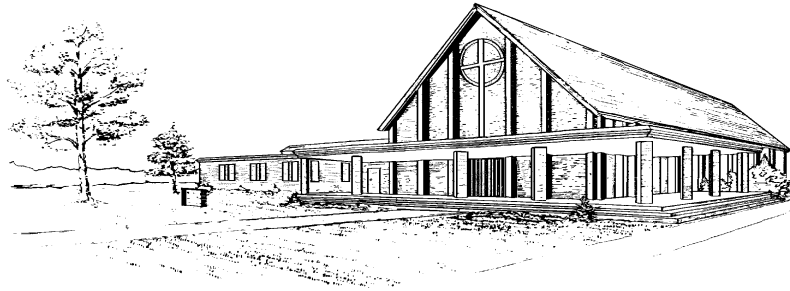


STEEPLE CHIMES

Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn

ISSUE: Two Hundred Two

JULY-AUGUST 2017



Message From the Pastor

We take summer vacations for granted but the idea of taking vacations is a fairly recent development in American history and was received at first with skepticism. Our Puritan forbears looked down upon taking any time away from work except in the observance of Sabbath. It was only later generations of Christians, partly under the influence of the 19th century Second Great Awakening movement, who recognized the potential of summer revivals and spiritual retreats to transform the human heart.

But transformation is pretty much the last thing many of us think of when we think of summer vacations. They are our time to get away “from it all.” Vacations raise questions therefore about our understanding of what it means to be human, and, if Christian, what it means to be Christ’s disciples.

We often start out our vacations with the best of intentions. “Why, we’ll commune with God on beach walks (or while fishing or on the golf course). After all, can’t God be experienced by a mountain lake or on the occasion of a lovely sunset?” Of course, but after a while, and apart from a worshipping community, we may discover ourselves giving attention to neither God nor neighbor, but only to an increasingly narrow version of ourselves.

My prayer for all of us is that we shall be alert to the opportunities that the summer brings us to deepen our faith in the God we are coming to know in Jesus Christ. For some of us, that may well mean attending, in a more intentional way, to the sacramental nature of all of life, not just some of it. For others it might mean a spiritual retreat. For still others, it might mean a rededication to spiritual practices. But my prayer for all of us is that we may be especially attentive to all the ways that our triune God is already at work in our world, and alert for the opportunities that may be given us to join God in that work. For I suspect that it is that which shall truly restore us; it is in that that we shall find our true re-creation.

See you in church,

Pastor Fred

Learning from Atheists

When author and speaker Larry Alex Taunton surveyed college students who self-identified as atheists, he discovered that the students' decision to embrace unbelief was often a very *emotional* one. When I read that, I thought of the atheists I know, many of whom think that they have come to atheism through cool and detached scientific reasoning, but whose stories- and bodies- sometimes tell a different story. As I read about Taunton's conversations, it occurred to me that what had happened with those budding atheists was analogous to what had happened with me: they had had a transformative experience. In their case, that experience might have served to contract, rather than expand them, to tighten, rather than loosen their grip on their own pretensions. But this was true also of my own first stirrings to faith, which were also marked by exaggerated earnestness, self-preoccupation and spiritual ostentation.

Taunton also offers clues as to how we might have more meaningful conversations with those who have a visceral hatred of faith (and of people of faith). He suggests that cool reasoning and logical argument may miss the mark. Listening is a start, but what kind of listening? The sort of deep listening, I think, that gets beneath the surface of things, that dislodges human story and teases it into telling, the sort of listening that gets beneath the anger to where the pain resides. All this presumes trust, of course, and that may be in short supply. But perhaps the open-ended question, "What led you to become an atheist?" is a good start, particularly if asked with genuine curiosity, and not so as to correct or otherwise convince.

And that, I think, is part of our calling, to hear and bear the pain of other human beings who, like us, are doing the best they can to play the hands they have been dealt and to make sense of a world that sometimes does not seem to make very much sense at all. If and when we do listen deeply, and without judgment, there is a good chance that Jesus will make himself present through the power of the Holy Spirit, even if He comes incognito, whether to them or to us.

Perhaps the real surprise in Taunton's interviews was his discovery of what led these young people to become atheists in the first place. As it turns out, what really helped these young people become atheists was church attendance. Well, not church attendance, per se, but attendance at churches where the message and mission were vague, which avoided the big questions of faith and/or offered glib and superficial answers to them. I pray that ours will never be that sort of church.

Submitted by Pastor Fred

Prayer of Thomas Merton

*My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself,
And the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please You
does, in fact please You.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this
You will lead me by the right road,
Though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore, I will trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for You are ever with me,
and You will never leave me to face my perils alone.*

Submitted by Pastor Fred

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES!

The following persons are graduating this year.
May the Lord bless them in their new endeavors.

Stephen Matthew Bologna-Jill graduated from Virginia Tech with a B.S. in Computer Science and a minor in Mathematics and Leadership. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps. Stephen is the grandson of Nancy Jill.

Genevieve Dean graduated from Tulane University with a B.S. in Management and a Master of Accounting degree. She will be working for Ernst and Young in New Orleans. Genevieve is the daughter of Arlissa and Jim Dean.

Michelle Perrotta graduated from Sacred Heart University with a B. A. in Sociology. She is continuing her studies at Sacred Heart working towards an M.A. in teaching. Michelle is the daughter of Susan Perrotta.

Nicholas Starost graduated from the University of Maryland with a GB.A. in Government and Politics. He will be continuing his career in Texas. Nicholas is the grandson of Evelyn Starost.

Andrew Walsh graduated *magnum cum laude* from Cornell University with a B.S. degree in Applied Economics and Management. He will be working at Barclay's in New York City. Andrew is the son of Frances Woodward and Pastor Fred.

Avery Infranco will graduate from Northport High School and the L. I. School for the Arts. She will be attending Temple University working towards a B.A. in Fine Arts and Musical Theater. Avery is the daughter of Maria Bindert.

SUMMER WORSHIP TIME

9:30 AM

JULY 2ND THROUGH SEPTEMBER 3RD

July-August Youth Happenings

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



Sunday July 30 - Car Wash

2-5 PM in the church driveway

Please come out and join us for some fun & fellowship for a good cause!

Sunday August 27- Car Wash

2-5 PM in the church driveway

Please come out and join us for some fun & fellowship for a good cause!

SUMMER CAMP

As school ends, and summer fun approaches, there's still time to register for fun at Holmes Presbyterian Camp and Conference Center! Holmes offers both day and overnight programs, allowing children and youth the opportunity to learn about God and community while playing and exploring God's creation. You can learn more about all of the exciting programs offered by visiting us online at www.HolmesCamp.org/Summer-Camp.

If you have any questions, contact the Holmes office by email at Holmes@HolmesCamp.org or by phone [\(845\) 878-6383](tel:(845)878-6383).



PRAYER CORNER

July-August 2017

—
A MODEL FOR PRAYER

~A Child's Finger Prayer~

~Anon

Many children learn to count on their fingers,
why not teach them to pray by their fingers!

THUMB --

Your thumb is the digit nearest your heart, so pray first for those who are closest to you.

SECOND FINGER--

The second finger is the one used for pointing. Pray for those who point you and others toward the truth, whether at church, home or school. Pray for teachers, caregivers, pastors, and parents.

THIRD FINGER--

The third finger is the tallest, pointing up towards heaven. Give thanks to God for who he is, and what he does for us.

FOURTH FINGER --

The fourth finger is the weakest. Pray for those who are in trouble and pain; the sick, injured, lonely, depressed, frightened. Pray also for God's forgiveness for your times of spiritual weakness and failure (i.e. tell Him your sins).

LITTLE FINGER --

The little finger is the smallest and last finger. We pray for our own needs last of all.

Dear God, you are wise and loving,
You are great and strong;
Glad when we do right,
Grieved when we do wrong.
Father God, my Father,
Guide me every hour;
Keep me safe and shield me
From temptation's power.
Amen

FIVE WAYS TO SHOW THE FLAG RESPECT

along with who enforces the US Flag Code
and what happens if you break it.

The US Flag Code sets forth a number of proper ways to handle and display the [American flag](#). Each guideline is meant as a way of showing the flag the utmost respect. President Franklin D. Roosevelt said it best with this key point from the flag code: **“The American flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing.”**

Here are five basic ways you can show the stars and stripes the respect it deserves.

- #1. **Don't let the flag touch the ground.** You should always make sure you are carrying the flag high enough so it doesn't touch or drag on the ground. But if it does, you don't necessarily need to burn it. Burning flags is meant for those that are in such a condition that renders them unable to fly.
- #2. **Always fly the American flag higher than all other flags.** If any other flags are displayed on the same pole, make sure Old Glory is the highest up.
- #3. **Don't fly the US flag at night without a proper light to illuminate it.**
- #4. **Can the flag be flown upside down?** Short answer, no. However, an upside-down flag is a symbol of extreme distress and you can fly the union facing down in situations of life or death.
- #5. **The flag should never be attached to a ceiling or used as a ceiling cover.** If you have one on your ceiling, you should take it down.

Who enforces the US Flag Code? Technically, nobody ensures everyone is following the rules properly. The Code is a bunch of rules and traditional customs that don't carry the weight of the law. Congress did attempt to create criminal penalties for burning American flags, but was overruled by the Supreme Court in 1989 and 1990. However, be wary of state laws; many have their own regarding US and state flags. In fact, Montana has the strictest policies for anyone caught defacing Old Glory. A fine in Montana can reach \$50,000 or a jail term can stretch to up to 10 years.

Happy 4th of July submitted by Betty Chatfield



A NEW SHARED MINISTRY

The Building and Grounds Committee and Session are happy to report that the First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn has added a new shared ministry for use of our facility. The ministry is the Fraternidad Christiana Church. This is a Spanish speaking church which is lead by Pastor Cristobal (Chris) Euceda. It is our desire and prayer that we will work together to best give glory to God

They are holding their church services in the sanctuary on Sundays at 6:00 PM. Their services are filled with spirit, praise and much uplifting music. They will also be using the Christian Education Hall several times during the week at night for study and celebration. They also have modified the choir room to provide an office for their pastor and a Sunday school room for the children in their church.

The agreement is currently for one year. We wish them well in their new ministry here at Greenlawn and look to a bright continuing future for them.

**ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS OF SESSION AND THE BOARD OF DEACONS
MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
TUESDAY, AUGUST 15TH**

**6:00 PM FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP
7:00 PM ANNUAL JOINT MEETING OF SESSION AND DEACONS**



PLEASE REMEMBER OUR FOOD PANTRY AS YOU SHOP FOR GROCERIES OVER THE SUMMER. OUR PANTRY IS USED YEAR-ROUND BY MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY.
THE BOARD OF DEACONS APPRECIATES THE GENEROSITY OF THE CONGREGATION!

SUBMISSIONS TO STEEPLE CHIMES

Messages, Poems, Prayers, Verses and inspiration, submitted by our members and 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

Summer Worship

9:30 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
Ed Close, Asst. 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?"*