

GOOD NEWS (USPS 065-790) Periodicals Postage paid at Ithaca, NY 14850. Published monthly by First Presbyterian Church, 315 N. Cayuga St., Ithaca, NY 14850.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to First Presbyterian Church 315 N. Cayuga St Ithaca, NY 14850. Editor: Rev. Kirianne E. Weaver Materials must be received by noon on Friday before each publication at the church office.

Periodicals Postage

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Ithaca, NY 14850



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.

Due Date for the May 2024 issue: Monday April 22, 2024

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Worship Schedule: April 2024

April 7, 10am: The Second Sunday of Easter

Worship and Communion.

Scripture: Acts 4: 32-35

and John 20: 19-31

Message: "I Don't Believe It"

April 8: Kendal Communion.

Conference Room C, 3pm.

April 14, 10am: The Third Sunday of Easter

Scripture: Acts 3: 12-19

and Luke 24: 36b-48

Message: "Opening the Mind."

April 21, 10am: The Fourth Sunday of Easter

In honor of Earth Day, April 22.

Scripture: Acts 4: 5-12

and 1 John 3: 16-24

Message: "Having the World's Goods."

...with the Youth Choir singing!

April 28, 10am: The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Scripture: Acts 8: 26-40

and 1 John 4: 7-21

Message: "Strange Understandings."

Dear friends,

As I prepared Holy Week's bulletins, I was ruminating on the repetitions that exist in the church. When a pastor comes to a new church, every service is new and must be thought out from scratch—but now that we have spent several paschal seasons together, the services tend to remain the same. Small changes come in from year to year, but the same hymns fit best, and the same texts describe the service's meanings.

I belong to a group on Facebook called "The Dull Men's Club," where this was recently shared. Rev. David Rowe, a school chaplain in South Carolina, shared this thought on repetition:

"One of the nice things about dullness is that we all have slightly different (but harmonious) explanations of what it is. For me, to be dull is, in part at least, the ability to delight in repetition.

When younger, I was something of a magpie—any old shiny thing that caught my roving eye would be exciting. But I've found that with age has come a love of repetition: the books I read I tend to have read before; the music I listen to I already know; the clothes I wear; the places I go; the daily routines I engage in... all follow a well-marked, comforting furrow.

But it's not boring: repetition brings the opportunity for deeper appreciation—with each reread of Lord of the Rings I notice new things; with each relisten to the Village Green Preservation Society I find more to appreciate; with each stroll along the same footpath, my eye alights on new colours and variations and shapes. It's like taking a picture of the same apple tree

Found Within:

- A Church Garden Plot—join us!
- The Deacons Matching Game
- A devotion from Bruce Lane — and more!

each year: yes, it's the same—the branches, the leaves, the blossom, the fruit—and yet each time it's fresh.

I just realized that this is the same at my church: every week we say/pray more or less the same things. And each year we go through the same cycle of seasons: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, etc. When I was young this approach bored me to death, but now I find that simple words and phrases and emphases are, by dogged repetition, being written on my bones and coming to life inside me. It's been a surprising discovery.

Some people think this is a process of 'growing up,' but I disagree. I have small children, and work in a school with more small humans, and they LOVE repetition—last night I was bullied into throwing my 3-year-old onto the bed about 20 times in a row. It's like GK Chesterton said:

"Because children have abounding vitality, because they are in spirit fierce and free, therefore they want things repeated and unchanged. They always say, "Do it again!" and the grown-up person does it again until he is nearly dead. For grown-up people are not strong enough to exult in monotony."

May our Easter together be worked upon our very bones.

From Pastor Cindy

Dear Friends,

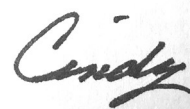
By the time you read this, Easter Sunday will have come and gone, but Easter itself is never really over. The new life we have been given in the risen Christ is endless, though it can be challenging to know how to live into it. It is so easy to have Easter be another holiday which is packed up and put away as soon as all the Easter eggs are found and another day has begun.

I'd like to offer a suggestion for remembering we have new life, and that is simply to do something new. Unlike New Year's Day when we focus on our shortcomings and make resolutions which usually involve changing "bad" habits or beginning new habits that are "good for us", Easter is a joyful time, and so my suggestion is that we take on something new and joyful, or at least, enjoyable. It simply should be something new which opens us to just a little more of what the world has to offer.

When you first step out the door in the morning, take a look at the sky and see what the clouds are doing, and then learn what the different cloud formations mean. If you enjoy cooking, it is a good time to expand your broccoli recipe repertoire. If you remember how good it feels to get a real handwritten letter, this would be a good time to write one or two to those who would also appreciate it. What books have you been "going to read"? This might be a good time to open and read more than the title on the cover. Of course, spending more time in prayer really can do wonders for us.

Yes, there is still much work to do out in the world, but I hope we do not neglect how much there is to enjoy in God's good creation. Easter has given us new life; let us find new ways to enjoy this gift.

Joyfully yours,



Adult Education

Our Adult Educational program as a church is wonderful, and we invite everyone to come and take part! Here is some of what we have planned for April.

- April 7 and 14: Bread for the World.**
If you have ever fasted, you know how terrible it is to be without food, even for a short time. Yet all around the world, people suffer from malnutrition and starvation even though the world produces enough food to feed everyone. On April 7 and 14, come learn with the "Bread for the World" program, a Christian advocacy program about getting food to those who hunger.
- April 21: Earth Day.**
As Christians we have been told to steward the earth, and have, we read, "dominion" over it. Dominion comes from the Latin Dominus which means Lord, implying that we should be to the earth as Christ, our Lord, is to us. Join us for a program in honor of Earth Day, in which we can better appreciate how to steward and care for the creation God has shared with us.
- April 28: Learnings from a Lock-In.**
Last time our Youth Group had a lock-in, they stayed after church and shared with us a skit about what they had learned. Come and enjoy again a presentation from our youth following their Spring Lock-in, led by the wonderful Mylika Selah!

...Sundays from 11:30-12:30 in Dodds Hall on the lower level of the church.

Announcements and Reminders

Homestay this Summer?

Mike Timmons is wondering if anyone from the church or community might be able to offer a homestay for a High School graduate doing some research work at Cornell over the summer. She is applying to Cornell early decision and hopes to become a student there, but also has research in aquaculture and climate change adaptation that she is working on in July and August. Anyone with a possible homestay situation should let Mike know:

Cell: (607) 227-5638 or

Email: mbt3@cornell.edu

The Indomitable Florence Finch

If you're looking for some good reading, Jan Parsons recommends this excellent book—written about a longtime church member and her heroic, unsung, undercover support for the Allied cause during World War II.

Florence was a member here until her death in 2017 at age 101, and she still has family in town. There is a group at Kendal currently reading the book, so perhaps copies will be available if the purchase is a hardship for anyone.

The stories of those who sit these pews are amazing. Let's listen to one another carefully!

We hold in our daily prayer:

David Brown; Elmer Ewing; Tom Hurst;
 Betsy Mann; Mark Radice;
 Vivian and Jim Russell;

the hostages of Hamas and the people of Gaza; all who are lonely; those awaiting college admittance, and those recovering from health concerns.
 May peace be upon us all.



Birthdays in April

- 9 – William Chen
- 11—David Dornbusch
- 11 – Martha Mapes
- 13 – Micah Beck
- 14 - Dorian Reining
- 19 – (Leni Mecnas) ❤️
- 24 – Judy Vaughan
- 25 – Nancy Whitmore
- 26 – Janet Mara



...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 worshipers, here it is:



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Easter Monday	2 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds Hall) 7 pm - Irish Music (Rm 307)	3 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am - Al-Anon (Fireside) 7 pm - FL Pipe Band	4 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 6:30 pm - Community Game Night 7 pm - YFN Music (Rm 307) 7:30 pm - Chancel Choir	5 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	6	
7 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	8 3-4 pm - Kendal Communion	9 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 5-6 pm - Adult Education Committee (Zoom) 5:30 - WMSL Committee (Zoom) 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds Hall) 7 pm - Irish Music (Rm 307)	10 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am - Al-Anon (Fireside) 6-7 pm - YMSS Committee (Zoom) 7 pm - FL Pipe Band	11 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	12 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	13
14 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 am - Deacon Meeting	15 Tax Day	16 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds Hall) 7 pm - Irish Music (Rm 307)	17 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am - Al-Anon (Fireside) 7-8:30 - Membership Con-nections (Zoom) 7 pm - FL Pipe Band	18 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 6:30 pm - Community Game Night 7 pm - YFN Music (Rm 307) 7:30 pm - Chancel Choir	19 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	20
21 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	22	23 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds Hall) 7 pm - Irish Music (Rm 307)	24 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am - Al-Anon (Fireside) 7 pm - FL Pipe Band	25 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 6:30 pm - Community Game Night 7 pm - YFN Music (Rm 307) 7:30 pm - Chancel Choir	26 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	27 4 pm—9 am (April 28) Youth Group Sleep Over
28 9:30 am - Nursery available 10:00 am - Worship 10:15 am - Sunday School 11:15 am - Youth Group and Youth Choir 12:30 pm - Session	29	30 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7 pm - AA Mtg (Dodds Hall) 7 pm - Irish Music (Rm 307)				

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!

John 13:14-15 "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

I find that I get a little bit keyed up when I have tasks at Church **sometimes**. Who doesn't...maybe Kiri? I want to a good job with my tasks. I remind myself when I finish a day like this Sunday...helping to set up communion, nursery duty, updating the Deacon bulletin board and a Deacon meeting. Guess what... when I am done I feel a sense of accomplishment and gladness in my heart. I had so much fun with the kiddos in the nursery. All the connections I made today such as; meeting parents that I might not have met if I did not say yes to the nursery duty. I also get to work with and know a bit better Liam, one of our youths in our church who volunteers each week in the nursery. Lastly, Deacon work is filled with so much goodness! One of the outreach tasks includes visiting members because they are not able to attend church. The truth is we not only get to help people but helping others **ALSO** helps **US** as well... "the giving and receiving".

Even Mayo Clinic notes how volunteering is healthy for us: *"Spending time and service with others provides us with a sense of meaning and appreciation, both giving and receiving has a stress reduction effect. Its good for your mind and body!!!"*

Other News:

- e. Stuelke – e@satre.org oversees our weekly floral arrangements. Here is a note from e,:

"Hello fellow parishioners! Elizabeth "e." here - I am proud to be serving as the flower deacon after the great efforts of Stella Martz, I fear I can't live up, but want to ask for your support.

If you have someone you'd like to honor with flowers placed in the Sanctuary for services, please let me know at e@satre.org. It's pretty

simple - you tell me the week or weeks to put in your flowers and the inscription(s) you'd like to accompany them, and send the \$40 cost of the flowers. When you send your requests to me you can also specify if you'd like to take the flowers home with you after service.

I hope to see lots of requests so we can keep the Sanctuary lovely and glowing. In peace, e."

- Student Awards for our High School Seniors of our church– Keep an eye out it's Coming up soon to apply for a financial award.
- Kitchen Cupboard is always in need of items here are a couple suggestions:
- Canned Veggies, Granola Bars and Unsweetened Applesauce

In service,

Heather Lane

A Church Garden Plot!

No, not that kind of plot—no scheming or dramatic turns. Rather the opposite—we invite you to enjoy the peace of communal gardening with us, as we now have a church plot at Ithaca Community Gardens!

Gardening is not only peaceful and environmentally friendly, but it's a great place to contemplate Jesus' parables. The good soil, the tiny mustard seed, the way one seed becomes thirty, or fifty, or a hundred! The care that must be taken with weeding, so as not to pull out the good plants by mistake. The lilies of the field; how they grow.

We have no agenda for our plot. There's space for vegetables, flowers, and herbs. Take what you want home. If you have an extra seedling, we can probably use it! If you don't garden with us at all, we will probably still send you home with fresh veggies some Sunday after church, and have plenty more to share.

Contact Kirianne to get involved:
kirianne.fpci@gmail.com / txt 607-882-1325



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Other News

- e. Stuelke – e@satre.org oversees our weekly floral arrangements. Please feel free to send her an email if you would like to sign up for flowers. We need some time slots filled.
- Student Awards for our High School Seniors of our church– Keep an eye out it’s Coming up soon to apply for a financial award.
- Kitchen Cupboard is always in need of items here are a couple suggestions:
Canned Veggies, Granola Bars and Unsweetened Applesauce

In service, **Heather Lane**

A little Matching Game! - The Deacons Edition

At the annual joint meeting of the Deacons and Elders, we played a little matching game. Each person wrote down something about themselves that people might not know. Then, we went around the circle, drawing papers and trying to figure out whose fact we were hearing.

We learned a lot about each other, and we thought you would enjoy playing along with us, too. So, here’s a little matching game from *most*

of the Deacons, and we’ll get the rest another time!

To play, just match the name of the Deacon with the fact about one of them—just like we had to do in grade school workbooks. Answers are on the bottom of the page so you can see how you did.

We hope you enjoy this! Perhaps you’ll enjoy it so much you’ll want to join the Deacons someday yourself!

A Photo from Dewitt Mall Apartments

We have known for a while that the North side of our slate roof needs to be replaced—but this knowledge has been reinforced by the reality that there is a drip occurring beneath one valley! Buildings and Properties engaged a company to come do an “investigative repair” to tell us what’s up and, if possible, do minor repairs to ameliorate the water damage. Here’s a photo John Ullberg took of the cherry picker, from the south side of Dewitt Park!



CHILDREN & YOUTH

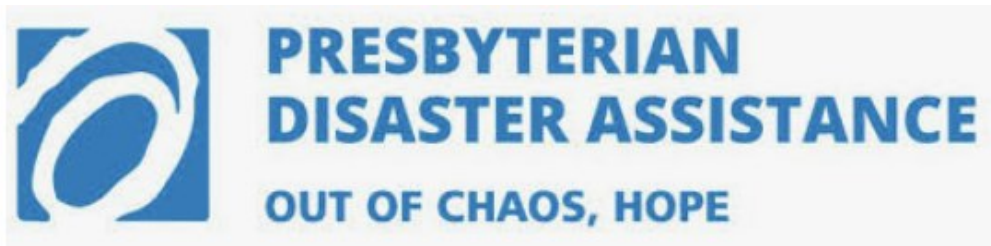
YOUTH GROUP

CARWASH for PDA—APRIL 14

As the youth explore their faith and how they are called to be in the world, they have been focusing on eco-justice and caring for their neighbor.

In response to their call to support their neighbors who are impacted by climate change, the youth have decided to support the PCUSA in their disaster relief kits by holding a car wash to raise money to assemble hygiene kits.

The youth will be washing cars after worship on **April 14**. Checks, cash and Venmo (new) will be accepted! An enthusiastic scrub down of your vehicle will be \$21. We thank you for your support of this cause and your contribution to disaster relief. **\$21=ONE car=ONE hygiene kit !**



UPCOMING EVENTS

HUNGRY GAME LOCK IN



5+grade and Up April 27-28 Saturday at 4:30p TO Sunday 1:00pm

Join us for this fun sleep over event where children learn all about food insecurity and the many ways it impacts people’s lives. Children will play church wide games, enjoy a pizza dinner and pop corn and a movie before lights out! Youth are asked to stay for adult education on Sunday until 12:30 to be a part of the Youth Groups presentation on what they have learned and how they hope to be good neighbors.



***Children who wish to sleep at home are welcome too! Our night will end around 10pm and parents are welcome to pick them up once the night’s activities are done.

BRING A FRIEND! All faith backgrounds are welcome!!!

Printed and emailed materials will be sent out on April 5th .

The Matching Game Playcard:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Geoff Lightfoote | A. When I was young I was afraid to pull two loose teeth and so the ‘big girl’ teeth grew in crooked” |
| 2. Sebastian Vander Ploeg Fallon | B. During my oral exams for my PhD, my major professor went out and smoked a joint.. |
| 3. Elizabeth Stuelke | C. My great, great, great, great uncle, an undertaker, buried author Washington Irving. |
| 4. Jeanette Miller | D. I’m an eagle scout. |
| 5. Bobbie Kohut | E. I saw the Beattles in DC Stadium for \$10. |
| 6. Linda Sharpe | F. I used to show cattle at the county and state fairs as a teenager in 4H. |
| 7. Tom Owens | G. I have small handwriting. |
| 8. Michael George | H. In a previous life I was a backup singer for Aretha |
| 9. Armando Aguilar-Pacheco | I. I was born in a Mormon hospital in Utah. |
| 10. John Weiss | J. I skipped third grade. |
| 11. Heather Lane | K. I enjoy my kiddos, gardening, baking, art and crafts, a good talk, and a cup of tea. |

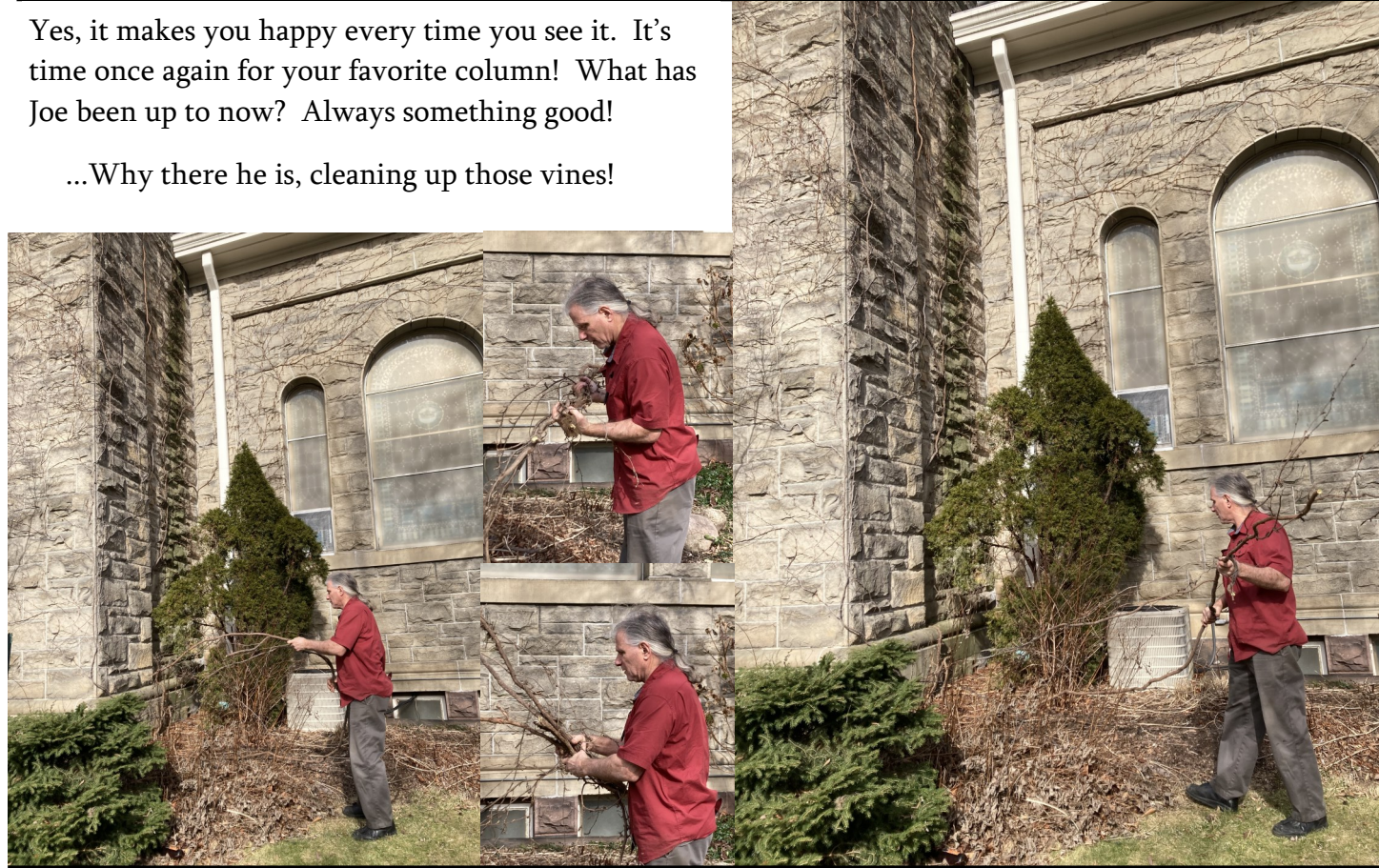
The answer key is below this line—so don’t look unless you’re really ready!

Answers: 1-F; 2-G; 3-A; 4-J; 5-I; 6-E; 7-B; 8-D; 9-K; 10-C; 11-H.

It's the Goe Joe Column!

Yes, it makes you happy every time you see it. It's time once again for your favorite column! What has Joe been up to now? Always something good!

...Why there he is, cleaning up those vines!



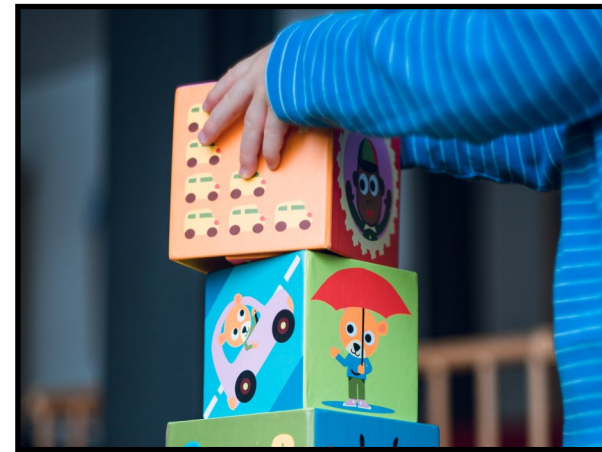
And some photos of our Labyrinth!

At an Adult Education time recently, we walked the Chartres Cathedral's eleven-circuit labyrinth. Here are a few photos to enjoy:



CHILDREN & YOUTH

NURSERY



WELCOME OUR NEW NURSERY ATTENDANT

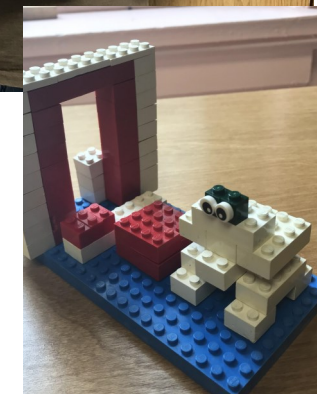
Maggie Stafford

Maggie might seem familiar to some of you as she has helped with the cooking and prep for the Yuletide dinner in the past.

She works with children during the week and is excited to get to know the youngest members of First Pres!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

In March we talked about the Holy Week and dove into the meaning of Jesus being the "Lamb of God" and the Lord's Supper. The children enjoyed learning through puppets, discussion, and a one-woman show depicting the events of Holy Week. As we acted out cheering on Palm Sunday, confessing and Ash Wednesday, Sleeping in the garden to seeing the tomb empty on Easter Sunday, the children had tons of questions as they explored and learned about this important week in our faith foundations. Here are some of the lambs the children created as they processed and connected to the great burden Jesus took on so that we may be forever forgiven by God.



CHILDREN & YOUTH

HEADING: TITLE



A WONDERFUL artistic reflection after our Ash Wednesday lesson by a youth who wants to remain anonymous.

	Sunday School VOLUNTEER	Sunday School Story
April 7	Christine Bataille	Road to Emmaus
April 14	Molly Benisch	Road to Emmaus
April 21	Jessa Dauria	Doubting Thomas
April 28	Volunteer	Ascension
May 5	Heather Lane	Ascension

Halleluiah He is risen! The children have enjoyed learning and exploring the gospel this season and it is so exciting to share the next chapters with them where WE respond to Jesus's words to "Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples..." (Matthew 28:19^A) I want to thank all of those who have and will continue to support the children and youth as they grow their faith and work to discern

PARENT PREVIEW

If you're busy and just need a quick "at a glance" I hope this section can summarize what the children have coming up.

Remember that when there is no Sunday school there are **CUSTOMIZED worship bags** in the Narthex for your children grades k-5. Each bag is labeled with your family name & filled with activities & items to help support your children during worship. **Please return all items** (toys & books) and the bags when finished. Guests are also welcome to take "Guest bags" for their family.

NURSERY

- Welcome to our new Nursery Staff Maggie!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Remember if worship Bags are always available in the Narthex for your child to enjoy. If you have suggestions or comments please leave them in the bag or email Mylika.

YOUTH GROUP

- April 14– PDA fundraiser for disaster relief
- Hungry Games Lock-in sleep over April 27-28 4:30 5th grade and up.

Publication of Research, 65 Years Later...

In January, [Elmer Ewing's article on the genetics of pea seed resistance to rot](#) -- based on his doctoral dissertation research -- was published in the [Journal of the American Society for Horticultural Science](#).

What makes this news? Ewing received his PhD from Cornell in 1959. Yet the journal's editors found his research still relevant 65 years later.

"It was worth the wait," says Ewing, professor emeritus in CALS School of Integrative Plant Science, now 92 years old. "In my whole career, it's the most satisfying research I've done."

Ewing built his reputation as a global expert in potato physiology at Cornell, and served as chair of the Department of Vegetable Crops and later Fruit and Vegetable Science from 1982 to 1996. But his pea seed-rot resistance story starts when he arrived in Ithaca in 1954 after earning degrees in chemistry and horticulture at the University of Illinois.

"I wanted to use chemistry and horticulture to help feed hungry people," Ewing recalls. After completing two years of coursework on campus, he traveled to Rockefeller Foundation's Mexican Agriculture Program (where the seeds of the Green Revolution were taking root) to conduct a year of field research on pea seed rot.

While in Mexico, Ewing isolated the causal organism – *Pythium* (now *Globisporangium*) fungus. He also found that seeds from purple-flowered peas were highly resistant to rot whereas the more common, white-flowered ones were very susceptible.

Ewing returned to Ithaca and conducted additional experiments, demonstrating the key to high resistance lay with seed coat tannins. He also found that pink-flowered peas had a different kind of tannin and were slightly less

resistant than purple-flowered peas.

[...] In 2016 – 10 years after he retired – Ewing decided to revisit his pea studies, motivated by the trend to use fewer fungicides in food production and the recognition that tannins can be healthful phytochemicals.

"Dry peas have become a vital source of protein in many parts of the world," notes Ewing.

Reprinted as excerpts from Cornell CALS "Field Note News" by Craig Cramer

Directly below: Elmer in his 20s in Mexico, conducting the original field research that led to January's publication.



10 years after retiring, Ewing revisited his pea studies, motivated by the trend to reduce fungicide use in food production and the recognition that tannins can be healthful phytochemicals. Here he reviews the original notebook (visible on the ground in top photo) where he recorded data from his experiments.

Welcome, Lauren Ponzoni!

Session Highlights from March

If you haven't heard already, we have a wonderful new Business Manager—Lauren Ponzoni! She has been working at catching us up on some undone tasks and getting a handle on how our church operates, and we enjoy having her here so much.

Lauren is not an employee of the church, but a contractor of whom we are a client. That said, she does spend time here in the offices each week, making deposits and paying invoices on our behalf.

If you'd like to welcome her or need something, she can be reached at busofc.fpci@gmail.com or by stopping by the church most Tuesday and Friday mornings!



At Session's March meeting, held after Adult Education on Sunday the 24th, a main item up for discussion was a leak that has appeared over the NE corner of the building.

First identified by Open Doors English, Buildings and Properties with Joe's help put a bucket underneath the leak to see how active it is. A couple days of rain later, there was two inches of water there, and some of the wooden rafters above are wet and rotting.

The question before the church is whether to spend money on a temporary but costly repair, or to spend a good deal more to re-do that entire section of the roof. Alternately, we could also plan to finish the entire north side of the roof, which we know is in need of a new slate roof.

Please pray with us as we seek more accurate bids and make this difficult decision for the church!

Tee is back in Thailand

Open Doors English fundraiser!

If you have been wondering where Tee Teerasupaluck, our Intern for Congregational Life, has been—he is back in Thailand, but hopefully only for a short stay.

He had to return home to revise his Visa status, and can then return. In the meantime, he is visiting with his family and was able to be in Thailand for their recent and historic move permitting same-sex marriage, and Kirianne got to decorate her office, pictured below!

We are holding Tee in our prayers until he can return and resume his work among us. Please pray with us for speedy visas and safe travels.

This year, Open Doors English is celebrating 5 years of serving Ithaca's immigrants and refugees. Come celebrate with them! On Saturday, May 4th, here at the church, come for a delicious birthday dinner and benefit concert—an evening of food, connections, and music.

- Reserve seats for a vegetarian Latin American dinner by April 30th (search Open Doors English for the website). Dinner starts at 5:30.
- All are welcome to the 7pm concert featuring Cascadilla Creek, a women's ensemble. There will be a bake sale, too!

All the proceeds from the evening's events go to help Open Doors English continue to provide free and highly reduced-cost classes to students without means. Thank you for your support!

A Devotion from Bruce Lane.

We have been reading Lenten Devotions; this one was just written for a Personnel Committee meeting, but I liked it very much and asked if I could share it with you all. Here it is!

The title of my devotions today is: **I meant to do that...**

“The road to hell is paved with good intentions.”

That seems to be the leitmotif of my life! I start each day, each hour, with intentions to do good things, to help others, to get materials together to pass along to Jan for Personnel, to work on my taxes. And each hour and each day I look back and see that I either failed to make those intentions come true, or worse, that I didn't make any progress on them at all.

Shakespeare in Macbeth says “I have no spur To prick the sides of my intent, but only Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself And falls on the other.”

Its not that I don't have the *intention* to make good on my intentions... Its not even that I don't WANT to have altruistic intentions to do good (as opposed to just working on my taxes)... It is that the work is hard and it takes more effort and mental fortitude than I can bring to bear on most days.

I get distracted with the shiny objects of daily administrivia. The pressing need to sweep THOSE cobwebs, or worse, the really important need to understand WHY the Fed may be dithering about lowering interest rates.

Who but Mary Oliver would best understand me: “With what vigor and intention to please himself the little white dog flings himself into

every puddle on the muddy road.”

And its not just the **doing** of things – the accomplishing of tasks where my intentions often are not matched by my actual efforts. It is the harder, more important daily work of empathy and human understanding. The heavy lifting of helping others physically and emotionally, even when I feel least able to do so.

“He who loves his **dream** of community more than the Christian community itself becomes a destroyer of the latter, even though his personal intentions may be ever so honest and earnest and sacrificial.” says Dietrich Bonhoeffer

I think that there is no loftier success than to be a consistent example of someone who does something good for someone else. Doesn't have to be every day. Doesn't have to be measured in volume. It is action meeting good intention—however often we can muster it.

Let us pray:

Dear God, give us the strength to have our deeds match our intentions. And give us the wisdom to create intentions that serve the people, as did Jesus. Amen.

And now for a plug for the **Instant Church Directory!** Bruce and Heather are in it, and you can be too. Just fill out a form in the narthex or call the church: 607-272-2800 or church.fpci@gmail.com

