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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

Dear friends,

Firstly, corrections. I meant to share this full quote in last month’s column:

“His diplomat parents had instilled in him the value of face time: never write a memo if you can make a phone call, never make a phone call if you can meet in person.”

The point I was trying to make, had I completed the quote: Spend time together. Build relationships.

The quote was from Gwendolyn Brooks’ novel, “Horse,” which also includes a wonderful passage in which a preacher opens up the book of Job:

“I think you gonna like these verses,” the preacher says. “This here is God, bragging on how he create the horse.” He cleared his throat and read aloud in a preacher voice:

*Who gives the horse its strength,
or clothes his mane with thunder?
His splendid snort is terror;
he churns up the earth, rejoicing in his power.
He laughs at fear, afraid of nothing.
In frenzy he devours the ground;
he cannot sit still when the trumpet sounds.
At the blast of the trumpet, he snorts: ‘Hurrah!’*

A marvelous passage. But here I am, quoting a book that was quoted in a book; and here you are, reading a quote from a newsletter that quoted a book that quoted a book! Don’t read this out loud to anyone, or it will get more confusing still. Perhaps we should stay closer to our

Found Within:

- Adult Education
- The Music Library Duo!
- Meet some of our newest members
- Mid-Year Finance Reports
- Deacons Sunday

sources? One way to do this could be to join our new Thursday Bible Study! By the time you get this, we will have started meeting Thursdays at 12pm, on the lower level of the church (Heritage Room), and will have begun the slow and fun process of reading through a book, always stopping to talk on the way.

Biblical stories and texts always raise something unexpected. *Were you surprised to find this? Did you relate? Is it weird and different from our lives today? How can we understand what is happening? Does this call us to any action, or any change in our lives?* In reading together, we uncover many ways to look at things, and learn much about one another.

We welcome any of you who are able to join us. It’s not a heavy commitment; come if you like, and when you like. What we do hope, however, is that in going right back to the source of our faith, we will find a growing and deepening understanding of one another and ourselves, and be made ready to face the world around us as true Christians.

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

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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Building Superintendent: Joe Bocchiaro

Sunday Schedule: October 2025

October 5: World Communion Sunday!
Lamentations 1: 1-6 and 3: 19-26, and
2 Timothy 1: 1-14. “The Lord is my portion.”

October 12: 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time
Jeremiah 29: 1, 4-7 and 2 Timothy 2:8-15
“Wrangling over Words”

Monday, October 13, 3pm: Kendal Communion

October 19: Deacon’s Sunday!
Join us this service for worship led by the Deacons – and bring warm clothes to donate for the Clothesline of Warmth!

October 26: Reformation Sunday!
Join us to hear bagpipes and our guest preacher from the Synod, the Rev. SanDawna Ashley!

From Pastor Cindy

Dear Friends,

It seems to me that somewhere near the beginning of my recent sermons I mention that we are in turbulent times, and we are. As I think about all that is happening in our country and in our world, I find I hear in my head that old question, “What would Jesus do?” This question began as part of a book title, In His Steps: What Would Jesus Do? by Charles Sheldon in 1896. It became popular again in the 1990’s, and it is still a good question to ask.

It is a good question to ask, that is, as long as we do not presume to have a perfect and complete understanding of what he wants us to do. He does give us what I believe are some clear starting points. In just a few verses in Matthew 25 we are taught we are to welcome the stranger, feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, take care of the sick, and visit the prisoner. While it is very simple to say these things and to want to do them, it can be a lot harder to follow through on our beliefs than we might want it to be.

Rarely do we think of following our faith as a risky commitment, but sometimes it is, and I think we are facing risks in subtle and obvious ways we may not have encountered before. When his disciples were hungry on the Sabbath, Jesus plucked some “heads of grain” to feed them even though the authorities chastised him. Jesus placed the care of his disciples, his children, above anything else in the moment. If this is what Jesus would do, it is a good place for us to start. Much of what we are facing today is complex, but when strangers need a welcome and the hungry are needing food, we know what to do. It may be that it is riskier to follow our faith than in the past, but that is when to remember we are part of a community of faith and that Jesus has promised to be with us always.

In the Fellowship of Christ,Cindy

Adult Education in October:

Adult Education classes take place in Dodds Hall following fellowship time after the service, from 11:30-12:30. The room is accessible via the lift, found in the front of the sanctuary. We welcome all to come and join!

October 5: The first Sunday in October is known as World Communion Sunday, and it is the day we collect the Peace and Global Witness Special Offering. We all have a sense of what “peace” means, but what does “global witness” mean and how are the two connected? Join Pastor Cindy in a discussion of how we as individuals and the church as a community in Christ can be part of witnessing for peace. Questions and creativity are welcome!

October 12: “Lectio Divina: Home Spiritual Practices,” led by Rev. Barbara Schwartz. Lectio Divina (Lat: “divine reading”) comes from the ancient monastic tradition, and invites the reader to enter into a passage in contemplation rather than dissecting it. Join Barbara for an explanation and experience of this spiritual practice that we can all practice to deepen our own relationships with God.

October 19, Sermon Conversation: Bring your thoughtful responses to the sermon and join Pastor Cindy and the Deacons in a conversation about the morning’s message.

October 26: Principles of Kingian Nonviolence: Join Sara Carpenter and Cindy Weaver as they share what they learned from a seminar in Martin Luther King, Jr. inspired Non-Violent Direct Action.

Jesus said, “The first commandment is this: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.” - Mk 12: 30.

Through education, we love God with all our minds!

Deacons Sunday

Deacons Sunday will be Sunday, October 19th !

Our theme this year is The Good Samaritan from Luke 10:25-37. The Deacons have been studying this parable and comparing it to modern day events. We encourage you to think of the every day “good Samaritans” in your life, and how can we be good neighbors to others!

Deacon Sunday is also be the first day of the Clothesline of Warmth which will be strung up in the narthex through November 23. We are putting it up earlier this year so that the items can be worn as soon as it gets cold, and, once again, the items will be given to Open Doors English. So bring in your contributions – new or gently used hats, mittens, scarfs, jackets, etc. - beginning October 19. We are looking forward to seeing you on Deacon Sunday! Deacon Becca Hilts.

Celebration of Life: Bob Stull

5pm, October 18
CRS Barn: 2622 N Triphammer Road
Ithaca, NY 14850

His obituary was just posted, and we will print it in the next issue. All are welcome to remember him together on Saturday, Oct. 18!

Sing in the chorus of “Amahl”!

Rehearsals for this December’s production of “Amahl and the Night Visitors” is in full swing! Would you like to take part? There is a great chorus of shepherds and shepherdesses, and we need voices! You can choose to sing only (seated), sing and act, or just act—a group runs onto stage bearing food for the kings, and some will also get the chance to dance!

Contact David Neal: David.neal09@gmail.com
or Kirianne: kirianne.fpci@gmail.com

...and let us know what your interest might be!

Birthdays in October:

6- Elaine Weiss
7- Kirianne Weaver
8- Joseph Tonzola
9- Angie Chen
11- Brad McFall
15- Benjamin Riley

17- Sadie Benisch
18- Magnolia Mead
22- Cris Haltom
28- Pam Pospisil
28- Carol Dornbusch
28- Doug Sybert
30- Alice Hatt

If you would like to be added to our list email the office: Churchfpci@gmail.com

happy

BIRTHDAY

We hold in our daily prayer:

David Brown; Jennifer Carlson; Suzy Courtney; Elmer Ewing; Harris Faulkner; Jeff Lovell; Martha Mapes; Katherine Pantlind; and Vivian and Jim Russell.



CHILDREN & YOUTH

WELCOME



Apple Picking Trip 9/13

October

- 5 Communion Sunday
- 12 No Sunday School
- 19 Genesis & Goodness
- 26 Laws and Levites (Super Sunday School)

PARENT PREVIEW



ALL AGES:

**YULETIDE
CONCERT
DINNER**

**Will Be Held
On
DECEMBER 6**



SUNDAY SCHOOL

We still need 22 of our 24 volunteers to sign up to help with Sunday school. If you are someone who is interested in seeing how we worship upstairs please reach out to Mylika.

If you are someone who is nervous about working with children you can also sign up and be a photographer during Sunday school. We always need candid photos of the children for church use. We have a special designated camera (old iPhone) for each volunteer to use.

YOUTH

Youth Group will be held on every Sunday when there is Sunday School. On the last Sunday of each month the youth will enjoy a Rummikub tournament!

This school year our theme will be Hadestown which is the Broadway Musical many of the youth saw on our mission trip this summer. We will be taking the songs from the show and reflecting on how they connect to scripture and the themes of Nature and Nurture (chosen by the youth in Feb 2025). Join us from 11:30-12:30 each Sunday for a fun time of songs, and reflection.

Summer Cleaning in the Music Room

Some of us may have spent our summers gardening, reading, mowing the lawn, or getting together with family and friends; but Jan Morgan and Susan Wade spent the summer re-organizing our Music Library!

With almost 800 titles needing to be boxed neatly on shelves, and more in file drawers and compilation books, this was a massive task! In 4-hour

stretches, they slowly worked their way through the collection, brought in new filing cabinets, and got everything into working order.

Rumor has it that we are already singing new anthems that were “discovered” in the process. Our huge thanks to Jan and Susan for sharing their talents and offering this amazing service to the church!



Meet John and Barbara Schwartz

In 1966 I finished graduate school with a PhD in Physics at Northwestern University in Evanston Ill. and was a Post Doctoral associate in the Cornell Engineering Physics department for 3 years. I became a faculty member at Ithaca College in the Physics department in 1969. We lived in Ithaca and bought a house next to South Hill school. We live there until 2003. We eventually bought some wooded property with access to a 13 acre pond and had a log home built. We are in the process of preparing our log home for sale, a daunting process.

My wife, Barbara, and I joined First Presbyterian Church Ithaca in the early 1977. Sue, our daughter, also joined as soon as able and attended 'Sunday school' as a youngster. Sue is a grown adult in her 40's. Sue and her husband, David, have an 8 year old son, our grandson. They live near Trumansburg.

In 1989's First Presbyterian participated in a Ministry of the Laity program that encouraged members to look at what they do on week days as a ministry of Servant Leadership. We looked at what we do as acts of leadership following Jesus' teaching. The goal was to serve others. Not to proselytize, convert people. We had to think about our secular lives in sacred ways. This was a seminal experience for me.

I have served as a member of the Session at First Presbyterian and as a representative of First Presbyterian Church with the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley

We are downsizing, again, after 20 years in our log home with the plan of moving closer to Trumansburg. I have rejoined First Presbyterian. Barbara, as an ordained member of the clergy, is a member of the Presbytery of Geneva.

I am a lifelong Presbyterian who grew up in Mankato, Minnesota, and graduated from PC(USA)-related Macalester College in St. Paul. In 1967 I came to Ithaca to begin graduate studies in cultural anthropology at Cornell. Shortly after arriving, I met my future husband John Schwartz, we were married in June 1968, and we continued living in Ithaca. I eventually finished my Ph.D. in 1979, after the births of our son and daughter. In the next several years, I carried out a research project on the NYS community dispute resolution system and occasionally taught anthropology classes.

John and I joined First Presbyterian Church in 1977, and our children were baptized there. In 1991 I was ordained as an elder, and I also began the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley's commissioned lay preacher training program. Toward the end of that training, I realized I was headed for seminary. In 1993 I began M.Div. studies at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, 30 years after I was a freshman at Macalester! Theological education was a challenging and richly rewarding experience. Feeling called to spiritual direction training, I went on to complete the Diploma in Spiritual Direction program at San Francisco Theological Seminary.

During the years leading up to my 2005 ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament, I had a spiritual direction practice in Ithaca and did frequent lay preaching. I have served as a designated and interim pastor in Presbyterian and Lutheran (ELCA) churches, and have done extensive pulpit supply preaching in the presbyteries of Geneva and Susquehanna Valley as well as in Lutheran and UCC congregations. Although I retired officially in 2023, I still do some supply preaching.

John and I appreciate living close to our son and daughter and son-in-law, and especially our young grandson. We are lifelong environmentalists and have canoed together for over 50 years. I enjoy cooking and baking, knitting, singing in the VOICES Community Chorus, practicing Qigong and Tai Chi, and reading murder mysteries.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Sunday School Apple Picking Trip!

On September 13 at 2pm the Sunday School (K-12) was hosted by the Bruce and Heather Lane at their daughter Katie Jacobson's apple orchard. Each child got pick as many delicious apples as they could carry. Every child also got to enjoy a very EXCITING and informative tour of the orchard by Bruce on in the gator (pictured below).

The children all had a fun time getting to know each other better and enjoying the wonderful weather!

Special Thanks to the chaperones Linda Sharpe, Jessa Dauria, Kiri Weaver, Bruce Lane and Heather Lane. If you would like to chaperone events like this please email Mylika Selah at Mylika.fpci@gmail.com



Finance report continued: Total assets, including restricted funds

In 2025, we budgeted \$77,000 from Investment income to help cover our annual expenses. We are very grateful for the gifts we have been given throughout the church’s life, which make us able to sustain and support our mission, ministry and music!

	Jun 30, 25
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1000 · Cash	
1003 · TCB Checking	202,345.96
1010 · Pastors' Discretionary Account	1,729.59
1030 · Money Mkt-TTC Bus Advantage	3,251.45
Total 1000 · Cash	207,327.00
Total Checking/Savings	207,327.00
Other Current Assets	
1020 · Receivables	
Total 1020 · Receivables	0.00
1100 · Investments	
1101 · General Endowment Funds	2,611,380.97
1103 · Wiggans Memorial Fund IMA	173,663.32
1104 · Park Fund	536,067.45
1105 · Inherited American Funds	321,022.46
1106 · CD Pastor's Discretionary	30,334.26
Total 1100 · Investments	3,672,468.46
Total Other Current Assets	3,672,468.46
Total Current Assets	3,879,795.46
TOTAL ASSETS	3,879,795.46

Ready for Winter? JPIC recommends a community resource

Citizen Emergency Preparedness Training

On Thursday, November 13, 2025, the NYS Citizen Preparedness Corp Training Program will hold a session in the Library Place at 105 W. Court Street. It is free and lasts from 4 to 5:30, including Q & A. Each participant will receive a backpack of supplies. To register, go to Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (<https://www.dhSES.ny.gov>). Recommended by JPIC, our committee on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.



Meet Samuel Ofori

Samuel Kofi Ofori currently works at Cayuga Health in patient services, cardiovascular scheduling. Sam’s family, including his sister Elizabeth who is a Deacon in our church, has spent time in both the USA and Ghana. He is a graduate of Pentecost University in Accra with a degree in Information Technology, where he was awarded the Best Student Software Developer award. He has worked as a data entry analyst and technical support assistant at Pentecost Preparatory School in Koforidua, Eastern Region, Ghana, where he also provided administrative support, and he has skills in web design, editing, and graphics.



In addition to all these things, Sam has also always contributed to his community and his church. He was the Church Event Coordinator at the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (RIIS Congregation), Brong Densuso, Eastern Region. There he also was the Junior Youth Organizer and Church Organist. Additionally, a year ago Sam spent several

months helping us here in our church office, too! If you have spent time staying in the sanctuary after church hours, you may have heard some of Sam’s playing on the piano!

John, Barbara and Sam are among our last class of new members.
Watch the bulletin for announcements about more membership classes coming soon!



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 AT 7PM:

The Spooktacular!

Our annual Hallowe’en Organ Spooktacular comes again! Join us in costume or just come as yourself—we’re all a little scary, after all. The Sanctuary sees a full crowd as families arrive, children unwrap candy, and local organists and other musicians play the spookiest music of the season. You won’t want to miss it!

Mid-Year Financials

Report from the Finance Committee: Mid-Year Financials

On the next two pages, please find a budget versus actuals report and assets report for the first half of fiscal year 2025. As of June 30, we are 50% through the 2025 fiscal year. Contributions are slightly ahead of 50%, and building use income is a bit behind (as of September, more building use income has come in). Investment income seems to be very high, but this is an artifact of the church being in a transitional year between two bookkeeping systems. Readers may remember from the June **Good News** that we are starting to report all income on our profit and loss statement, rather than reporting some “off-budget” income and expenses on the balance sheet. Any investment income that was reserved for restricted purposes fell into the latter category in earlier years, but is reported here in full on the profit and loss statement. This year we are fine-tuning the new system, and next year our budget numbers should be closer to actuals.

Total expenses for the year are right around the 50% one would hope for on June 30. However, you can see that there is quite a range once we look at individual departments or committees. Buildings and Properties in particular was a hard budget to estimate this year. Repair costs that used to come out of accounts on the balance sheet are now appearing on the profit and loss statement. Again, learning from this year, we will have a better idea of how to budget under our new paradigm in the next fiscal year.

As with the 2024 reports, we are presenting just the asset side of the balance sheet. We are still in the process of cleaning up the many liability accounts that track the restricted funds of the church. The entire balance sheet is still very detailed, and it is long—it would take up several pages of the **Good News**! In order to save space, and because these are not true liabilities, we are reproducing just the assets side of the balance sheet in the **Good News**.

If you have any questions about these reports, or would like to see more detailed versions of the P & L or balance sheet, please contact the chair of the Finance Committee, Christina Mead, at christina.mead@gmail.com.

At a glance:

- The next two pages show charts of expenses and income. By budget line, you will see what has been received and spent through the end of June, and then a column showing our total annual budget for each line.
- Income currently exceeds expenses by \$55,266.
- There are a few larger expenses that do not yet appear on this statement, as it only covers through the end of June.
- Altogether we are on track to be “in the black” at the end of the year.

Income and expenses: January—June, 2024 in comparison to budget

		Jan - Jun 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					
Income					
3000 · Income					
3001-1 · Members & Friends Contributions					
	3001 · Pledges	181,236.34	315,000.00	-133,763.66	57.54%
	3003 · Prior Year Pledges	19,440.00	1,000.00	18,440.00	1,944.0%
	3004 · Contribution Income	55,570.23	80,000.00	-24,429.77	69.46%
	3005 · Plate Offering	4,638.47	7,000.00	-2,361.53	66.26%
	3007 · Grant Income	500.00			
	3012 · Memorial Choir Funding	3,357.48	4,600.00	-1,242.52	72.99%
	3013 · Worship Flowers Income	520.00			
	3025 · Miscellaneous	2,331.31			
	Total 3001-1 · Members & Friends Contributions	267,593.83	407,600.00	-140,006.17	65.65%
3010-1 · Building Use Income					
	3011 · Open Doors ESL	0.00	29,700.00	-29,700.00	0.0%
	3017 · Kitchen Rental	1,037.00			
	3019 · Building Rent	4,055.35	16,000.00	-11,944.65	25.35%
	6005-1 · Offset for Manse Rent	7,800.00	14,400.00	-6,600.00	54.17%
	Total 3010-1 · Building Use Income	12,892.35	60,100.00	-47,207.65	21.45%
3200 · Investment Income					
	3201 · Park Investment Income - Restr	6,138.04	5,000.00	1,138.04	122.76%
	3202 · Tanner Investment Income	6,000.00	14,000.00	-8,000.00	42.86%
	3203 · Tompkins Investment Income	28,753.08	8,000.00	20,753.08	359.41%
	3204 · Money Market Interest Income	0.39	106.00	-105.61	0.37%
	3205 · Wiggans Investment Income	1,832.57	3,000.00	-1,167.43	61.09%
	6020 · DCE Wages funded by Invest	23,028.78	34,206.30	-11,177.52	67.32%
	6030 · DCE Health/Pen funded by invest	5,451.60	13,493.00	-8,041.40	40.4%
	Total 3200 · Investment Income	71,204.46	77,805.30	-6,600.84	91.52%
	3400 · Youth Fundraising Income	821.00	1,200.00	-379.00	68.42%
	Total 3000 · Income	352,511.64	546,705.30	-194,193.66	64.48%
	Total Income	352,511.64	546,705.30	-194,193.66	64.48%
	Gross Profit	352,511.64	546,705.30	-194,193.66	64.48%

Expense					
	4000 · MISSION	17,791.84	35,895.00	-18,103.16	49.57%
	4500 · WORSHIP & MUSIC	7,331.72	10,700.00	-3,368.28	68.52%
	5000 · CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	2,555.56	11,825.00	-9,269.44	21.61%
	5500 · MEMBERSHIP CONNECTIONS	3,130.76	6,850.00	-3,719.24	45.71%
	5700 · DEACONS	58.40	500.00	-441.60	11.68%
	5800 · PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY	3,875.00	6,000.00	-2,125.00	64.58%
	6000 · MINISTRY and STAFF	180,718.57	380,242.40	-199,523.83	47.53%
	6500 · BUILDINGS & PROPERTIES	43,746.48	68,250.00	-24,503.52	64.1%
	7000 · ADMINISTRATION	29,710.50	41,400.00	-11,689.50	71.76%
	Total Expense	288,918.83	561,662.40	-272,743.57	51.44%
	Net Ordinary Income	63,592.81	-14,957.10	78,549.91	-425.17%
	Net Income	63,592.81	-14,957.10	78,549.91	-425.17%