

# 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: [office@firstpresithaca.org](mailto:office@firstpresithaca.org) by the due date. We print and mail the Good News on a monthly basis. Email subscriptions also available.

**Due Date for the January 2023 issue: Friday December 16, 2022**

First Presbyterian Church Phone: 607-272-2800 • Fax: 607-272-2813

Email: [office@firstpresithaca.org](mailto:office@firstpresithaca.org) • Website: [www.firstpresithaca.org](http://www.firstpresithaca.org)

Rev. Kirianne Weaver: [kirianne@firstpresithaca.org](mailto:kirianne@firstpresithaca.org) • Rev. Cynthia A. Weaver: [cynthia@firstpresithaca.org](mailto:cynthia@firstpresithaca.org)

Director of Christian Education: Mylika Slaughter

Organist: Dr. Ian Woods • Chancel Choir Director: Dr. David Neal

Business Manager: currently vacant • Office Administrator: Linda Sharpe,

Building Superintendent: Joe Bocchiaro

Nursery Attendant: Abigail Gordon

### Worship Schedule: December 2022

**Sunday, December 4, 10am: Communion Sunday**

**The Second Sunday of Advent!**

Scripture: Isaiah 11: 1-10

Message: "A Shoot from the Tree of Jesse"

**Sunday, December 18: Christmas Pageant!**

**The Fourth Sunday of Advent**

Scripture: Isaiah 7: 10-16

Message: "Asking for a Sign."

**Monday, December 5 at 3pm:**

Communion Service at Kendal

**Saturday, December 24, 7 pm**

Christmas Eve Service!

**Sunday, December 11, 10am: Lessons and Carols!**

**The Third Sunday of Advent!**

*Join us and our wonderful choir as we celebrate the season in readings and congregational and choral carol singing.*

**Sunday, December 25, 10am: Merry Christmas!**

*Our Christmas Day service will use excerpts from Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" to lead us in worship, along with lots of actual Christmas carols!*

**...Read more about Advent and Christmas worship in the insert!**

Dear saints,

Grace and peace to you - in this season of new birth and renewal! As the darkness creeps in toward the equinox, Christmas lights easily claim their place in our thankful hearts. The theme of birth, though, in the midst of the first snows and the bitter cold is poignant: a child in this weather! New life, in this darkness?

It is a reminder to me that new life takes time. We like to imagine God's arrivals, our epiphanies, as taking place all at once: Aha! Eureka in the bathtub! The sudden realization captures our imaginations much better than the slow, arduous gestation of waiting and birth - but it is the latter path by which God patterns for us the real recreation of our lives, and most other creations that are worth our time.

This coming season is one that tests us. Every season does, in its way, but I believe this season tests our very life as a church. We are recovering, each one of us and all of us together - our individual selves and our communal expressions - recovering from a collective depression and coming out on the other side. We are, indeed, doing this; but as we do so we are now at the time when the Great Physician urges us to press forward and regain our strength. The world is a changed world: how are we adapting? How are we meeting its challenges? How are we serving our world?

It is winter, and the spring - the first signs of real growth - are still a long way off. But Advent

#### What's Inside:

- Deacons Corner
- Christmas Book Display
- Christmas Joy Offering
- Yuletide Dinner
- Instant Church Directory
- Youth Choir

and Christmas are now; they are reminding us that growing new things takes time and patience, that we must start now to develop what will become our joy later. Wheat and garlic are planted, next year's spring bulbs are already in the ground, fall pruning clips are on the brush pile and the dormant months are here to play their part. Our minds must dwell on what God is planting in our lives. What new life does God want for you? What new life does God want for us, together? What is it that God wants us to prepare to bring new hope and faith to our world?

Please join me in looking around us with renewed eyes. In this season of peace and joy, we are not only devotees of the nativity, we are their followers: those who seek new birthplaces for the Messiah, new stables on earth where his love is being born anew.

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

### From Pastor Cindy

Dear Friends,

The week before Halloween brought to my ears their first advertisement of the Christmas marketing season. I felt an inner groan and began to feel the pressure of finding the right gift for each family member. Though this feeling happens earlier and earlier, it is the same familiar annual near panic, and I am glad to report that I have found something that helps me get past the false pressures of Christmas and remain better focused on the event that is often lost in the hubbub of the season.

As one of our deacons said during the Deacon Sunday service, one of the great mysteries of our faith is that God came to visit us in the form of Jesus, and in order to keep this foremost in my heart and mind through the upcoming hours of Christmas advertising and bustle, I unpacked the simplest of my nativity scenes – a mother and a father with their heads bowed over a baby in a manger.

And so, my wish for you this Advent is that each day you find a simple way to delight in the enormity of Christmas. Find a time that is not filled with putting up the out door lights, selecting just the right tree, decorating the tree, baking cookies, buying presents, wrapping presents, writing Christmas cards, checking your list to be sure you haven't forgotten someone and then checking it twice, and remember how a mother and a father accepted the unexpected gift they were given with humble and loving hearts and nurtured that gift so that all might share in the love we were sent that first Christmas. It is a love which far-outlasts what all the advertisers promise. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Wishing you all a Christmas filled with the simple joy of love, Cindy

### Adult Education

**December 4:** Micah Beck will lead an Advent Bible Study.

**December 11:** Our new Choir Director, Dr. David Neal, will make a presentation on the special music the choir will be singing for Lessons and Carols.

**December 18:** Intergenerational Christmas Fair! Come to Dodds Hall to enjoy some special treats, sign cards to our friends who can't come to church in person, make Christmas crafts, and enjoy an extended time of fun and fellowship. One of our favorite traditions of the year!

**December 25:** No Adult Ed, but a very Merry Christmas to you!

### Stewardship 2023:

We are so very grateful to everyone who participated in our pledge drive for 2023. We are all at our best when we can budget and plan ahead, and we know already that we have a year coming that is worth being excited about. Library Place is coming in across the street, and we as a congregation need to be ready to welcome our new neighbors; there is much to do! Please join us in prayer and let us all open our hearts to what God has in store for us this wonderful new year!



### Announcements and Reminders

#### Office Hours

Without Kate, our office hours have been reduced to Tuesday through Friday, 8:30am-1pm. In the afternoons, please feel free to leave us a message!

For Christmas week, the office will be closed Monday through Friday. If you have information for the January 1st bulletin, please have it to the office by Monday morning, December 19th as bulletins will be printed early that week.

Remember that the church has been re-keyed. If you need access at unusual times, please stop in the office to get a new key!

Thank you!

#### Birthdays in December



- 1 - Martha Trattel
- 2 – Zaris Sybert
- 10 – Patrick Bohn
- 10 – Deborah Streeter
- 10 – Kelly Patterson
- 11 – Ah Ling
- 12 – Lucia Armstrong
- 15 – Marilyn Ewing
- 19 – Junko Furuta
- 21- Linda Sharpe
- 22 - Mylika Slaughter
- 30 – Mike Ferdinando

*...We would love to add your **birthday** and/or your **anniversary**. If it's not here, please email the office at [office@firstpresithaca.org](mailto:office@firstpresithaca.org) and we will be happy to add it!*

#### Office Closed for Christmas

The church offices will be closed for the Christmas Holiday from Sunday December 25th through Sunday January 1, 2023.

Be sure to watch the weekly church bulletin and the First Presbyterian website ([www.firstpresithaca.org](http://www.firstpresithaca.org)) for updates to deadlines and for announcements and activities.

#### Snow Policy

**The office follows ICSD "snow day" closures.** If the Ithaca City School District calls for a closure or delay, the church office follows Monday through Friday. For emergencies, call Kirianne at 607-882-1325.

#### We hold in our daily prayer:

Ann Cedarholm; Bobbie Collyer; Tom Hurst; Nita King; Betsy Mann; Greg McFall; Gayle Park; Mark Radice; and Connie and Don Scott.



*The practice of prayer requires discipline. When we think we can pray regularly without having a place and time, we grow sloppy and fail to accomplish it. Prayer without rhythm is like words without paper: both are often soon forgotten.*

## Youth Choir Photos!

Here are some photos to enjoy of our Youth Choir singing “The Two Houses” on November 13. Below right is the photographer’s son. Come hear their next piece, “Good King Wenceslas”, Dec. 11 and at the Yuletide Dinner on Friday, December 16 starting at 6pm—see the insert and webpage for tickets!



## Church has been re-keyed!

The church building has been re-keyed! Both the Buildings and Properties Committee and our insurance company are really happy about this. Some things to note:

1. **YOUR OLD KEYS WILL NO LONGER WORK!** You may dispose of them or we will collect them for recycling. Please contact the office (607-272-2800) to get a new key.
2. **DO NOT GIVE YOUR NEW KEY AWAY!** We are keeping track of who has keys and what their contact information is. DO NOT pass the key forward to someone else in an organization - connect that new person to the church office so that we can get the new contact information that is needed!

THANK YOU!

## Annual Meeting coming!

If you are an elder or in charge of a church group:

The church’s Annual Meeting is coming! Start thinking now about what you want to include in your annual report for the meeting packet. Photos, news, statistics, impact? Packets will be due in early to mid-January for the meeting, which takes place every year in late January. Thank you for your kind attention—and congregation, keep your eyes open for our invitation to the meeting in the January Good News!

*A Happy New Year  
to you all!*

## Deacons Corner

November and December are definitely celebration months. We celebrated our Deacons Sunday November 13th, when the service was a reminder of our humble commitment to serve and visit our community members, especially those who are in need. We reflected on the meaning of VISITATION in the context of the holy scriptures and our personal lives and how this impacts our church.

Thanksgiving celebration is an opportunity to be conscious of gratitude and the meaning of it in our daily life routines. We deacons keep doing our best to stay committed to our service call. Please consider being part of this ministry. If you want to be more involved, drop an email to Deborah S. (dhs4@cornell.edu) or Mischa D. (mischa.dixon59@gmail.com) Or come and join us at our monthly meeting on the first Sunday of the month after adult ed.

December comes with the hope and joy of Advent (Nov 27) and Christmas celebrations, and our lives are ever more enlightened and filled with elation as we remember the birth of our lord Jesus Christ. We Deacons wish you a very warm Merry Christmas.

Are you willing to help pack groceries for the Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard? We are responsible for packing on the 3rd Thursday of each month, from 1:30-3:00 pm. If you can help, please contact Tom O. (tgo2@cornell.edu). In addition, for all church members, remember to bring your canned or boxed donations for the Kitchen Cupboard and place them in the cupboard under the bell tower. Monetary contributions are also accepted. Thank you!

If you would like to sponsor a flower donation for the Sunday morning services, please contact Stella M (stellamartz@gmail.com) or the church office.

### Worship, Music and Spiritual Life

Advent begins next Sunday, and this year the Worship, Music, and Spiritual Life Committee invites you to enjoy “Kindling the Flame of Love: A Celtic Advent Devotional”, an Advent devotional offered by Presbyterians Today. This devotional is available to download by going to Presbyterians Today Celtic Advent Devotional. We will also have paper copies available in the narthex and the church office.



### Cents-Ability Update

The youth would like to thank the congregation for getting our Cents-Ability program off to such a generous start. Thanks to your pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, and more we collected \$141.50 which will be sent to local and national hunger relief efforts. Please keep setting your coins aside at each meal and bring them with you to church any Sunday. The Cents-Ability canisters will be inside the four entrances to the sanctuary each Sunday morning.

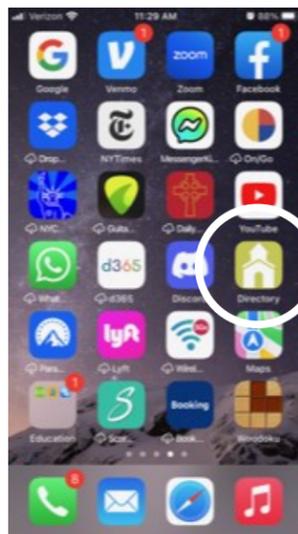
**Every penny counts!**



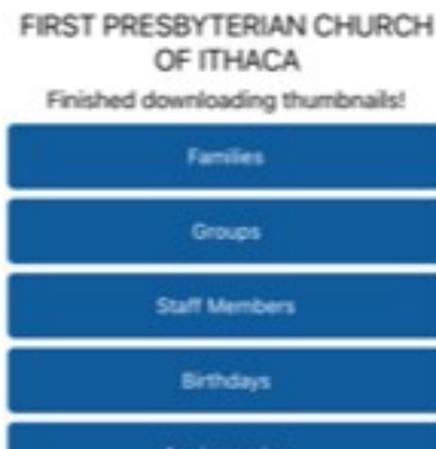
# Get a Feel for the Instant Church Directory app!

If you've been hesitating to download the Instant Church Directory app because you're not exactly sure what it will be like, here are some photos of a real-live user (me!) and what it all looks like on my phone.

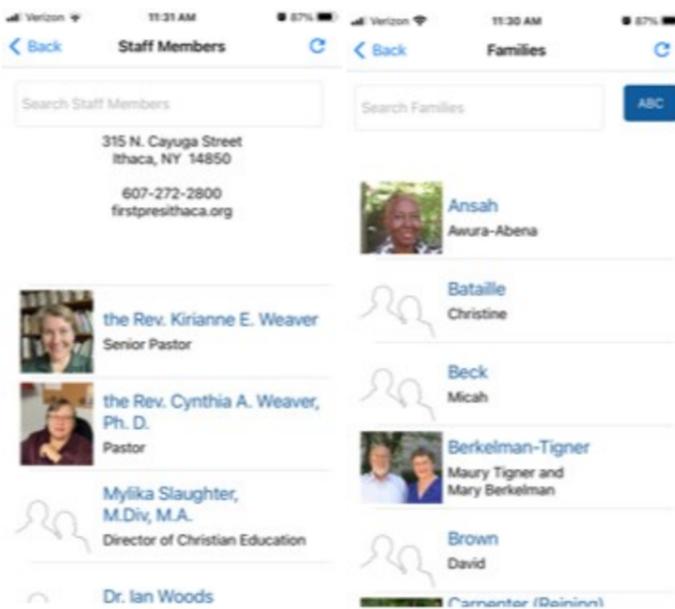
Here's the app icon on my screen, right:



...And here's the front page when I open it, below!



Here are screenshots of the Staff and Families pages as they appear on the screen:



And here's a sample family page, what you see when you touch one of the names of the families (mine again!):



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I hope this introduction helps some more of us to use this good new tool. I really believe it will help connect us to one another and draw us closer in community. See the Good News Insert for a mail-back form you can use to send us your information and get started! - Kirianne and the Membership Connections Committee

# Christmas Joy Offering

## THE PERFECT GIFT

When Jesus was born among us, he came as a helpless baby destined to bring joy, peace and salvation to his people. This child, God's Word made flesh—fully human and fully God—became one of us. One with us. One among us. In all of our vulnerabilities, struggles and triumphs, Jesus became one of us—leading us, knowing us, connecting us to himself and to each other, and offering us his gift of eternal life.

*The perfect gift.*

Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we reflect God's perfect gift to us, with generous support of church leaders among us- past, present, and future - who have pointed us to God.

We honor and celebrate leaders like retired pastors, church workers and their families who have faithfully guided and led us but who now find themselves in critical financial need. We honor and celebrate emerging leaders like students in schools and colleges equipping communities of color, who develop leadership skills as they pursue their education and prepare to bring their gifts in service to the world God loves so much.

Jesus' example as a child born to be among us and lead us to eternal life provides a pattern for us to follow as we celebrate those who have led us in the past and will lead us into the future. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we come together to support past, present, and future leaders, embodying God's perfect gift to us, Jesus Christ.

## Christmas Pageant

We welcome all children of the church to come join us in putting together the Christmas Pageant!

Casting and rehearsal:  
**Sunday, December 11 from 11:20-12:15**  
*meet in the choir room.*

**Pageant: in worship, Sunday December 18**  
*come that morning at 9am to the choir room for costumes and last minute preparation.*

Questions? Contact Kirianne:  
kirianne@firstpresithaca.org or  
cell: 607-882-1325

## Poinsettias

At Christmas time many of us want to remember or honor loved ones through the gift of a poinsettia in the chancel area on Christmas Eve. Poinsettias are displayed in the front of the church for our Christmas Eve service. You are welcome to take your poinsettia home after the service or you may leave it and it will be delivered to someone who is home-bound.

**Poinsettias are \$20 each.** To order, please complete the insert and send to the church office (315 N Cayuga St., Ithaca, NY 14850), along with your check made out to FPCI Flower Fund. You may also bring this form along with payment to the church office or leave in the collection plate on Sunday.

## Youth and Children



*Remember this?! It is a photo from the Yuletide Dinner in 2014. Lets get together and continue this tradition and make a lot more memories (and photos)!*

### December Godly Play Schedule

| Date        | Godly Play Story | Story Teller | Door Person | Church Activity    |
|-------------|------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|
| December 4  | Advent II        | Mylika       | Kate        | Communion          |
| December 11 | Advent III       | Mylika       | Ben         | Lessons & Carols   |
| December 18 | Advent IV        | Mylika       | Linda       | Christmas Pageant! |
| December 25 |                  |              |             | Christmas Day!     |

*The **Children and Youth Program** needs your help!*

There are so many ways to serve—as a nursery volunteer, a Godly Play storyteller or doorperson, as a helper with youth events, or by serving on the YMSS committee once a month. Parents and caregivers are especially welcome!

## Yuletide Dinner is BACK!!

YOU ARE INVITED! *Come support the youth and enjoy the return of this wonderful tradition.*

**Friday, DECEMBER 16**

**Dinner is at 6 pm & Music and Tree decorating from 7-8pm**

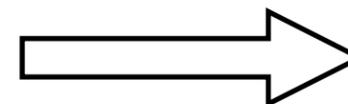
JOIN US December 16th at 6pm in Dobbs Hall for a wonderful dinner prepared by Heather Lane which will include vegan and vegetarian options. Dessert will be **APPLE HILL CAKE!**

At 7pm join us upstairs for live music and singing in the sanctuary followed by decorating the Christmas tree.

Tickets for this event will which will go towards future youth trips.

**Ticket prices:** To Be Announced...

Check your bulletin or the QR code for future updates.



We will need **VOLUNTEERS** to make Apple Hill Cakes.

Sign up will be available at Fellowship Time or contact Mylika at [mylika@firstpresithaca.org](mailto:mylika@firstpresithaca.org) or by cellphone at 516 324 2929

### WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

Ways to support this youth event:

1. Buy tickets early and invite friends
2. Make an Apple Hill cake
3. Be an adult helper to help Mylika with the youth.
4. Speak to David and Ian about offering a musical talent!

There is a page just for this event on the website.

Find more info under “ News & Events”

*Use your camera app, hold it over this code, open the link at the top of your phone.*

**SCAN ME!**



# WELCOME!

*This Advent, come and celebrate!  
There's much to do, and long to wait  
until the birth of that sweet boy  
who fills our lives with hope and joy.  
Within this page, you'll find our calls  
to fellowship and festivals;  
So, read! —And, maybe, be enticed  
to join with us, and welcome Christ!*



## Throughout Advent:

### Advent Devotionals:

This year's Advent Devotional comes from Presbyterians Today - "Kindling the Flame: A Celtic Advent Devotional." Copies will be available in the narthex and online. A link to the devotional can be found on the front page of the church website, [firstpresithaca.org](http://firstpresithaca.org).

### Poinsettias:

Keep an eye on the bulletin inserts to dedicate a Poinsettia in the sanctuary in honor or memory of someone you love. Poinsettias can be picked up at the end of the service on Christmas Eve.



## Clothesline of Warmth:



The Clothesline is back! From Sunday, Dec. 4 through Sunday, Dec. 25, bring new or gently used warm coats, hats, gloves, toasty socks—whatever you think best helps against the cold. Clip them to the clothesline to help people in our local area through the winter.

## A Display of Christmas Classics:



Contribute to our "Art in the Narthex" displays by bringing in a favorite Christmas Book! The Worship, Music and Spiritual Life committee is gathering together a display of favorite Christmas stories. Include your name and any other relevant information - why you like the story, how you got the book, with whom you read it - anything that helps share your own Christmas joy!



## Advent Events:

Write these events on your calendars to participate in Christmas celebrations!

Sunday, November 27, 3pm:

### Hanging of the Greens.

We will gather at 3:00 pm to decorate our church! Meet outside to put lights on the bushes. Then, stay for a potluck supper in Dodds Hall before a look at the newly decorated sanctuary and a final end to the evening's preparations. During the afternoon and evening, we will take photos in front of the tree for our directory! \*ALL\* are welcome!

Sunday, December 11:

### Lessons and Carols!

The music continues as we celebrate a traditional service of Lessons and Carols! Our wonderful choirs will lead us in this sweeping Biblical story, through the prophets to the coming of the Christ. With readings interspersed with seasonal music, and the candles of hope, peace, and joy, Lessons and Carols is one of our favorite services of the year!



Friday, December 16:

## The Yuletide Dinner is Back!



Join us in Dodds Hall for a wonderful meal provided by Heather Lane, carols and Musical performances in the sanctuary.

Tickets are on sale now!

Adults—\$18; Child (6-11)—\$5  
Family — \$40; age 5 and under Free

Proceeds go to our Youth Summer Trip and other special events for our youth.

Contact Mylika with any questions.

Sunday, December 18, during church:

### Children's Pageant!

Our Children will reenact the story of Christmas for us all, and we shall continue our Advent waiting—for the day which is so near at hand! The Christmas Joy Offering, providing clergy renewal and help in crisis, will be collected that day too - and after church is:

## The Intergenerational Christmas Fair!

We offer coffee and cookies, crafts and cards! The intergenerational Christmas Fair is in Dodds Hall and the Fireside Room, and is so much fun for all.



Now, it is finally time for...

# Christmas Eve!

At 7pm, we will hold our

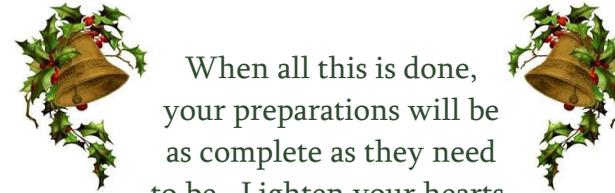
## Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

Now comes the night we have all been preparing for! Come to the church from Cayuga Street to see a live nativity at our front doors; then come to the warmth within, to worship God with carols, readings, and the amazing start of the greatest story ever told. Receive the light of the Christ candle as we end the service in candlelight—a treat for all!

*The offerings taken at the Christmas Eve services go to support the work of the Deacons of the church, in helping and serving the community.*



*(And there IS a service on Christmas Day—based on Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." We are always ready to worship on Sunday at 10am!)*



When all this is done, your preparations will be as complete as they need to be. Lighten your hearts, and do not worry about anything; Christmas is not for worry but for love. So enjoy, and remember, and give thanks, and pray:

“O Christ of love, be born again within my ready heart. Amen.”

*Whatever this year's holy days may bring, receive God's gift with praise; for through our days, we long to see a blessed new nativity—the birth of hope and peace, within this world so darkened by our sin. Come, raise your hopes, and lift your light; for love shines through this holy night.*



For more information about any of these events, please contact the church office:  
272-2800 or [office@firstpresithaca.org](mailto:office@firstpresithaca.org)  
315 N Cayuga Street  
[www.firstpresithaca.org](http://www.firstpresithaca.org)

# First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca



How to  
Celebrate  
Advent and  
Christmas  
with us

### Featuring:

- Advent Candle Lighting
- ❖ an Advent Devotional ❖
- Clothesline of Warmth ❖ the
- Hanging of the Greens ❖ Lessons and
- Carols ❖ the Yuletide Dinner
- ❖ the Children's Christmas Pageant ❖
- and Christmas Eve at 7pm!

