and Nohemy Hernández, mother of Patricia Trujillo, who has stage 1 stomach cancer.



Birthdays in May

- 9 – Eh Tha Yooi Lee
- 18 – Phil Courtney
- 28 – James Russell
- 30 – Hannah Kohut
- 31 – Joy Mecenas

...We would love to add your birthday and/or your anniversary. If it’s not here, please email the office at church.fpci@gmail.com and we will be happy to add it!

Bulletin QR Code!

The church bulletin is now accessible by QR code when you enter the church. If you want to save paper, scan it and follow along! For online worshippers, here it is:



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5:30 am - Nursery available 9:30 am - Nursery available 10:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School 11:15 am - Youth Group and Youth Choir 11:30 am - Adult Education 12:30 pm - Deacons		7 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds Hall) 7 pm - Irish Music (Rm 307)	8 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am - Al-Anon (Fireside) 6-7 pm - YMSS Committee (Zoom) 7 pm - FL Pipe Band	2 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 6:30 pm - Community Game Night 7 pm - YFN Music (Rm 307) 7:30 pm - Chancel Choir	3 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	4 6-9 pm - Open Doors English Event - dinner and concert (Sanctuary/Dodds Hall)
6 5 Cinco de Mayo 9:30 am - Nursery available 10:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School 11:15 am - Youth Group and Youth Choir 11:30 am - Adult Education 12:30 pm - Deacons		7 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds Hall) 7 pm - Irish Music (Rm 307)	8 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am - Al-Anon (Fireside) 6-7 pm - YMSS Committee (Zoom) 7 pm - FL Pipe Band	9 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9-10 am - Buildings and Properties Committee 6:30 pm - Community Game Night 7 pm - YFN Music (Rm 307) 7:30 pm - Chancel Choir	10 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7 pm - Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers (Concert)	11
12 Mother's Day 9:30 am - Nursery available 10:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School 11:15 am - Youth Group and Youth Choir 11:30 am - Adult Education	13 3-4 pm - Kendal Communion	14 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 5-6 pm - Adult Education Committee (Zoom) 5:30-6:45 - WM&SL Committee (Zoom) 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds Hall) 7 pm - Irish Music (Rm 307)	15 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am - Al-Anon (Fireside) 7-8:30 - Membership Connections (Zoom) 7 pm - FL Pipe Band	16 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 6:30 pm - Community Game Night 7 pm - YFN Music (Rm 307) 7:30 pm - Chancel Choir	17 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	18 6:30-7:30 pm - Paganini and Pie concert (Sanctuary) 7:30-8:15 pm - Pie Reception (Dodds Hall)
19 9:30 am - Nursery available 10:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School 11:15 am - Youth Group and Youth Choir 11:30 am - Adult Education 3-5 pm - Cayuga Chamber Orchestra Concert	20	21 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds Hall) 7 pm - Irish Music (Rm 307)	22 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am - Al-Anon (Fireside) 7 pm - FL Pipe Band	23 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 6:30 pm - Community Game Night 7 pm - YFN Music (Rm 307) 7:30 pm - Chancel Choir	24 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7-8:30 pm - Caitlin Glas-tonbury's Recital	25
26 9:30 am - Nursery available 10:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School 11:15 am - Youth Group and Youth Choir 11:30 am - Adult Education 12:30 pm - Session	27 Memorial Day	28 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds Hall) 7 pm - Irish Music (Rm 307)	29 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am - Al-Anon (Fireside) 7 pm - FL Pipe Band	30 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 6:30 pm - Community Game Night 7 pm - YFN Music (Rm 307) 7:30 pm - Chancel Choir	31 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	

Note: Be sure to check the weekly bulletin and First Presbyterian Church website (www.firstpresithaca.org) for any changes or updates to the monthly calendar.

Good News

Good News from the Deacons!



Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard Needs our Help

Background

One of the long-standing community outreach efforts of the Deacons is our support for the Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard (IKC). IKC supports families and individuals in the Ithaca area who are experiencing some type of food insecurity for whatever reason. For more than 50 years, IKC has provided non-perishable foods, frozen meats, dairy products, and personal care products from our pantry. Patrons can obtain approximately three days of food once a month. At the beginning of COVID, we also added the daily availability of perishable items such as fruits and vegetables, breads and pastries that had been gleaned from local stores who would otherwise be disposing of them.

Money Needed More Than Cans

Since 2021, the number of individuals we have served has more than doubled. While IKC continues to serve patrons, the needs have changed. At FPC, we have for years provided assorted non-perishable goods through our white pantry cupboard under the bell tower. While such food donations are still useful to IKC, our greatest need is for money. Since 2021, our net cost of

stocking the pantry (primarily with items ordered from the Food Bank of Southern Tier) have nearly tripled, a consequence of increased demand and decreased grants (largely due to the end of COVID). That means monetary contributions are the best way to support our mission to help IKC.

Ways to donate to IKC:

Leave a check in the offering plate or mail it to the church office with a designation for the “Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard” on the notation/memo line:
315 N Cayuga St, Ithaca, NY 14850.

Send a check directly to IKC at:
PO Box 608, Ithaca NY 14851.

Donate online through the Food Bank of the Southern Tier’s website: <https://www.foodbankst.org/>. Just click on the yellow “donate now” button, check the Tribute box and in the comment box write: Designate this donation to Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard.

Volunteers Needed Too

It takes FPC volunteers to work at IKC. Our church packs pantry orders on the first and third Thursdays of each month between 1:30 and 3:00pm. Current volunteers from FPC include Tom Owens, Pam Pospisil, Harrison Faulkner, and David Brown. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact either Tom or Pam for more details.

On behalf of IKC, thank you so much for your continuing support.

Submitted by Tom Owens

Lots of Concerts!

May is going to be a busy month for our sanctuary! If Sunday morning isn't enough for you, and you want to bask in the reverberative sounds of our beautiful space, then here are some more events you can come to:

- **Cascadilla Creek and an ODE Dinner:** Saturday, May 4, starting at 5:30pm. This fundraiser for ODE includes a concert starting at 7pm (and open to everyone) featuring the women's ensemble Cascadilla Creek—find out more and reserve your dinner on their website!
(sites.google.com/view/open-doors-English/)
- **Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers:** Friday, May 10, at 7pm. Many of our church choir members sing in this excellent gospel ensemble!
- **Flight Voice Studios Concert:** This vocal studio meets in our choir room all year and students will be showcasing their work. Saturday, May 11, in the afternoon—time TBA.
- **Paganini and Pie:** This annual concert by Ithaca Talent Education students includes a delicious pie reception afterwards! Saturday, May 18, at 6:30.

...and a new Accessible Ramp!

- **Cayuga Chamber Orchestra:** Sunday, May 19, at 3pm—a full ensemble of top area musicians.
- **Senior Recitals:** Caitlin Glastonbury, the evening of Friday May 24th—and our own
- **Rosemary and Laura Mead,** playing before they leave for college and to cap their amazing High School careers—Sunday, June 2 at 2:30pm!

We are fortunate to have an excellent space to share with so many!

What's this about a new ramp?

Sometime this month, when the weather and prayer meet to hold hands, we will be breaking ground to put in our new accessible ramp! The Cayuga Street façade of the church will be re-landscaped to provide a curving, natural sidewalk ramp that leads up to the Corner Door at the NW vertex of the church.

The whole project, which has been generously funded by an anonymous donor and also in memory of Henry Doney, will allow for wheelchairs and strollers to smoothly enter the narthex of the church. Feel free to come and watch the excitement anytime!

Welcome, Office Administrator Stephanie Murray!

Since she hasn't even started, as of this publication's printing, we don't want to get too far ahead of ourselves—but your hard-working Personnel Committee is very pleased to let you know that we have a new Office Administrator, and we think she is just wonderful!

Stephanie has worked for a long time managing the offices of medical practices, with all the multi-

tasking and personal interactions you can imagine that work requires! Now she is a grandmother, and was very happy to see our position, which at 16 hours a week would allow her lots of time for family and for her other hobbies, like gardening.

We are looking forward to her start on April 30—and we hope you all get to meet her sometime when you stop by or call the church office!

On Faithful Elections

At its meeting on April 22, Session voted to run a series of articles based on a handbook for free and fair elections, created by nonpartisan "Faithful America".

Addressing the need: Misinformation.

- Misinformation, disinformation, and even just plain confusing information can serve as a barrier to voting.
- Misinformation is false or inaccurate information.
- Disinformation is false information which is deliberately intended to mislead.
- Americans in different areas of the country have different options on where and how to vote. Voting rules can change between elections, which makes it difficult for people to keep track.

Some voters — especially voters from historically marginalized groups — have been targeted and purposefully misled with false or intimidating information about voting. Faith-based organizations can counter this mis- and disinformation by connecting their members and audiences with accurate information about the voting process.

The Response:

- Religious organizations are hubs of information and organizing within their specific communities. They provide clear information on upcoming events, holidays, and opportunities to both provide and receive help. This communication infrastructure can be used to provide accurate nonpartisan information on voting and elections.
- Organizations that serve historically marginalized communities have a particularly important role to play in providing correct information, as these communities have faced campaigns to suppress their votes in the past, including a campaign to convince Black voters not to vote in the 2020 election.
- One of the most important ways to ensure that your members have accurate information regarding voting is to **share trustworthy information on your website and in communications.** Be certain to link to your local or state election administration's

website for information instead of writing it on your website. This information may change over time.

- You can send election-related information to your organization or congregation multiple times during the leadup to the election to ensure that they have accurate information about how they can check their registration, vote, and even track their mail-in ballots.
- Some of the most helpful pieces of information for voters include:
 - ◇ How to register to vote and check registration status.
 - ◇ Options for voting, such as early voting, mail-in voting, or dropping off their ballot on Election Day.
 - ◇ The dates, times, and locations for voting early and on Election Day.
 - ◇ What types of identification may be required in your county and state.
 - ◇ Checking the status of mail-in ballots that have been requested or the status of mail-in ballots that voters have returned.
 - ◇ Where to call if you are having issues casting your vote.

What You Need to Know:

It is legal for houses of worship, denominational organizations, and other 501(c)(3) entities to provide information about voting.

It is important that any shared information about voting does not privilege one candidate over another. Information on voting must not show bias toward any one candidate in the message that you send or with whom you choose to share it. All of your members should have the same access to this nonpartisan information.

We will plan to add links to voting information on our church's website this summer. Stay tuned for more from Faithful America next month.

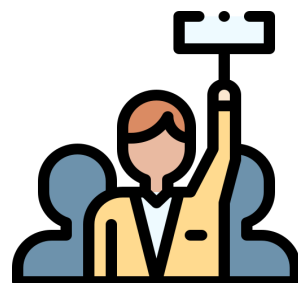
CHILDREN & YOUTH

Youth Group

The service auction is here! Find a service auction card online or at Sunday worship and be sure to turn them in by Sunday May 26.

ANNOUNCEMENT: The service auction will be transitioning to a bi-annual event. That means that after this year, our next service auction will be held in June of 2026. So be sure that you submit your service auction cards. The catalogue of service auction items and services will be available on June 2 at the church picnic.

The Service Auction will be held after church on June 9.



(Auction photos from last year!)



Review : car wash

The youth THANK YOU!
On April 21, nine children & youth help to wash **12** cars and raised **\$400** for Presbyterian Disaster Relief. The youth will be purchasing the supplies needed for the hygiene kits, assembling and mailing them to the facility at Ferncliff Presbyterian Camp in Arkansas soon.

Your gifts will help someone experiencing the devastating impacts of climate change.



The Matching Game Playcard: Elders and Staff Edition!

Match the person and what they did! This was from our annual joint meeting with Deacons, and not everyone could make it, so there may be a few still to come next month—enjoy the game!

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 1. Kevin Packard | A. I still hold my High School long jump and shotput records (as far as I know!) |
| 2. Sara Carpenter | B. Technically, I went to University with Justin Trudeau and Tom Brady |
| 3. Margaret Shackell | C. I have four brothers and no sisters |
| 4. Glen Dowell | D. I played Snow White in an original musical when I was a teenager |
| 5. Bruce Lane | E. I once appeared on ice with the Russian Ice Ballet |
| 6. Jan Morgan | F. I almost burned down my college's brand new Physical Sciences Building |
| 7. Christina Mead | G. I love steamboats |
| 8. Linda "Mac" McLean | H. I was a Chemistry tutor in college |
| 9. Kate Hubbs | I. My grandmother's cousin competed in the Olympics and won a gold medal |
| 10. Christine Bataille | J. I've broken both hips |
| 11. Tavie Flanagan | K. I love reading books about spies and secret agents |
| 12. Brad McFall | L. I played the drums in the Finger Lakes Pipe and Drum bagpipe band |
| 13. Mylika Selah | M. I was born in a place where the official language is Français |
| 14. Cindy Weaver | N. I can touch my nose with my tongue |
| 15. Kirianne Weaver | O. I won the space shuttle student involvement program for PA and Maryland |

ANSWER KEY: 1=I, 2=E, 3=M, 4=B, 5=G, 6=N, 7=K, 8=L, 9=C, 10=D, 11=H, 12=O, 13=J, 14=A, 15=F. 15 is very happy to report that she—or should we say her photosynthetic Organic Chemistry Lab project—did not in fact burn anything down at all. though a graduate student was extremely startled when their beaker of ether exploded after being passed over a Bunsen burner.

It's the Goe Joe Column!

Of course Joe's amazing work is everywhere, so this month we'll just keep reveling in the glories of spring. Here's the Memorial Garden, mulched and beautified by the team on page 9—and next to it is a beautiful photo, taken by Jeanette Miller, of the magnolia tree that was planted in memory of Florence Finch.



Of course, that's not all that Joe has done though. He has also scraped the pillars in Dodds Hall for repainting, and has re-plastered the vestibule inside the Tower Door of the church so that it looks beautiful and isn't peeling at all, and he nailed shut the old historic mail slot so that we don't get our mail dumped without ceremony onto the floor of the Park Door entrance. He organizes storage, responds to fire calls, makes coffee for fellowship time every week, and watches out for us in so many ways.

It's hard to know how to say an adequate thank you, which is why each month we write: **Goe, Joe!**

2024 Deacons Student Award Season:

Deacons Student Awards: The Board of Deacons is seeking applicants for its 2024 Student Awards. Students who will be graduating from high school this year and have been active in the life of this congregation are encouraged to apply. The purpose of the Deacons' Student Awards is to encourage and assist members of our church family wishing to pursue their education beyond high school. These educational activities include trade school (or job-related training), community college, university studies or other educational opportunities. The award is meant to be a supplement to existing financial support for the

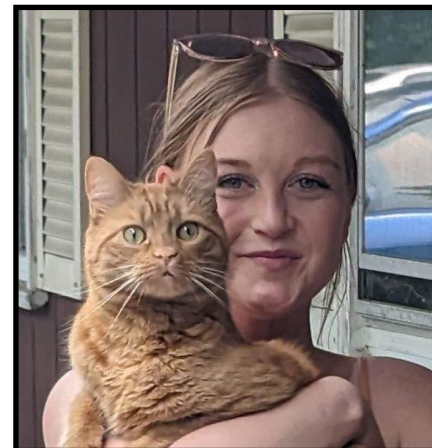
student. Monies can be used toward educational expenses, such as tuition and fees required for enrollment and/or fees, books, supplies, or equipment required for courses.

For more information or to request an application please email the church office at church.fpci@gmail.com or call the church office - 607-272-2800).

Completed applications are due by May 31, 2024 and should then be returned to the church office. Please contact John Weiss - jhw4@cornell.edu, Linda Sharpe llsharpe1221@gmail.com or Pastor Cindy with any questions.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Nursery



We are so happy to welcome Maggie to our community as the Nursery staff attendant. She has experience working with young children and enjoys getting to know each individual child and their needs. She is a great addition to our community and I hope that you will all give her a warm welcome when you see her on Sunday

Sunday School

This month the children learned all about what happened after Jesus rose from the tomb. Through fun and engaging interactive lessons about the road to Emmaus, doubting Thomas, and the 40 days before ascension, the children have learned that Jesus didn't go straight up to heaven after he rose from the tomb but instead spent 40 days, visiting and being with his disciples.

Here are the creations and quotes that the children made while they grew their faith and explored the story of Jesus' resurrection and ascension.



This is all of the days of Holy week. There's Palm Sunday and Good Friday. And this will be the Fig tree... see I used pipe cleaners.

"I wonder if Jesus disappeared but he never really left them."

"40 days?!... That's like Noah! 40 must be a special number or something..."



I made a box of JOY! Because we can't be like the fig tree. We have to share the good things in our hearts with others. So I will fill this with good things and then share it.

We are acting out Jesus on the night of his arrest. We like the part when they cut off the man's ear. But it's not good but he really loved Jesus.



CHILDREN & YOUTH

HEADING: May announcements



Hello! Thank you all for all your support of the children and youth! From volunteers covering the nursery, joining YMSS, helping take photos of youth events, donations of recycled goods and volunteering to help in the Sunday school program. The children and youth have seen and felt your love for them and **THANK YOU!**

	SUNDAY SCHOOL	Description
May 5	Wiggle break & Worship Bags	Children will return to the sanctuary for communion and remain until the end of worship.
May 12	Pentecost	Children will talk about the Holy Spirit and the events of Pentecost
May 19		
May 26	Year in Review	Children will review all they have learned this year during Sunday school from Genesis to Pentecost!
June 2	Wiggle break & Worship Bags	Children will return to the sanctuary for communion and remain until the end of worship

In April the children learned all about what happened after the tomb and the youth group zeroed in on their passion for helping fight climate change.

Enjoy this look back at how we learned about Holy week and celebrated Christ's resurrection.



Palm Sunday: We imagined Jesus on the colt and shouted "Hosanna!"

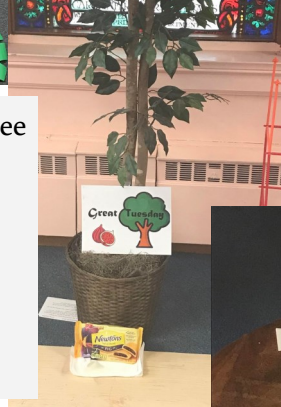


Ash Wednesday: We learn about the ashes & how Judas would soon betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.



Maundy Thursday: travel from the Passover meal to the garden.

Great Tuesday: We see the fig tree has no fruit, and learn to share our good gifts. And we enjoy some yummy fig cookies!



Good Friday: We talked about Jesus on the cross.



Easter Sunday: We count the 3 days until we open the tomb. And look! He is RISEN!

From the Archives: FPCI's History Supporting Refugees!

Phan Sy and four of her younger children arrived from a Cambodian refugee camp in Thailand to the United States in December of 1980. They had lived through some horrific years under the rule of the Khmer Rouge (Red Cambodians). Between 1975 and 1979, 2 million out of 7 million Cambodians were murdered, died from disease, or starved to death.

Phan, her husband, and 7 children had lived in Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia. Her husband was a professional architect. They were a middle class family and had a comfortable life.

When the Cambodian communists (Khmer Rouge) took over the country, everyone in Phnom Penh was told to leave in three days with the promise that they might be able to return some day. Anyone who tried to return was shot.

The family was forced to live out in the open and had to work in the rice fields. There was never enough food. Members of the family were split up by age and gender for different duties. Phan's husband died of starvation.

When the Vietnam communists took over, Phan decided to leave and take her children to Thailand. They walked for many miles through booby trap laced trails. It was then that she felt that God was guiding them. They got to a Cambodian refugee camp in Thailand where they lived for several months. It was there that she became a Christian.

In 1980, I became part of a church-sponsored group based in Dryden, McLean, and Freeville. This sponsorship group welcomed Phan and her family in the middle of winter, 1980. While living in Freeville, the children went to the Dryden schools while Phan learned English and found a job. While there, she and her children became American citizens. Phan and her family have been my friends for many years.

After one of her daughters married and returned to Cambodia, Phan has gone to visit her and her family. It was then that she wanted to help the poor in Cambodia. Each year she has bought rice, noodles, tuna fish, mosquito netting, soap and towels to give away. She remembers how hungry, dirty, and mosquito ridden her family was when they lived there. Recently she has been funding water wells for communities that need clean water. Through the years the First Presbyterian Church has been helping her with the funding of food, soap, mosquito netting, and digging water wells.

Our church has been known to assist refugee families through the years. It is a wonderful and awarding task.

By Jan Parsons

Note: Phan Sy passed away on Monday, April 15, 2019, at the age of 76. She died peacefully in her home and surrounded by family, friends, and the church, and she is very much missed by all.

Love one another, therefore, as I have

Session Highlight from March: News about the Roof!

If you've been on Session or on the Buildings and Properties Committee, you may have heard about our church's roof. Back in 2014 we finished replacing the South and East sides of our slate roof—the sunny sides, meaning that they get the most damage and weather. We were told at the time that we would probably have to replace the North side of the roof in about 15 years—but then, about a month ago, our friends at Open Doors English reported a water stain on the ceiling. Joe investigated, and it was a leak—with a significant amount of rotted wood above it!

Since then, we have been on a steep learning curve. Here is some of what we have learned:

1. The rotting beams around the leak look alarming, but are not in immediate danger of collapsing or causing further structural damage.
2. While repair is costly, it turns out that we may not need to replace our North side roof after all—at least not yet, and perhaps not for the foreseeable future! Let me explain!

Our current church building, the third built for the congregation, was started on the church's 100th anniversary, in 1904. It took three years to complete the building, which was finished in 1907. In those years about 80% of the slate that was mined and used on roofs in the US came from Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania slate, often called "Bangor slate", is mixed with the coal that the state is known for—which gives it a soft black finish, but also reduces its lifespan, as coal reacts in the sunlight and over time loses integrity. The absolute best slate comes from Vermont, and is mixed with the dust of granite—but our slate came from Virginia, and is also durable and strong.

It has been fascinating researching slate, on this steep learning curve we are on! Here is an image of some old slate that needs replacing. Some is "ribbon slate", which means the grain is diagonal

and it shears at an angle. Some is Bangor slate, which absorbs and then evaporates water, leaving it with a "gray beard". Additionally, galvanized rather than copper nails rust over time, causing red residue. See the image below and see if you can find these problem slates in it—and of course some that are missing!



If you ever have a chance to stand on the north side of Court Street and look at our roof, you will not see these problems. You'll see staining from the snow cleats and from weather and pollution, but you won't see ribbon slates or the gypsum (calcium sulfate) that creates a bearded look.

We are still investigating and gathering professional opinions about what our next step should be. We know we need to properly fix the leak and the wood and subroofing underneath, and this itself is no small job. But we are heartened to have these indications that, in fact, our roof as a whole may be strong for many, many years to come—a relief to our Finance committee, and a wash of loving gratitude from us all!

Who are the recipients of this loving gratitude? They are our ancestors, those who—over 100 years ago—chose well and invested in something strong and good, to surprise us with joy today.

Now you know why I mentioned the roof as a teacher! It is reminding me of the importance of building with good material. Thanks be to God!

-Kirianne

Spring Cleaning!

With the warmer weather come outdoor chores! It's wonderful to be able to attend to the Memorial Garden again (pictured: Rick Vaughan and Joe Bocchiario; John Ullberg not shown), and thus to honor the history of the stones engraved there.

Sadder news came from our friends at the Baptist Church: they need to replace the slate roof of their bell tower, but to do that they had to cut down, sadly, their old cedar tree.

With great sadness, it was taken down this past month; John Ullberg captured the moment for us in pictures.

