

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

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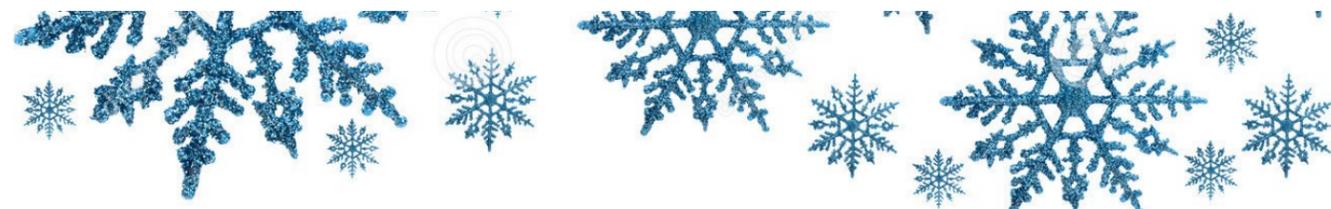
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Worship Schedule for February 2022:

Sunday, February 6, 10am:

Scripture: Luke 5: 1-11

Message: "The Catch."

Sunday, February 20, 10am:

Scripture: Luke 6:27-38

Message: "Merciful"

Sunday, February 13, 10am:

Scripture: Psalm 1

Message: "Close to the Source."

Sunday, February 27, 10am:

Scripture: Luke 9:28-43

Message: "A Change of Face"



Dear friends,

If you ordinarily let cover letters drift past your eyes as just so much fluff before the real facts begin, please read this time. I am using this space to make an announcement that is sad, faithful, hopeful and worthy of our care and attention.

Suzanne Scholten, our Director of Christian Education, has let us know she has decided to resign from the position—but she (and Joseph) will remain with our church family as members. She has, incredibly graciously, given us some additional advance notice and flexibility so that we can start to search for a new leader for our programming for children and youth.

That's the sad part! We have thrived under Suzanne's leadership of our youth. She has led us so well, and given so much time and dedication to the church. We are going to miss her very much in the office and in our programmatic lives as a church!

Suzanne was a visitor and then a member of the church, though, for some time before taking on this position, and she and Joseph both have good friends here and a community of faith. They remain among us as congregants, and will be able to help us applaud a new DCE as they come. We don't know when, but we trust the day will arrive!

What's Inside:

- **February Adult Education Classes for the Justice-Minded**
- **An Annual Meeting Song**
- **Elders Serving on Session**
- **Get Your Nametag!**

There is a lot of uncertainty. We Covid-dwellers are now used to uncertainty—how to plan for two potentialities, how to move forward not knowing the details of what, who and when. We will be starting the search as soon as we get our feet beneath us, but we all know that getting the right person is far more important than getting someone quickly, so it will take time.

Please pray for your church leaders as they gather a search committee and work through the details and process of calling someone to lead us forward in our ministry with children and youth. Everyone these days is tired and stressed, and the task can seem daunting, but Suzanne is giving us the gift of her flexibility and support. As we practice our faith, these days we must live it out in truly believing that God is with us; that just as God led God's people through the desert, we will be led through all our trials.

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

From Pastor Cindy

Dear Friends,

“What is The Wizard of Oz ?” was the correct question to the Final Jeopardy answer one day last week on the game show Jeopardy. Even though the question was actually referring to the book and not the movie by the same name, for some reason when I heard mention of the book, the image of the Tin Man came to mind as he sang about his wish for a heart, “If I only had a heart.” He goes on to sing about what he would do –be tender and gentle...and friends with the sparrows, etc.

Our hearts have not had an easy time of it these past couple years. It seems the less time we spend with others, the less practice our hearts have at being flexible and full of endurance. In the Bible there are many references to hearts that are hardened, and whether we are talking about the muscles that beats in our chests and keeps our lifeblood flowing or the seat of our souls where we nurture compassion, forgiveness, and love, the heart needs to be used to keep us healthy and able to live life fully in all its joys and sorrows.

Even though I have spoken about how understandable it is to be a bit grumpy these days, I hope we use any frustration we feel with others as an internal nudge to be aware of how we are feeling and then care about how the other is feeling in any encounters we have. Our Christian faith is a faith of the heart, one in which love “bears...believes...hopes...endures all things” as we saw in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Without a heart the Tin Man was missing the rich experience of being human. We, on the other hand, having the gift of a heart, can know and share the love of Christ at a time when the world sorely needs it. Whenever possible give your heart some exercise – a bracing winter walk or a kindness offered when it is unexpected.

With heartfelt gratitude and love,

Adult Education

February 6:

By now many of you will have become acquainted with the Spaak family. Jenny sings in the choir while Jürg sits in the front pew with their children. We are happy to have Jürg leading our class. Here is how he introduces it: “I, Jürg Spaak, came here with my family, Jenny, Nora, Johanna and Arthur for a Post-Doc at Cornell, studying plankton coexistence. I think a lot about all sorts of things, and I believe that this is a gift from God, and that God is like that too. The passage we will discuss, Isaiah 53, gives us a glimpse of God's love, but also God's ingenuity and planning. Come and join me, to see both—God's love and God's mind.”

February 13:

Dr. King encouraged us to see each other in ways that are not defined solely by physical characteristics such as skin color. We will use Chimamanda Adichie's TED Talk, “The danger of a single story” to explore the consequences of stereotyping individuals and groups, with the goal of appreciating both the complexity and uniqueness of each of us.

February 20:

A year ago Pastor Kirianne, JPIC and the Session decided our church should be more involved in educating people on justice reform bills. Brad McFall will summarize our hard work, Susan Multer will introduce us to the new Interfaith Advocates for Fair Law Enforcement, and Laurie Konwinski—Coordinator of Justice & Peace Ministry for Catholic Charities, Tompkins/Tioga—will update us on two parole bills that need action now in our state legislature.

Feb. 27:

To be announced—watch the church bulletin!

Announcements and Reminders

MLK Jr. Sunday Together!

If you weren't here on January 16, we were so blessed to have our annual joint service with Saint James AME Zion Church in celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend—”The Great Gathering”!

This was a tradition for many years between the two congregations, and was recently revived. When Covid doesn't interfere, we start at First Presbyterian and share a brief worship service with the pastor of St. James preaching. Then we walk to the MLK Jr. statue on the Commons, where we are joined (traditionally) by Ithaca's Mayor, who shares some words. Then, we walk together to St. James, at 116 Cleveland Avenue, and have a second time of worship there with the pastor from FPCI speaking.

Because of Covid, we had to forego the second time of worship in a smaller space—we didn't believe that would do any of us any favors. But we did trek to the statue, and some photos were taken that we can share in a future issue of the Good News.

In the worship service here at FPCI, Rev. (almost-Dr.) Terrance A. King preached a powerful sermon, and their worship associate, Mabel, sang and read beautifully, elucidating the texts. Alejandro Bernard-Papachryssanthou, the Director of Music at St. James, also added to the morning's collaboration with his excellent piano playing.

What I will remember most is Rev. King's phrase: “Jesus is the ultimate loophole.” I love this image, of the legal impossibility: that though he was humble, he was God; that though he was kind, he was killed; that though he died, he rose to live, and reign forever! Amen. -Kirianne

Birthdays in February



- 5 – Scott Anderson
- 7 – Shiloh Riehl
- 12 – David Lincoln Call
- 14 – Laura Mead
- 14 – Rosemary Mead
- 14 – Imogene Sybert
- 14 – Dix Wayman
- 24 – Laura Britton
- 28 – Suzy Courtney

...We would love to add your birthday and/or your anniversary. If it's not here, please let the office know and we will be happy to add it!

Help us make you a Nametag!

Your Membership Connections Committee would like to bring back nametags! To get a nametag made for you, please write your name *as you would like it printed* in the Friendship Pads at the beginning of the service.

When you do so, look for your printed nametag in the back of the church in the following weeks! We will have instructions on how to put together your nametag the way you want it, and we have wall slots at each door for you to keep it week to week. Wearing nametags helps everyone!

We hold in our daily prayer:

Ann Cedarholm; Bobbie Collyer; Tom Hurst; Betsy Mann; Gayle Park; David Morey; Jean Radice; Connie and Don Scott, and their family; and Bibs Warner.



Our prayer and sympathy to Heather Lane and family, on the loss of her mother, Sarah Snow; and a loving bon voyage to Marianne Weaver on her journey heavenward.

Elders Serving on Session:

An alphabetical list of currently serving elders:

- Micah Beck—B&P and Ceiling
- Sara Carpenter—Membership Connections
- Roy Colle—Buildings and Properties
- Tavie Flanagan—YMSS
- Sandra Greene—Personnel
- Nita King—Worship, Music and Spiritual Life
- Bruce Lane—Personnel
- Lorraine Maxwell—Adult Education
- Valerie McAllister—YMSS
- Brad McFall—JPIC, Presbytery representative
- Christina Mead—Finance, Monuments
- James Nagy—Missioners, Reopening
- Timothy Riley—Strategic Planning
- Margaret Shackell—Stewardship, Capital Campaign

Report about Stewardship:

Let's rejoice together over the pledges we have made as a congregation! Here is a snapshot of Stewardship for 2022, as of January 13, 2022:

Total pledged so far 2022: \$307,363.00
Total budget for 2022: \$518,762.00
Non-pledge expected income: \$107,000.00

As you can see, we anticipate a budget shortfall for 2022. We are still expecting some additional pledges. In addition, most years we project a deficit, but are able to underspend our budget to come out even. This year's projected deficit is a little smaller than the one we anticipated last year.

For those of you who wanted me to take a raise this year, please help us to support our budget—there are so many good things that happen beneath our roof. And we will work to keep you all abreast of our progress throughout the year!

Respectfully submitted,
 Kirianne

From the Session:

Our Session meeting this month was packed! We started with a joint meeting, which is an annual event uniting the Deacons and Elders in a time for conversation.

After the two groups parted, Session did some basic organizing for the year ahead, approved two baptisms, and welcomed new members who will be received by the congregation at a later date.

The Personnel Committee proposed that we begin incrementally to fund the position of Director of Christian Education from the church's annual budget. Previously that position has been funded by a generous bequest that was left to the church from the Beischer family. A decrease in some other budget lines, Personnel proposed, made it possible to begin doing this without impacting the church's overall budget. The Session concurred.

The Worship, Music, and Spiritual Life Committee asked Session to consider improving our livestream of the service. In agreement, Session referred the request back to the Committee to develop a more detailed proposal for consideration.

The Colombian Embassy has asked the church to serve as a polling location for their national elections this spring. This voting is scheduled for three Sundays: March 13, May 29, and June 19. The poll site will be open that day to Colombian Nationals from 8am to 4pm in the Fireside Room. You may see their work if you enter through the Park door or attend Adult Education those days!

Among its other conversations, Session responded to the request in the Annual Meeting to begin creating a column like this in the Good News, so that everyone in the church can be aware of Session's work. I hope you've enjoyed this first missive!

With love, Kirianne.

FEBRUARY 2022

First Presbyterian Church * 315 N Cayuga St, Ithaca, NY 14850 * (607) 272-2800 * www.firstpresithaca.org

Calendar for February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
13 9 am—Youth Group 9:30 am - Nursery (2nd Fl) 10 am - Worship Service 10:15 am—Godly Play 11 am—Fellowship Time 11:15 am—Adult Ed	14 7 pm—Study Group	15 4:45 pm—Chamber Singers 6:45 pm—Tai Chi 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds and Fireside) 7 pm—Kava Irish Music- 3rd floor	16 2 pm—Bible Study- Zoom 6:30 pm—Finger Lakes Pipe Band 7 pm—Membership Connections	17 6:30 pm Community Game Night 7:00 pm—JPIC Mtg (Zoom) 7 pm—Piperventilators— 3rd floor 7:30—Chancel Choir	18 GOOD NEWS DUE	19
20 9 am—Youth Group 9:30 am - Nursery (2nd Fl) 10 am - Worship Service 10:15 am—Godly Play 11 am—Fellowship Time 11:15 am—Adult Ed	21 PRESIDENT'S DAY 7 pm—Study Group	22 4:45 pm—Chamber Singers 6:45 pm—Tai Chi 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds and Fireside) 7 pm—Kava Irish Music- 3rd floor	23 SESSION MATERIAL DUE 2 pm—Bible Study- Zoom 6:30 pm—Finger Lakes Pipe Band	24 6:30 pm Community Game Night 7 pm—Piperventilators— 3rd floor 7:30—Chancel Choir	25	26
27 9 am—Youth Group 9:30 am - Nursery (2nd Fl) 10 am - Worship Service 10:15 am—Godly Play 11 am—Fellowship Time 11:15—Adult Ed 1 pm—Black History Month Choral Event	28 7 pm—Study Group 7 pm—Session					
6 Communion Sunday 9 am—Youth Group 9:30 am - Nursery (2nd Fl) 10 am - Worship Service 10:15 am—Godly Play 11 am—Fellowship Time 11:15 am—Adult Ed 1:15 pm—IWR Volunteer Orientation	7 3 pm—Kendal Worship & Communion 7 pm—Study Group	8 2:30 pm—WMSL Mtg (Zoom) 4 pm—Adult Ed Mtg (Zoom) 4:45 pm—Chamber Singers 6:45 pm—Tai Chi 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds and Fireside) 7 pm—Kava Irish Music- 3rd floor	9 2 pm—Bible Study- Zoom 6 pm—YMSS Mtg (Z) 6:30 pm—Finger Lakes Pipe Band 7 pm—Personnel Mtg (Z)	10 9 am—B & P Mtg 6:30 pm Community Game Night 7 pm—Piperventilators— 3rd floor 7:30—Chancel Choir	11	12 10 am—Missioners Mtg (Z)
FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH		1 6:45 pm—Tai Chi 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds and Fireside) 7 pm—Kava Irish Music- 3rd floor	2 2 pm—Bible Study- Zoom 6:30 pm—Finger Lakes Pipe Band	3 8 am—Strategic Planning Mtg (Zoom) 6:30 Community Games Night 7 pm—Piperventilators— 3rd floor 7:30p—Chancel Choir	4 8 am—Strategic Planning Mtg (Zoom) 6:30 Community Games Night 7 pm—Piperventilators— 3rd floor 7:30—Chancel Choir	5 John Weiss and the Friendship Center Meals—Kitchen

Youth and Children

Schedule for February and March

Date	Acolyte	Godly Play Story	Storyteller	Door Person
February 6	MooEh Soe	The Exile and Return	Suzanne	Laura
13	Joseph A.	Bishop Barbara Harris	Suzanne	Ben
20	Liam	Parable of the Good Samaritan	Ben	Kate
27	Laura G.	John Lewis	Suzanne	Kristie
Ash Wed. 3/2/22		Mystery of Easter	Laura	Kate
March 6		The faces of Easter 1	Ben	Suzanne
13		Faces of Easter 2	Laura	Ben
20		Faces of Easter 3	Suzanne	Kristie
27		Faces of Easter 4	Laura	Kate

Dear Families and Friends of the youth program, we are looking for youth and mentors to participate in the acolyte lighting during the coming time of Lent in March. I hope you will be able to help and serve during this very special time.

Date	Youth Group Topic/Godly Play Story	Leaders
February 6	How do we serve ourselves and others with intention	Tavie
13	Service: Baskets for college students	Laura/Suzanne/Tavie
20	Mid-Winter Recess, No Youth Group	-
27	Mid-Winter Recess, No Youth Group	-
March 6	Lent Story	Tavie/Laura
13	Lent Story	Tavie/Suzanne
20	Lent Story	Tavie/Laura/Ben/Suzanne
27	Lent Story	Tavie/Suzanne

Dear Parents or Guardians, we are looking for Youth Ministry & Sunday School (YMSS) members to assist in attending regular meetings to talk through youth program offerings, teach Sunday school and maybe host youth events. If you are interested in getting more involved with the youth programs, please reach out to Suzanne Scholten, suzanne@firstpresithaca.org.

An Annual Meeting Song

This is a little embarrassing, but I was asked to share the words from the Annual Meeting song that I sang for our outgoing officers. It's not fine poetry, so please read with a big glossy Disney arpeggio in the back of your mind! Sung to the tune of the opening number of Beauty and the Beast...

Little church, in a quiet city.
Ithaca, on Cayuga Lake.
And right now, in our present meeting,
...it is time to say.....:
Our thanks. Our thanks. Our thanks!

Now these fine folks are here
because God called them,
And if you recall you did too.
It was right here among you,
That their calling really grew,
When you voted to ordain them to our crew.

*...Do you remember that day?
Standing up in front of the congregation,
being elected, and ordained, and installed?
It started something very wonderful.*

A great deal happens long before this meeting.
The nominating people meet.....
They consider and they stew.
In the end, they pick a few,
And then pop the question on someone like you.
What's that? Elder? You must be joking!
Who, me? Oh gee – I never thought.
Hang on – Deacon? What are you smoking?
And thanks for asking, but I'd rather NOT!

*That's the answer we usually get, at first.
But it's best to give people a little time to
think it over. After all, Moses tried to get
out of serving; Isaiah said he wasn't
worthy; Jonah ran away, and we all
know what happened to him! No, I am
quite sure that, eventually, we can
convince you, along with a little bit of
help from God – who is, by the way,
QUITE persuasive, and not easy
to escape!*

Look, there he goes with a pacific smile,
See how she glows, somewhere within!
When God chooses us to serve,
Though it takes a little nerve,
It's a quite fantastic journey to begin.

Oh Lord, what is this I'm learning?
Now I see your church through different eyes!

And oh, with a new discerning,
I feel I must care for this place where
such beauty lies!
We thank these servants for their
praying, dreaming,
And all the doing that they've done.

An amazing lot of work
In a little tiny kirk
Is attributed to these fine few.
They've done as much as they could do.
We seat you here to say, thank you, a ton!

*How was that? Did you like it? Well, now
that you have served for a while, you know
that none of us does this alone. The thing is,
this calling to service belongs to all of us
together. So I want you to take a moment to
look at one another. Really do it. You have
a whole screen full of your brothers and
sisters, your family. God gives us to one
another in love, and we rarely stop to
appreciate it in its fullness.*

I know that life is never very easy.
It's rare, in fact, to get a breath.
God commands us all to rest;
We ignore this rule the best.
And we cram stuff in and work ourselves to death.

But then, at times, God comes and asks you.
Would you do this one thing for me?
And when, right then, God comes and tasks you,
He'll lighten up the rest of life you'll see!

When we - are one - here in the spirit,
Looking ahead with eyes of faith,
Nothing in life gets even near it,
There's no way to get closer to our Christ!
You might find the call of your entire life!

This is a thank you, but its point is simple:
Our God is calling one and all.
From the past, we take our cue.
But the future now is you.

Let's be better than our former best,
More blessed than we had been blessed,
Living a life of faith confessed: Our Call!