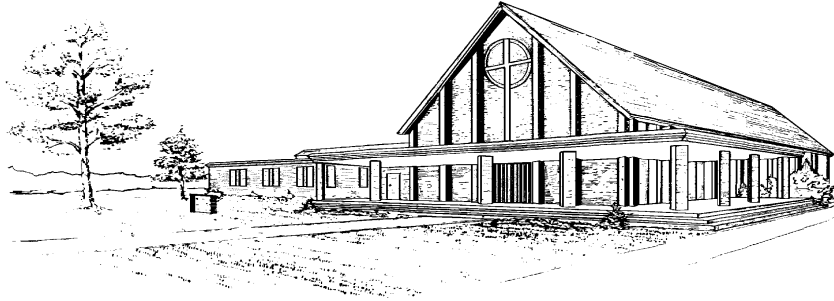


STEEPLE CHIMES

Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn

ISSUE: Two Hundred Thirty-one

FEBRUARY 2020



Message from the Pastor

They don't teach you in seminary how to write your last Steeple Chimes article, how to preach your last sermon or how to say goodbye. So what else is there to do but to throw oneself into the arms of our loving God?

I trust those arms carried me here in your season of life and in mine. I trust that we were brought together for a purpose, and that this leave-taking too is for a purpose. And I trust that you will all be held forever in the arms of our loving God.

The prophet Jeremiah wrote these well-remembered words to the captives in Babylonia, exiles from the Kingdom of Judah: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord."

Jeremiah spoke in a different age and to a different context, but perhaps we too find ourselves in a place of exile, where nothing remains the same, not even change. The old reliable world is passing away. The sources of authority we knew growing up are diminished. Treasured symbols of meaning are mocked.

I recently shared at Presbytery the story about the seminary professor who invited his beloved student over to his house to share with him some good news and bad news. The student asked for the bad news first, and it was bad: the professor had inoperable brain cancer. Overwrought, the student barely had it in him to ask the other question, but he did anyway. "So what's the good news?" he asked plaintively. The professor looked at his prized student aghast. "What's the good news?" the professor shouted in disbelief. "The *good news* is the good news!"

In my short time as a pastor, a shorter time than I might have hoped, it has been my conviction that among a pastor's chief burdens is the responsibility to share the bad news for which our good news is so very good. But let us never forget our good news, or the blessing it is to share it. For we are everyone of us gospels, and so even in this season of great regression, in our nation and in our world, in which not only the fabric of nation has become torn, but even the whole cloth of the good creation, let us not forget the good news or ever tire of telling it.

What is the good news? The *good news* is the good news! We are not hospice workers, but midwives. Ours is not the darkness of the tomb, but of the womb. And however great the pain we sometimes feel, ours is the pain of something struggling to be born. And maybe, should we dare to say it, is the rebirthing of God.

So let us trust the vision of wholeness we carry inside ourselves. Let us trust in the One who gives us our longing for home. Let us trust in Jesus, with whom we share our homesick tears, and in whose name we exiles offer our liquid prayers.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Fred



Looking Ahead

In a letter to the congregation and its friends, I have shared my intention to retire, and have announced my last Sunday will be February 23rd. But I am also pleased to share that discussions are underway between the Presbytery of Long Island, through its Committee on Ministry, the session, and the Rev. Ann VanCleeef to provide pastoral leadership at Greenlawn beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 26th. What precisely she will be doing beyond leading Sunday worship is yet to be fully worked out. But what so far is being imagined is a part time temporary pastoral relationship (between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ time), with an office day besides Sunday.

Pastor Ann is a graduate of Hofstra University. She received her Master of Divinity from New Brunswick Theological Seminary, and her Doctor of Ministry from Hartford Seminary. A second-career minister, she taught instrumental and vocal music on the South Fork of Long Island before being called as Pastor of the Orient Congregational Church, where she retired last January after more than seventeen years of service.

Pastor Ann holds her Ministerial Standing in The United Church of Christ. She is a staff member (Registrar) of the Suffolk Association (equivalent to Presbytery), and serves the New York Conference (equivalent to Synod) as Chair of the Commission on Ministry. She also serves on the UCCNY Women's Board and is an adjunct to the NY Conference Youth Board. Pastor Ann and her husband, Bob, live in Greenport. Pastor Ann recently finished a month-long Temporary Supply Pastorate at The Congregational Church of Huntington, and has led worship at Greenlawn in September, October and December. In a word, whatever distance there may be between us geographically or culturally, she gets you and she knows the way.

I have known Pastor Ann for 20 years, and I wish I had even a portion of her gifts. She brings to you a palette of remarkable talents, and I commend her to you with every confidence. I know too that you will love Pastor Ann with the same love with which you loved me, and I will be praying for both you and for her, and for the relationship that is already forming between you.

Submitted by Pastor Fred

Vision 2020

Bringing Our Future Into Focus February 9, 2020 @ 12pm in the Parlor

Ideas to build our church

This is an Open Forum.
All ideas and all people are welcome!

RETAIN active members
RECLAIM inactive members RECRUIT new members



LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS

BEGIN ON ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 26 AT 6:00 PM

AND CONTINUE ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS THROUGH

APRIL 1, 2020



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PRAYER CORNER

FEBRUARY 2020

“Promise Yourself”

~Christian D. Larson

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.
To talk health, happiness, and prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them
To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.

To think only the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best.
To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.
To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.
To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

To think well of yourself and to proclaim this fact to the world, not in loud words but great deeds.
To live in faith that the whole world is on your side so long as you are true to the best that is in you.”

DEEPLY ROOTED

-Billy Graham

The happiness which brings enduring worth to life is not the superficial happiness that is dependent on circumstances. It is the happiness and contentment that fills the soul even in the midst of the most distressing of circumstances and the most bitter environment. It is the kind of happiness that grins when things go wrong and smiles through the tears. The happiness for which our souls ache is one undisturbed by success or failure, one which will root deeply inside us and give inward relaxation, peace, and contentment, no matter what the surface problems may be. That kind of happiness stands in need of no outward stimulus.

“THINK” YOURSELF TO SUCCESS!”

~Marcia Reynolds, author of *Outsmart Your Brain*

TELL YOURSELF, “I *WILL* HAVE A GREAT DAY!”. It triggers your brain to release hormones that help you focus.

TAKE TIME TO LAUGH. When you feel blue, try visiting a humorous website. “There’s nothing like laughter to keep you feeling optimistic,”

MAKE A “COLLAGE OF GRATEFULNESS”. Surrounding yourself with photos of things you’re grateful for will remind you that good things do happen to you—and that will convince your brain to help make more good things happen.

IMAGINE SUCCESS. When you visualize a future triumph, try to really feel it, imagining all the details.

“What is success?

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

*To laugh often and much;
To win the respect of intelligent people
and the affection of children;
To earn the appreciation of honest critics
and endure the betrayal of false friends;
To appreciate beauty,
To find the best in others,
To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy
child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition;
To know even one life has breathed easier
because you have lived.*

This is to have succeeded.



Submitted by Betty Chatfield

First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn



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Sunday Worship And Sunday School

10:30 AM

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

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?*”