



The Steeple Chimes

The E-Newsletter of The First Presbyterian Church of Greenlawn
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Rev. Dr. Ann M. Van Cleef, Pastor

October, 2020

Pastor's Message

My Beloved Congregants,

We're back in the Sanctuary. But things are a bit different, aren't they? We wear masks, we sit apart, there's no coffee hour. That's the bad news. But let's look at some of the positive changes that we have made in the past six months.

We discovered technology. We learned to use the Zoom video conferencing system, which enabled us to worship together in time for Holy Week and Easter. No, it hasn't been perfect. Worship was interrupted several times a month by my weak Internet bandwidth shutting me down. We found that Zoom was not a good way to transmit music, and there were people who were just uncomfortable worshipping on line. But some good things happened, too. People who have been homebound for years were once again able to worship with us. The half hour before worship became a time of conversation and fellowship. Our church bonded in a new and different way.

And, we learned to be flexible. Remember Palm Sunday? No one had palms! Instead, we waved ribbons, handkerchiefs, newspapers, flowers, and whatever else we could lay our hands on. God didn't punish us. And what about Communion Sundays? Some of us had bread and grape juice, but I also saw cookies, muffins, sweet rolls, coffee, tea, water, and even Diet Coke! And lightning didn't strike us.

Our Vision 2020 Team was thinking so far outside of the box, I'm not sure they even know where the box *is* anymore! They came up with a wonderful on-line fellowship idea, "Coffee with Friends," this past June, and planned a special "Homecoming" event for our first Sunday back. I sincerely hope that this group will continue its work after the year 2020 is over.

Throughout all of this, people have continued to support us. That, coupled with some grants, kept us afloat financially during the time that our 12-step groups and nesting congregations were not able to be in the building.

We will be having a "Blessing of the Pets" Service on Sunday, October 4, and our Deacons are working on a plan to make a small food pantry available to the community on a full-time basis. Other ideas are in the offing for the fall and winter; stay tuned for details!

Changes have been made in our church building. We have been able to give the groups who share our facility their own meeting rooms and rest room. The old choir room downstairs is being refurbished, with Larry Foray doing much of the planning and work, with Gary Prentiss assisting. We hope to be able to turn that room into a place that can be offered to the community for meetings and social events. Our Building and Grounds



Committee is doing a major clean-up of the building, getting rid of “stuff” that has been taking up valuable real estate for years. Debbie Eitel has painted and redecorated the rest rooms. Leonora Colletti has put an incredible amount of time sorting through old music and choral arrangements, making and selling masks for the church, and assisting anyone who asks in any way that she can.

Our custodian, Gary Prentiss, has made arrangements to keep the building disinfected with the help of a new “fogger.” Arlissa Dean has purchased a no-touch thermometer, and takes everyone’s temperature on Sunday mornings. And, our secretary, Linda Siegmann is back. She will be working 20 hours a week, sometimes four days and sometimes five, depending on her schedule.

This is a church that is experiencing new life! The ironic part is this: the things we have been able to accomplish could not have been realized without the pandemic. COVID-19 forced us to think differently. For us, God was able to take an absolutely horrible situation and turn it into something that has given us new energy and a fresh outlook. Dare I use the word “miracle?”

We are not the same church that we were last winter. And I pray we can honor our Triune God by keeping this level of energy going. God isn’t done with us! God is still speaking!

With love and blessings,

Pastor Ann

Zoom Worship

How are we going to worship on Sundays?

We will “simulcast” our Sunday worship on Zoom for those who cannot be in the Sanctuary. You may log on as early as 10:00 a.m. for coffee and conversation. Worship begins promptly at 10:30. The easiest way to do Zoom is to download the Zoom App from the App Store. Zoom will work on a computer, a laptop, an I-Pad, or a Smartphone.

What are the Meeting IDs?

On October 4, the meeting ID is 984 2634 4685. The passcode is 710462

From October 11 through November 14, the meeting ID is 962 8758 3076. The passcode is 681753

Will I get a reminder about logging on to these services?

If you are on the church e-mail list, you will get a weekly e-mail with the Zoom link.

I don’t have a computer or a Smartphone. What can I do?

You may telephone the following number:

1-646-558-8656

You will be asked for a meeting ID and passcode. (Please see paragraph 2)

You won’t be able to see us, but you can still hear what’s going on.



Birthday Blessings!

October 7 – Ann Beck
October 9 – Parker Chatfield
October 9 – Trevor Chatfield
October 10 – Dawn Polcer
October 10 – Max Vaughan
October 19 – Julie Hago
October 20 – Arlissa Dean

October 24 – Talyn Wendell
October 26 – Nancy MacIntyre
October 27 – James Dean
October 30 – Helen Kozlowski
October 31 – Kathleen Gerlach
October 31 – Susan Perrotta





Prayer Corner

“God has given each of you some special abilities;
be sure to use them to help each other,
passing on to others
God’s many kinds of blessings.”
1 Peter 4:10 LB

RELIGION

This is what I found out about religion:
It gives you courage to make the decisions you
must make in a crisis, and the confidence to leave
the results to a higher Power.
Only by trust in God can a man carrying
responsibility find repose.
~Dwight D. Eisenhower

“Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks
you to explain the hope you have in God, but do it
with gentleness and respect. Keep your conscience
clear, so that when you are insulted, those who
speak evil of your good conduct as followers of
Christ will become ashamed of what they say.”
1 Peter 3:15b-16 GNB

Holy Spirit of God, visit now this soul of mine,
and tarry within it until the eventide.
Inspire all my thoughts.
Pervade all my imaginations.
Suggest all my decisions.
Lodge in my soul's most inward citadel,
and order all my doings.
Be with me in silence and in my speech,
in my haste and in my leisure,
in company and in solitude,
in the freshness of the morning
and the weariness of the evening.
Give me grace at all times
to rejoice in Thy mysterious companionship.
~John Baillie

On Men, Women, God, and Mountains

Have you ever noticed how in the scriptures men
are always going up into the mountains to commune
with the Lord? Yet in the scriptures we hardly ever
hear of women going to the mountains.

But we know why — right? Because the women
were too busy keeping life going; they couldn’t
abandon babies, meals, homes, fires, gardens, and a
thousand responsibilities to make the climb into the
mountains!

I was talking to a friend the other day, saying
that as a modern woman I feel like I’m never “free”
enough from my responsibilities, never in a quiet
enough space I want with God.

Her response floored me. “That is why God
comes to women. Men have to climb the mountain
to meet God, but God comes to women where ever
they are.”

I have been pondering on her words for weeks
and have searched my scriptures to see that what
she said is true. God does indeed come to women
where they are, when they are doing their ordinary,
everyday work. He meets them at the wells where
they draw water for their families, in their homes, in
their kitchens, in their gardens. He comes to them
as they sit beside sickbeds, as they give birth, care
for the elderly, and perform necessary mourning
and burial rites.

Even at the empty tomb, Mary was the first to
witness Christ’s resurrection. She was there
because she was doing the womanly chore of
properly preparing Christ’s body for burial. In these
seemingly mundane and ordinary tasks, these
women of the scriptures found themselves face to
face with divinity.

So if — like me — you ever start to bemoan the
fact that you don’t have as much time to spend in
the mountains with God as you would like.
Remember, God comes to women. He knows where
we are and the burdens we carry. He sees us, and if
we open our eyes and our hearts we will see Him,
even in the most ordinary places and in the most
ordinary things.

He lives. And he’s using a time such as this to
speak to women around the world.

(Submitted by Geri Milk)

BE A PERSON

~ Harry Emerson Fosdick

What Jesus Christ would say to us if he should speak to us in an audible voice now would be something like this:

Be a person. Be a real person. Stand on your own feet. Do not be pushed about by passing fads. Live by an inward light. Be true to an inward loyalty. If skepticism divides the church, vulgarity discolors social living, the profit motive makes industry often cruel, and nationalism blockades the way to peace, do not yes, yes the situation. Have a conscience of your own and, when in private life the clamor of public custom grows very loud, do you grow quiet, quiet enough to hear the beat and catch the rhythm of that inward drum.

HUMBLE TASKS

~ Helen Keller



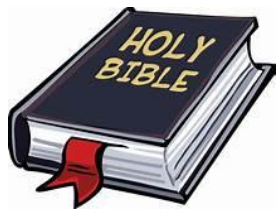
I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker,

(Submitted by Betty Chatfield)

Worship at FPC Greenlawn

On September 6, we observed Labor Day Weekend with a sermon titled “Work – A Four-Letter Word.”

September 13, our sermon was called “False Witness and Forgiveness.”



September 20 was our first day back in the Sanctuary with “A Service of the Resurrection.”

On September 27, we contemplated our future as a congregation with “Trusting Jesus and Fishing for People.”

Tentative themes and sermon titles for October include: “World Communion Sunday” (October 4); “The Stone that the Builders Rejected” (October 11); “Render Unto Caesar” (October 18); and “Which Commandments Are the Greatest?” (October 25).

Reopening

It took a lot of planning, but we did it! After six long months of “Zoom Church,” we worshiped together in our beautiful Sanctuary on September 20. It was so good to see folks in person and to worship God together. We had 27 in worship, with another 9 people “Zooming” in.

After the Service, the our Vision 2020 Team (Debbie Eitel, Larry Foray, and Leonora Colletti), led us in an all-church pep rally, where we cheered for our church leaders, committees, and for each other. It was a lot of fun. Thank you, Vision 2020!



We still can't have coffee hour or hug our friends. We have to wear masks, have our temperatures checked, and stay six feet away from non-family members. But we can pray, sing softly behind our masks, and hear the Word of God, knowing that we are in the presence of our sisters and brothers in Christ.

Now that we're back together, let's be intentional about making church attendance a priority. (And, if attendance in person is not possible, you will still have the opportunity to Zoom in.)

Little Free Food Pantry

Our Board of Deacons has voted to install a Little Free Food Pantry in the front of our church.

Very similar to the Little Free Libraries that are so popular, Little Free Food Pantries are a national trend. The idea is that those who are in need may



take what they need any hour of the day or night, and those who are able to give may place food in the pantry at any time.

By building and installing a Little Free Food Pantry, we will be able to increase our outreach to the community. We will do this on a trial basis, with hopes that the idea will not be abused.

Choir Room

Beneath the Narthex and part of the Sanctuary lies our choir room, which is about to be given new life by a group of our church members.

For the past several years, the choir room has been used by one of our Hispanic congregations, but this summer it was vacated. In September, Larry Foray spent a considerable amount of time knocking down old shelving and closets, thus increasing the usable square footage. Larry, along with Gary Prentiss, cleaned years of dirt from the floor, and plans are in place to paint the walls a light gray, with a bright white trim. As much as we would like to put a new floor in the room, we don't have the \$7,500 that is



needed at the moment. That will be a future project.

What will we do with the room once it is fixed up? There are several bookcases around the building and hundreds of books. The bookcases will be moved into the choir room and repainted to match the white trim. Books will be sorted and the ones we keep will be placed in the bookcases. Artwork will be hung on the wall. It is hoped that these steps will give the room an inviting, home-like appeal.

When it is finished, we hope to offer the room to people who want to rent it for baby showers, meetings, and other such one-time events. Not only will this be an outreach to the community, but it will also be another source of income for our church.



Many thanks to Larry Foray, Gary Prentiss, Leonora Colletti, Debbie Eitel, and Pastor Ann and Bob Van Cleef for their efforts. Thank you also to Otis Morvan who donated painting supplies to this project.

(Pictured above is our painting crew: Debbie Eitel, Larry Foray, Bob Van Cleef, and Pastor Ann Van Cleef.

Blessing of the Pets

On Sunday, October 4, at 2:00 p.m., our church will have a special *Blessing of the Pets* service, which will take place in the parking lot behind that church.

In the first part of the service we will pray for our pets and thank God for the joy that our pets have brought into our lives. We will also remember our pets who have crossed over the Rainbow Bridge. In the second part of the service, each pet will be individually blessed by Pastor Ann, and will receive a Certificate of Blessing with the pet's name written in lovely calligraphy by Kathleen Gerlach.



It is no coincidence that the service is being held the 4th of October, for that is the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, who is known for his great love of animals.

This service is open to the public. Pets should be on a leash or otherwise contained. Masks and Social Distancing for humans will be in effect.

Rest Rooms Updated

If you haven't seen them already, take a look inside our restrooms. Gary Prentiss has installed new lighting, and Debbie Eitel spent several evenings and weekends painting and re-decorating them. We thank Gary and Debbie for their hard work!



Coffee Mugs

When a building has been around for over sixty years, “stuff” accumulates. One of our Buildings and Grounds members refers to it as “building creep.”



We are in the process of getting rid of things that are outlived their usefulness, and are now simply taking up space.

Recently, the kitchenette in the Parlor was cleaned. Two dozen coffee mugs were removed from the shelves, and have been stored temporarily. If you have an emotional attachment to any of those mugs, please contact Pastor Ann. Otherwise, at the end of October, out they go!

Stewardship Campaign

November is Stewardship Month at FPCG. We will be thinking about what our church means to us, especially in light of the fact that we were unable to worship in our Sanctuary for six months.

There is so much more to stewardship than money. Stewardship is also about the sharing of time and talent. It’s about the realization that we have been given a wonderful gift, our church building, from our ancestors in faith, and thinking about how we are going to take care of it so we can pass it on to the next generations. It’s about giving back to the community. It’s about being thankful to God. Most of all, stewardship is about faith. It’s about trusting God, being more Christ-like, and being open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Very soon, you will be receiving a letter from our Finance Committee. Please prayerfully consider that FPCG means to you, and what your part will be in the future of our church.

Our Church Officers

Session

Betty Chatfield
Debbie Eitel
Diane Kirshhoff
Susan Perrotta
Ruth Satterlee

Deacons

Carolyn Brockett
Corinne Burdett
Arlissa Dean
Larry Foray
Kathleen Gerlach
Gary Prentiss
George Santos

From the Pastor’s Kitchen

I call this recipe *The World’s Easiest Biscuits*. My husband Bob just loves them.

I always keep Bisquick in my pantry. With it, you can make anything from pancakes to crepes to cakes to biscuits.

Ingredients:

2-1/4 cups Bisquick
2/3 cup milk

(I use water because of Bob’s allergies.)

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Stir ingredients until soft dough forms. Drop by spoonfuls onto ungreased cookie sheet. (I put them in a cupcake tin.) Bake 8 – 10 minutes or until golden brown.

I add rosemary to the mixture. You can also add grated American cheese. Enjoy!



New Fund Created

At its meeting on September 30, the Session approved the creation of a new fund. The purpose of the fund is to save enough money to install a new ceiling, good lighting, and a new floor in the old choir room.

We would like to thank Leonora Colletti, who donated the \$200 she made selling facemasks to this fund as a kickoff gift. Anyone who wants to contribute to this fund is invited to do so; just mail a check to the church with “Choir Room” in the memo line.

Thank You, George Santos

George Santos went to a lot of trouble roping off pews and making seating charts so that we could “social distance” on Sundays. “Well done, good and faithful servant.” Thank you for sharing your talents, George. You are much appreciated.



Reporter interviewing a 104-year-old woman: “And what do you think is the best thing about being 104?” She simply replied, “No peer pressure.”

I’ve sure gotten old! I’ve had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, new knees, fought skin cancer and diabetes. I’m half blind, can’t hear anything quieter than a jet engine, take 10 different medications that make me dizzy, winded, and subject to blackouts. Have bouts with dementia. Have poor circulation, hardly feel my hands and feet anymore. Can’t remember if I’m 85 or 92. Have lost all my friends.

But, thank goodness I still have my driver’s license!

It’s scary when you start making the same noises as your coffee maker!

Always remember this: You don’t stop laughing because you grow old. You grow old because you stop laughing!

“Why I Like Retirement”

Q: How many days is a week?

A: Six Saturdays, one Sunday.

Q: How many retirees does it take to change a light bulb?

A: Only one, but it might take all day.

Q: What is the biggest gripe of retirees?

A: There’s not enough time to get everything done.

Q: Why don’t retirees mind being called Seniors?

A: It comes with a 10% discount.

Q: Among retirees, what is considered formal attire?

A: Tied shoes.

Q: Why do retirees count pennies?

A: They are the only ones who have the time.

Q: What is the common term for someone who enjoys work and refuses to retire?

A: Crazy!

Q: Why are retirees so slow to clean out the basement, attic, or garage?

A: They know that as soon as they do, one of the adult kids will want to store stuff there.

Q: What do retirees call a long lunch?

A: Normal.

Q: What is the best way to describe retirement?

A: The never-ending Coffee Break.

Q: What is the biggest advantage of going back to school as a retiree?

A: If you cut class, no one calls your parents.

Q: What do you do all week?

A: Monday through Friday – nothing. Saturday and Sunday I rest.

Telephone and Internet Scams

This is just a reminder that your Pastor will never text you or call you to ask for money or gift cards.

Medicare will never call you to offer you a back brace or anything else. Never give your Medicare information to anyone except your doctor!

American Airlines will not give you a free flight if you “like” them on Facebook. Neither will any other airline.

And speaking of Facebook

Congresspersons do not receive a full salary pension for life after serving one term. Their pension system is based on years served.

If you add your age to your year of birth, you will always come up with the current year. This is not something that happens once in a thousand years. It’s basic math.



Michelle Obama’s mother does not receive a \$13,000 federal pension every month for watching her grandchildren. She was never a federal employee!

Be smart. Double check things before passing them along as “facts.”

A Reminder About Our Sunday AM Procedures:

- You will be required to wear a mask at all times while in the building. If you do not have one, or if you left your mask at home, we will give you one.
- Please enter the building from the back door, which will be propped open so you don't have to touch the door handle.
- You will be greeted by two ushers. One will aim a touchless thermometer at your forehead, and one will write your name down. Yes, we are required to take attendance during the pandemic.
- Please proceed directly into the Sanctuary. There will be a basket near the Communion Table where you may drop off your offering envelope.
- Every other row will be roped off. Please choose a seat. Sit where you choose, but please maintain 6 – 12 feet of social distancing.
- Bulletins may be picked up on the way into the Sanctuary. They will also be sent to you electronically in the middle of the week; you may print your own if you wish. The bulletins will have the words to the hymns. Bibles and hymnbooks will be stored away, so you might want to bring your own Bible to church. You may sign out a hymnbook to borrow for several months, if you wish.
- Please don't hug or kiss anyone, and don't shake anyone's hand.
- The bathroom nearest the Pastor's office is reserved for our exclusive use.
- There will be no coffee hour. However, if you want to visit with friends in the parking lot after church, that's fine. Remember, fresh air is your best friend during this pandemic.

