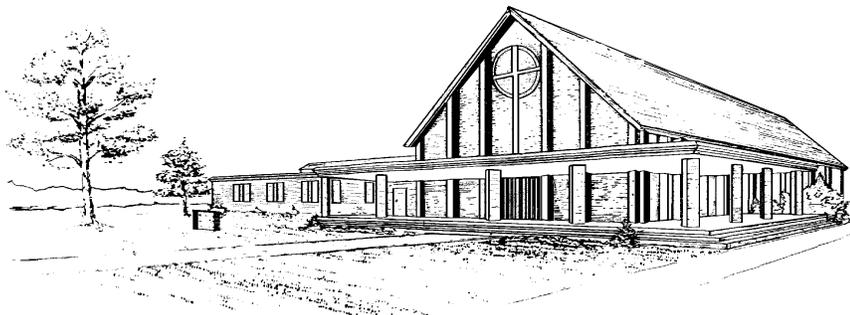


STEEPLE CHIMES

Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn

ISSUE: Two Hundred Five

NOVEMBER 2017



Message From the Pastor

As I grew up in our church, you taught me about the vertical and horizontal dimensions of Christian life. You explained that the horizontal dimension, like the horizontal beam on the cross, rests on the vertical one; that the vertical dimension has to do with our relationship with our God who creates, redeems and empowers life; and that the horizontal dimension concerns our relationship with the neighbors God gives us to love. You told me that it is our very relationship with God that helps us to recognize our neighbors as neighbors, rather than as strangers, competitors, or enemies.

I learned from you that the Ten Commandments are rooted in the self-revelation of God: “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt” (Ex. 20:2; Deut. 5:6). You helped me to see that all the “oughts” of Christian life flow out of the “is” of God’s love for us in Jesus Christ.

You instructed me that the horizontal dimension of stewardship (our mutual obligations as members of Christ church, both to one another and to the world into which we are sent) rests upon the vertical dimension, namely that “the earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Ps. 24:1). You invited in me the recognition that if the horizontal dimension of stewardship draws on the language of *duties* and *responsibilities*, all the stuff we *have* to do, the vertical dimension frees us to turn our gaze from what we *have* to do to what, through God’s empowering Spirit, we *get* to do. You taught me the new language of *response-ability*, how our Creator enables us to care for others rather than leaving us all wrapped up in the tiny package of autonomous self.

Sunday, November 19th, is stewardship commitment Sunday. May we discover in stewardship not burden (“have to”) but buoyancy (“can”). May our responsibility become response-ability. That is, may we as individuals and as a congregation be freed to live joyfully in response to the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ. Then maybe we’ll discover that love of God and the love of neighbor are not an either/or proposition, that love is not divided. In that new way of seeing may the love of God be for us the love of neighbor, and the love of neighbor, the love of God.

See you in church,
Pastor Fred

Annual Huntington Community Thanksgiving Service (11-19-17)

“Gratitude, not understanding, is the secret to joy and equanimity”- Anne Lamott

Over the last four and a half decades, members of our Huntington area churches have gathered to worship together and to offer thanks to our Creator and Redeemer for all good gifts. In the last decade or so, the worship has become increasingly diverse and inclusive. At the 45th Annual service last November, members of many faith traditions, including Baha’i, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh, joined together in an act of thanksgiving unity and solidarity.

In a season in our national life when divisions tear at us, what an opportunity to affirm our oneness as a people marked out by grace, and set apart for gratitude!

After our worship beginning at 7:30 PM, there will be a time for refreshments. All members are invited to bring a light dessert to share. Reach out to Deacon Arlissa Dean or Elder Susan Perrotta to let them know that you are coming and what you intend to bring.

Submitted by Pastor Fred

How Big Is Your God?

How big is our God? There is an important sense in which we get to decide just how big or small our God is going to be. One of the ways we can do that is through our giving. So, just how big is our God?

Although we often think of stewardship as what we give to the church in the way of money, we know that it is really much more than that. It is about the way we choose to live with all that has been entrusted to our care. Stewardship is rooted in the conviction that “the earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Ps. 24:1). Stewardship expresses the conviction that what defines us in the end is not what we accumulate, but what we give away, how we release our gratitude in generosity.

Stewardship is not so much about *how much we give*, but *how we choose to spend what we have been given*. Stewardship is our prayerful response to what God is doing in our lives and in our world. Making a financial pledge is one expression of both our responsibility as members of Christ’s body, and of our new *response-ability* made possible in Jesus Christ, our newfound capacity to respond as the new creatures we really are to the grace of God that we ourselves have experienced.

On Stewardship Sunday, November 19th, some of us shall be pledging because we feel that we should. Others of us shall pledge because we know we can. But whatever we decide to pledge or protect, give or withhold, may we act not in fear but in freedom. For in that way we shall proclaim just how big we really believe our God to be.

Submitted by Pastor Fred

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DINNER

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH ~ 6:00 PM

**This year we will be celebrating Thanksgiving
with our friends from the
Ebenezer Wesleyan and Fraternidad Cristiana Congregations!**



Fall Church Workday

**Saturday, November 18th
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM**

**Please come and help us clean.
There is something for everyone to do!!!
Please sign up on the
Bulletin Board**

**Thank you!
Buildings and Grounds
Committee**

November Youth Happenings

Want to know more about the Church Youth Group?
Contact Youth Director Debbie Eitel at debbie_eitel@ibi.com



Saturday Nov 11 Annual Thanksgiving Dinner ~ 6PM

In the CE Hall - come out and enjoy a delicious Thanksgiving Dinner with your church family!
All 3 congregations invited to join together!

Saturday Nov 18 Church Work Day 10AM - 1PM

Come out and help us make our church "shine!"
Many hands make quick and light work!



Sunday Nov. 19 Thanksgiving Baskets!

We will be making the baskets immediately after church!
With the donated goods from our congregation.
This is a wonderful Outreach to our community!

We will be collecting gently used coats and jackets
"Jackets for Jesus" again this year -see box in hallway of church

Friday Nov 24 - 2 PM ~ *Decorate Our Church for Christmas!

All help appreciated!

PRAYER CORNER

November 2017

Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

I NEED THEE, LORD

~Peter Marshall

Speak to me, that I may hear Thee giving me courage
for hard times and strength for difficult places; giving me
determination for challenging tasks. I ask of Thee no easy
way, but just Thy grace that is sufficient for every need,
so that no matter how hard the way, how challenging the hour,
how dark the sky, I may be enabled to overcome.
In Thy strength, who hast overcome the world, I make this prayer.
Amen

THE DIFFERENCE

~Anonymous

I got up early one morning and rushed right into the day.
I had so much to accomplish that I didn't have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me, and heavier came each task.
"Why doesn't God help me?" I wondered. He answered, "you didn't ask."

I wanted to see joy and beauty, but the day toiled on, gray and bleak.
I wondered why God didn't show me, He said, "you didn't seek."

I tried to come into God's presence, I used all my keys at the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided, "My child you didn't knock."

I woke up early this morning and paused before entering the day.
I had so much to accomplish that I had to take time to pray.

*Enter His gates with thanksgiving, And His courts with praise.
Give thanks to Him; bless His name. Psalm 100:4*



The House by the Side of the Road

~Sam Walter Foss

There are hermit souls that live withdrawn in the place of their self-content; There are souls like stars, that dwell apart, in a fellowless firmament; There are pioneer souls that blaze their paths where highways never ran; but let me live by the side of the road and be a friend to man.

Let me live in a house by the side of the road, where the race of men go by, the men who are good and the men who are bad, as good and as bad as I. I would not sit in the scorner's seat, or hurl the cynic's ban;--Let me live in a house by the side of the road, and be a friend to man.

I see from my house by the side of the road, by the side of the highway of life, the men who press with the ardor of hope, the men who are faint with the strife. But I turn not away from their smiles nor their tears, both parts of an infinite plan; Let me live in a house by the side of the road, and be a friend to man.

I know there are brook-gladdened meadows ahead, and mountains of wearisome height; that the road passes on through the long afternoon, and stretches away to the night; but still I rejoice when the travelers rejoice, and weep with the strangers that moan, nor live in my house by the side of the road, like a man who dwells alone.

Let me live in my house by the side of the road, it's here the race of men go by; They are good, they are bad, they are weak, they are strong, wise, foolish-- so am I. Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat, or hurl the cynic's ban? Let me live in my house by the side of the road, and be a friend to man.

Submitted by Betty Chatfield

Anxiety: The Primary Diagnosis

It is helpful to notice how anxiety presents itself not only in our own lives, but also in our congregations: sometimes as anger, sometimes as grief, and sometimes simply as stuckness.

When we are anxious:

- ◆ we demand certainty while sacrificing curiosity;
- ◆ we engage in black/white (yes/no; either/or), all or nothing thinking
- ◆ we look for quick fixes and, when they are unavailable, our defensive behavior can create gridlock;
- ◆ we stiffen our positions over and against others and tighten our perspective;
- ◆ we lose our ability to hear without distortion, and our capacity to respond clearly and graciously

When we are anxious about some circumstance, that something has happened or may happen, our primary problem is often *not* that circumstance, but our anxiety about that circumstance. It is that anxiety bars us from full life in the present.

Submitted by Pastor Fred



2018 Stewardship Campaign

Dear Members and Friends,

Thank you for your generous giving to the First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn! Thoughtful stewardship of your resources enables our church to continue to serve our congregation and the people of the Greenlawn community. As we approach the end of 2017 we ask that you begin thinking about your commitment in the coming year. We're beginning our stewardship campaign this year with the hope of continuing the progress we've made toward balancing our church's budget. This year, we hope to receive pledges on *Stewardship Sunday*, November 19th.

Our church responded to ongoing operating deficits by making substantial cuts in our 2017 budget, including significant reductions in staff salaries. So far, thanks to these actions, it appears we may end the year with a small surplus. In time, we'd like to begin returning to salary levels which are more supportive of the church staff, and which allow more flexibility and creativity in our church programs.

Please take time to consider the place of this congregation in your life, in the community, and in the mission of the Church. In a world that seems ever more distracted from the Good News of Jesus Christ, here at First Presbyterian we have a place where we, our families, and our friends learn of the Father's love for each of us, through the life of his son Jesus. As we worship, sing, and pray, we grow as a congregation faithful to Christ's calling.

In a few weeks you'll receive your pledge card in the mail, or at the church. Please remember to bring your Pledge Card with you on Stewardship Sunday, November 19th. Please feel free to reach out to anyone on the Finance Committee (Betty Chatfield, Susan Perrotta, or Jim Dean) if you have questions or ideas about the Stewardship Campaign or our budget-building process.

With the support of each of us, our church can continue to serve our members and community, teaching them the Good News of Jesus Christ for years to come.

Your Finance Committee

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." 1 Peter 4:10

THIS IS YOUR CHURCH NEWSLETTER!

SUBMISSIONS TO STEEPLE CHIMES

Up-coming events, Messages, Poems, Prayers, Verses of inspiration, submitted by our readers are **ALWAYS welcome!** Did you find God somewhere in your life today? Tell us about it! We welcome your submission to Steeple Chimes! It's EASY to do:

- ◆ Send email to fpcgoffice@gmail.com with your submission. Please put "Steeple Chimes" in the Subject!
- ◆ Drop printed material in the Steeple Chimes mailbox, next to the entrance to the parlor!
- ◆ Clippings are welcome, just please provide a note as to the source!

Submissions to Steeple Chimes are due on the **third Monday of each month**. This date is to help get Steeple Chimes to you before the beginning of the next month!

First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn



497 Pulaski Road
Greenlawn, New York 11740
Phone: 631-261-2150

Sunday Worship ***Sunday School*** **10:30 AM**

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matt 19:14)

Pastor Fred's Office Hours

are from 11:00am through 5:00 pm Monday through Thursday... unless visiting or attending meetings. Outside the above hours, please call (631) 626-3702 for appointments and consultations.

OUR STAFF

Rev Frederick H. Woodward, Pastor
Linda Siegmann, Administrative Assistant
Catherine Mahler, Director of Music
Debra Eitel, Youth Director
Margaret Negrelli, Clerk of Session
Jim Dean, Treasurer
Betty Chatfield, Financial Secretary
Nancy MacIntyre, Benevolence Treasurer

This is Your Church

As Christians, we are called to serve God by serving others. Here at Greenlawn, many members respond to that call by volunteering their time and talents in one or more of the activities that support our church and community. Volunteers care for our church and facilities, participate in our worship and music services, nurture each other in times of need, and reach out to lend a helping hand in communities near and far.

Ask yourself :

*"How is God calling **Me** to His Service?"*