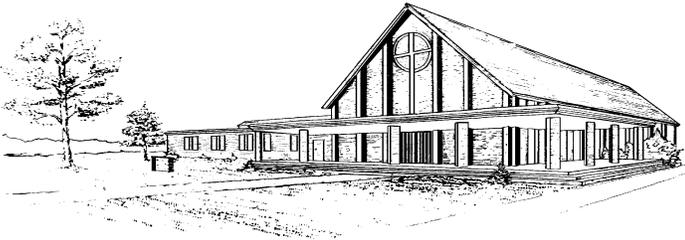


STEEPLE CHIMES

Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn

ISSUE: Two Hundred Thirty-two

MARCH 2020



A Message from Pastor Ann Van Cleef

Dear Friends

I had no intention of coming out of retirement to serve a church. Not this soon, anyway. But there's an old Yiddish proverb: "Man plans, God laughs." Or, as the great theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer put it, "Allow God to interrupt your life."

There is something about The First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn that made me want to listen to God's laughter and allow the interruption of life when God called.

Let me tell you a little about myself. From the age of ten, all I ever wanted to do was to become a music teacher. God kicked some stones out of my path, and thanks to some caring teachers, hard work, and a God-given musical "ear," I was able to attend Hofstra University, major in music, and achieve my goal.

Teaching jobs were difficult to find when I graduated from college. Baby Boomers were flooding the market, and school districts were closing schools that had been built just twelve years prior to accommodate those same Boomers. I was lucky to find a teaching position on the South Fork of Eastern Long Island, and I was determined to "bloom" where God had planted me.

But, after about seventeen years, I became restless. By that time, I had been married, divorced, and was raising a son on my own, so I couldn't quit my job and join the Peace Corps. I knew that the Holy Spirit was calling me to do *something*, but I couldn't discern what it was. I investigated the idea of becoming a foster mother to a handicapped child. I also explored the idea of getting a Master's Degree in Elder Studies and working with the Senior population. But, after much discernment, I realized that God was calling me to the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Seminary wasn't easy for me. I was (and still am) a left-brained thinker, logical and organized. I had to learn to use the right side of my brain, to develop my imagination, intuition, and learn to discern the various shades of gray that are found in theology. Furthermore, because I was still teaching and was commuting from Eastern Long Island to Queens in the evening, I was only able to take one class at a time, and it took me thirteen years to finish the 96-credit Master of Divinity program at New Brunswick Theological Seminary.

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(continued from page 1)

I was Presbyterian at the time, but there was a Congregational / United Church of Christ in Orient that needed a part-time Pastor. I was still in seminary, but the UCC was willing to license me, and I made the difficult decision to leave the PCUSA and join the UCC. I spent almost eighteen very happy years as Pastor of the Orient Congregational Church.

The decision to retire was not easy, but it was necessary. My husband and I are not getting any younger, and it was time to buy a camper, travel, cook healthy meals, and keep the house organized.

As a “retired” person, I am still involved with some community musical groups, and I continue my long-time work as a New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Adjudicator. I am also continuing my position as Registrar (equivalent to Stated Clerk) with the Suffolk Association of the United Church of Christ (equivalent to Presbytery), and as Chair of the Commission on Ministry for the New York Conference (equivalent to Synod). But I’m happy to report that my husband, Bob, is eating well, the house looks pretty good, we’re looking at travel catalogues, and there’s a pile of things in the garage ready to be put into the camper. God has blessed us abundantly.

I will be the Temporary Supply Pastor at The First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn from Ash Wednesday through May 17. We will be journeying through Lent together, grieving Jesus’ suffering and death during Holy Week, and rejoicing in his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

My doctorate at Hartford Seminary was in worship design, so after Easter, I hope to be able to do some special themed worship services, particularly for Earth Day and Mother’s Day.

My call to serve FPCG is a 2/5 call. During Lent, I will be “on campus” Sundays and Wednesdays, and will be working from home on Mondays. Each week, I will post my specific hours in the church bulletin. E-mails are always welcomed at pastorannsutton@yahoo.com. Be sure to put the word “Greenlawn” on the subject line, and your e-mails will be given priority.

God always puts the right people, both clergy and lay, in the right church at the right time. I thank God for the excellent ministry of my seminary friend, Pastor Fred Woodward, during his tenure here. I pray that God will allow me to continue his fine work during my short time with you, and that God will find you an Interim Pastor who loves you as much as you have been loved in the past and are loved right now.

With blessings,
Pastor Ann

Lenten Services

Ash Wednesday – February 26 – 6:00 p.m.
Service, Communion, and Soup Supper

Wednesdays of Lent – March 4, 11, 18, 25, and April 1 at 6:00 p.m.
Service, Soup Supper, Discussion, and
Fellowship with Friends from Bethany and Sweet Hollow Presbyterian Churches

Palm Sunday – April 5 at 10:30 a.m.
Join us here at First Presbyterian as we celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem with
shouts of "Hosanna!"

Maundy Thursday – April 9 at 6:00 p.m.
Tenebrae Service
(We will determine soon if we want to include a soup supper)

Good Friday – April 10 at 8:00 p.m.
Bethany Presbyterian Church has invited us to join them at their Service.

Easter Sunday – April 12
Sweet Hollow Presbyterian Church has invited us to join them at their
6:30 Sunrise Service

Easter Breakfast here at First Presbyterian at 9:00 a.m.
Joyous Service of the Resurrection in our Sanctuary at 10:30 a.m.



*(All Services will take place here at First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn
unless otherwise indicated in bold type.)*

PRAYER CORNER

MARCH 2020

AWARENESS

-Miriam Teichner

God—let me be aware.
Let me not stumble blindly down the ways,
Just getting somehow safely through the days,
Not even groping for another hand,
Not even wondering why it all was planned,
Eyes to the ground unseeking for the light,
Soul never aching for a wild-winged flight,
Please, keep me eager just to do my share.
God—let me be aware.

God—let me be aware.
Stab my soul fiercely with others' pain,
Let me walk seeing horror and stain.
Let my hands, groping, find other hands.
Give me the heart that divines, understands.
Give me the courage, wounded, to fight.
Flood me with knowledge, drench me in light.
Please, keep me eager just to do my share.
God—let me be aware.

I AM ONLY ONE

~Edward Everett Hale

“I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything,
But still I can do something: And because I cannot do everything,
I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”

*“Remember there’s no such thing as a small act of kindness.
Every act creates a ripple with no logical end.”*

~Scott Adams

Lord, make my life a window for Your light to shine through
and a mirror to reflect Your love to all I meet.

-Robert Harold Schuller

I’ve always been impressed by this poem (that was later set to music) written by Howard Walter while in his early twenties. I’ve also noticed the subtle difference in the last line. While secular society uses the phrase: Laugh ~ Love ~ Live.

Mr. Walter captured the spirit that we as Christians try to use:

LAUGH ~ and LOVE ~ and LIFT

as we try to be encouragers and lift up one another.

MY CREED
~Howard Arnold Walter

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
I would be pure, for there are those who care.
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer,
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.
I would be friend to all—the foe, the friendless;
I would be giving, and forget the gift.
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up—and laugh—and love—and lift.

Submitted by Betty Chatfield

Thank You!

I would like to thank the congregation for its astonishing generosity to me and Frances on our last day in worship on February 23rd. The gifts and well-wishes from members and friends of the congregation were deeply touching. Some of you shared moving stories about special times our lives intersected as when, for example, it was my privilege to offer pastoral care. Many of you have written notes, made calls or sent texts of congratulation. Over the last weeks, families have brought children forward to greet me whom it was my blessing to baptize. For all of this, I am grateful beyond the telling.

During worship itself, we were given the gift of sacred music by Rob Murphy, a longtime friend of our congregation. And after worship, we shared a fellowship meal made possible by many loving hands, including those of Elder Debbie Eitel and our deacons.

Please accept this expression of gratitude for your kindness to us over these last dozen years of shared ministry, and for our special time together in worship and fellowship on Transfiguration Sunday.

I will hold you all in my heart, and I know you will always be held in the heart of God.

Blessings,
Pastor Fred



First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn



497 Pulaski Road
Greenlawn, New York 11740
Phone: 631-261-2150
www.greenlawnpresbyterianchurch.org
facebook.com/First-Presbyterian-Church-of-Greenlawn

Sunday Worship And Sunday School

10:30 AM

Pastor Ann's Office Hours

please call (631) 260-2150
for appointment schedule and consultations.

OUR STAFF

Rev. Dr. Ann Van Cleef,

Temporary Supply Pastor

Linda Siegmann, Administrative Assistant

Debbie Eitel, Fellowship Director

Leonora Colletti, Director of Music

Jim Dean, Treasurer

Betty Chatfield, Financial Secretary

Susan Perrotta, Benevolence Treasurer

This is *Your* Church

Church is not something
you go to,
It is a family you belong to.

Ask yourself :
“How is God calling **Me** to His Service?”