



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PITTSFORD

THE GOOD NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2023

### Embracing and Sharing Christ's Love

## CHARTING THE COURSE WITH PASTOR AARON

When the early Christians were seeing tremendous growth in the church (3,000 people becoming Christians in a single day!), we're told that they devoted themselves to studying the teachings of the Apostles and praying together (Acts 2:42). Prayer was an incredibly important spiritual discipline in those early years. In fact, it has always been important and even necessary for the church's vitality. I recently finished reading the autobiography of Presbyterian minister and revivalist Charles Finney, and he insisted that focused, intentional, and wide-spread prayer was a necessary component for the success of his revivals that spread across New York State in the 19th century. Through prayer, we focus on God and God's will, and, when we align our hearts with God's will, amazing things can happen. It is no wonder, then, that Jesus himself frequently separated from the crowds to find a place to pray (Luke 5:16). It is only when our hearts are aligned with God's will that it becomes true what Jesus said in Mark 11:24: "Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."

In my view, the Faith Forward initiative we have begun is all about seeking a revival of the Holy Spirit in First Presbyterian Church and throughout Greater Rochester. Through Faith Forward, we will be taking account of ourselves as a church and asking, "What ought to matter most?" Through asking ourselves that question, we also want to profess to God, "Thy will be done." This is the posture of seeking a revival, and this is the power of prayer.

In the July/August issue of *The Good News*, I introduced you to the 25 members of our Faith Forward Vision Team. Their job is to lead us in discerning and updating our church's mission, vision, and values (our "True North") to help the church know with greater clarity who we are becoming. They will also be helping us to create alignment to our True North by crafting a "roadmap" outlining the path to becoming that future church. Their work begins at a retreat on September 30 and October 1. In an earnest desire for revitalization and revival, I think it is necessary for us – the whole church – to be in heartfelt prayer for the Vision Team as they prepare for their work.

Toward that end, I invite you to participate in 20 Days of Prayer and Fasting for the Faith Forward initiative. Beginning on Sunday, September 10 (which is the start of our program year) and ending on Friday, September 29 (the day before the Vision Team retreat), you will have the daily opportunity to spend a brief, focused time praying that the Vision Team listens for and hears the voice of God. For that purpose, I have created the "20-Day Faith Forward Devotional." In this devotional, there is a short reading and a prayer for each of the 20 days. On Sunday, September 3, you can pick up a hard copy of the devotional either after worship or in the office during the week. The church office can email you a PDF copy of the devotional if you prefer. You will also be able to access a daily podcast version of the 20-day devotional. The 20-Day Faith Forward Devotional is meant to walk you step-by-step through a focused time of reflection and prayer as we begin this next phase of the Faith Forward journey.

*continued on next page*

Additionally, every Thursday during those twenty days, we will be meeting in our chapel from 7:00-7:30 am for a time of guided prayer and meditation. I will also be encouraging you to fast in addition to praying. Jesus taught us to fast (Matthew 6:16-18), and fasting helps to focus us on our need for God and for prayer. I will be fasting from all food on those days, and I encourage you to do the same thing, some kind of limited fasting, or a version of fasting that will be safe and healthy for you.

I truly desire for a revival of the Holy Spirit in my own life and in our church as a result of the Faith Forward process. I ask you to join me in praying for it, too.

~ Aaron

### **This Year's Stewardship Campaign: Share God's Blessings**

As September is arriving and we will soon be back to our "regular" church schedule, the Generosity Team is evaluating our funding needs for 2024. At this time, we ask you to prayerfully consider your blessings prior to Consecration Sunday, November 12, when we will ask you to "Share God's Blessings".

Your Generosity Team: Lew Becker, Chair; Andy Ashworth; Bill Blackmon; Faye Casey; Paul Irving; Rob Rhodes; Bill Rieth

### **Yoga for Wellness**

You've heard your friends, you've seen your fellow congregants, healthier, happier, walking straighter, fewer doctor visits, fewer falls, better balance, less medicine, more energy... you're not imagining that, they do Yoga for Wellness every week and YOU can too!

Right here at First Presbyterian Church, in the chapel, Thursdays 10-11 am.

You can get strong, flexible, and improve your balance for an independent, healthy, and active life! For more info email Lisacove1@outlook.com or call 585-766-8266. What are you waiting for—just give it a try. You will wish you started sooner.

## **Lectionary for September**

### **September 3**

#### **14th Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 3:1-15  
Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b  
Romans 12:9-21  
Matthew 16:21-28

### **September 10**

#### **15th Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 12:1-14  
Psalm 149  
Romans 13:8-14  
Matthew 18:15-20

### **September 17**

#### **16th Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 14:19-31  
Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21  
Romans 14:1-12  
Matthew 18:21-35

### **September 24**

#### **17th Sunday after Pentecost**

Exodus 16:2-15  
Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45  
Philippians 1:21-30  
Matthew 20:1-16

## **Members with September Birthdays**

Patricia Adams

George Adams

Kelby Ash

Alexa Ashworth

Carole Bell

James Bouchard

Carole Brice

Richard Burton

Elizabeth Bynum

Matthew Campbell

Beth Collins

Drew Diekmann

Emmalie Drake

Alyssa Eisenberg

Grace Fox

Barbara Harper

Dede Holmes

Elizabeth Johnson

Hannah Johnson

Marin Kilmer

Grady McElveney

John Mecredy

Jackson Mooney

Donna Osborne

Rob Rhodes

Kay Saxum

Kenneth Shaffer

AnnMarie Simmons

Bradley Tome

Daniel Wilborn

Claudia Williams

*Hoping your birthday brings you many happy reasons to celebrate!*

If we missed you, please let the office know.

## First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford is Offering Our Fourth Round of Grief Support Workshops in Partnership with [Faith and Grief Ministries](#)

### Comfort and Hope for the Journey of Grief

Join us for either of these multi-session workshops where participants explore sacred grief-related stories and share their own stories in a supportive environment with others. The workshops give you time to talk about your loved one, share your unique grief experience, and explore a spiritual practice designed to promote comfort in your grief. Group meals and light refreshments are served at the sessions noted below. Please contact the office at First Presbyterian Church at (585) 586-5688 if you have questions or need information about the meals.

### Faith & Grief Workshop - MONDAYS

[More information about the Monday sessions](#)

[Click here to register for the Monday sessions](#)

This workshop meets in person for seven weeks at 6 pm starting September 18 and is led by certified Grief Educators Debbie Matrachisia and Janis Croop. Meals are served at three of the sessions: September 18, October 2, October 16

### Faith & Grief Workshop - WEDNESDAYS

[More information about the Wednesday sessions](#)

[Click here to register for the Wednesday sessions](#)

This workshop meets in person for seven weeks at 11 am starting September 20 and is led by certified Grief Educators including Claudia Williams, Cynthia Van-Houte Purpura, and Rev. Erin Jacobson. Meals are served at three of the sessions: September 20, October 4, October 18



### Faith & Grief™ Workshop Meets Weekly

Explore the nature of grief, share your story and explore spiritual practices designed to provide comfort as you grieve.

We are offering two groups  
Mondays  
starting September 18th at 6 pm ET

Wednesdays  
starting September 20th at 11 am ET

RSVP at [www.faithandgrief.org/events/](http://www.faithandgrief.org/events/)



or call (585) 586-5688



Hosted by  
1st Presbyterian Church, Pittsford  
21 Church St, Pittsford, NY



### News from the Nursery School

September is near and with it a new school year. As we welcome new and returning families, the staff are excited and busy preparing for another fun-filled, educational year. We would like to welcome Becky Frazier and Amy Carleton to our PCNS family, both of whom will be working with our 3's & 4's classes as assistants. September brings meets and greets, first days, learning classroom routines, and making new friends. We are continuing to enroll students in our 3's/4's/YK programs for this upcoming year. Please reach out or share the news if you know of a family who may be interested. Thank you for your continued support, here's to a wonderful '23-'24 school year!

Kathy Woodruff, Director Pittsford Nursery School

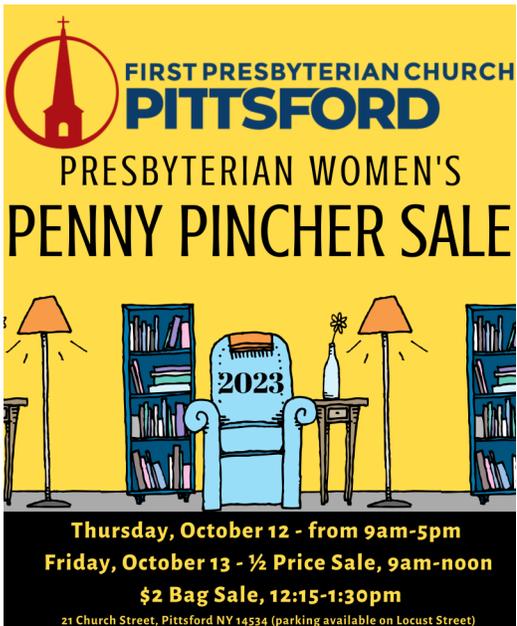
### Fall Deacon Events

Game Night – Friday, October 13, at 7 pm  
in Fellowship Hall

Hiking Mendon Ponds Park – Saturday,  
October 14, meet at church at 10 am

Cooking Club – Sunday, October 15, at 5  
pm in Fellowship Hall. We will prepare  
several traditional British meals in honor  
of the new King Charles. Cost is \$8 per  
person.

Sign up with Dan Traina  
at [dtraina@rochester.rr.com](mailto:dtraina@rochester.rr.com) or call 585-  
208-6839



## Penny Pincher Sale

This year the Presbyterian Women's Penny Pincher Sale is the week of **October 9-13**

**Table Set-Up:** Sunday, October 8, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm

**Drop-off Dates:** Monday, October 9, 9:30 am – 5 pm; Tuesday, October 10, 9:30 am – 5 pm; Wednesday, October 11, 9:30 am - noon (*please don't leave anything outside*)

**Sale Dates:** Thursday, October 12, 10 am – 5 pm; Friday, October 13: ½ Price Sale 10 am - noon, \$2 Bag Sale 12:15 pm - 1:30 pm

**Load Van & Clean Up:** Friday, October 13, 1:30 pm – 4 pm

As you clean out, reorganize or downsize in the next few weeks, please keep us in mind for donations. Our WISH LIST includes: small working appliances, antiques, collectibles, books, CDs, DVDs, sports equipment, holiday items, dishes, glassware, furniture, jewelry, kitchen and household items, craft supplies, stationery/office items, toys, games and puzzles, tools and garden equipment, small electronics and linens. *ALL DONATIONS MUST BE CLEAN AND USABLE.*

We do NOT accept: clothing, large exercise equipment, grills, large appliances, skis, boots, poles, and electronics like TVs, computers, and stereos. If you have a large or unusual item you wish to donate, please ask first. Please mark sizes on sheets and tablecloths with a piece of tape—this really helps!

Clean plastic bags and shopping bags for use at the sale may be donated with your sale items in October. We will be in Fellowship Hall after each service for volunteers to sign up starting on September 10. We need all the help we can get and volunteering is a great way to meet those elusive people from the “other” worship service!

Clean plastic bags and shopping bags for use at the sale may be donated with your sale items in October. We will be in Fellowship Hall after each service for volunteers to sign up starting on September 10. We need all the help we can get and volunteering is a great way to meet those elusive people from the “other” worship service!

## You Helped Make Campers' Summer Awesome!

Be inspired by this update from Lea Kone, Exec. Director at Camp Whitman

This summer we served 200 campers in our sleepaway camp program. As part of our outreach to Rochester urban ministries, we enrolled five campers from Family Promise of Monroe County. Funding for their camperships (\$1,875) was made possible via the donations from First Pres. We also hosted 39 participants and chaperones from Cameron Community Ministries for swimming, slip and slide, tractor rides, archery, Gaga game, boat rides on Seneca Lake and lunch. The cost of their visit to Camp Whitman was \$1,188 and your gift assisted with our ongoing connection to Cameron.

Thank you so much for all of your support for Camp Whitman!

## Join the Handbells

We are looking for new members! The first rehearsal will be on Wednesday, September 6, at 6:00 pm. While it is helpful to have a background in reading music it is not a requirement. Training and practice in bell technique and music reading occurs during each rehearsal. Please contact Dede Holmes at dedeholmes1954@gmail.com or (585) 330-2249 if you are interested!

## Join the Choir

The choir is open to everyone, from beginners to experienced musicians. New members are always welcome! The first rehearsal will be on Wednesday, September 6, at 7:15 pm. Please contact Jared at musicdirector@pittsfordpres.org or (303) 506-1114 if you are interested!

# All Church Picnic

Sunday,  
September 10  
11 am

food, games,  
dunking booth,  
friends and  
family, and more!



## Church Picnic

Sunday, September 10, following the 10 am worship service. Help us celebrate the new school year and the return of two church services with a family picnic at 11 am. Your Deacons will be serving hamburgers and hot dogs and side dishes. Children's activities are planned.

## Construction Days for Habitat for Humanity House Build begins on August 26! Come Build With Us!

You can now sign up to help build our GRIB House at 108 Ackerman Street in the city of Rochester. (GRIB means Greater Rochester Interfaith Builders, the combined church coalitions in our area of which HIP is now a part.) Thank you for your patience! Our building days will be Fridays and Saturdays, each date with 10 openings. If you

want to do a group day, please let Dianne know as that has to be set up with the office. Wall raising is scheduled for September 9! Please note that no prior experience, skills, or tools are needed—you will be taught onsite and tools will be supplied. *(please refer to your bulletin or weekly email for further details)*

## Landscaping at Church

Our September landscaping date at the church is set for Wednesday, September 13, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. with a rain date on the 14th, same timeframe. Please bring your own gardening tools. Snacks and drinks provided. Hope to see many of you there!

Debbie Gaudion 585-749-3878

## Eve Circle

Eve Circle will meet Monday, September 25, at 12:30 pm in room 200. We will review Chapter Two, The Gospel of Matthew, in *The Bible from Scratch, The New Testament for Beginners*.

## OPTIMISTS

The first meeting of OPTIMISTS for the fall will be on October 20 at 1 pm in Fellowship Hall. Meetings are planned to include a soup and sandwich meal (\$5 per person), socializing, and discussion of a topic at each meeting. Let's see if we can each invite a friend to join us! You may introduce yourself to someone new after church or give someone a call to invite them to come! Put the date of October 20 on your calendar - you might even add the other meetings, generally the second Friday of each month through the fall, winter, and spring. And watch the bulletin or Friday emails for reminders of the meetings. Hoping to see you there!

October 20 - Halloween and Reformation Sunday

November 10 - Thanksgiving and Family Blessings

December 8 - Christmas Carol Sing

January 12- Resolutions

February 9 - Sweetheart Stories

March 8 - Stories of being "saved"

April 12 - In the Garden

May 10 - Genealogy

June 14 - Picnic

# Youth Ministry News!

By the time this newsletter is published all families in grades 6-12 will have received a paper copy and digital copies of this year's schedule. The schedule is designed carefully with the purpose of creating a program that your youth will want to engage. It is our desire for youth to have a strong understanding of God and Church Community before they leave for college.

## FPC Youth 2023-2024 "Inside, Outside, Upside Down"

Our theme for the year is "Inside, Outside, Upside Down" - meaning that roughly each month we have tried to include events related to these themes:

**INSIDE** - faith formation via Youth Group Fellowship events / Bible Study / 6th-12th grade FORUM

**OUTSIDE** - fellowship and fun events outside our walls to build relationships among our youth

**UPSIDE DOWN** - mission events that remind our young people that God has called us to serve the world as the hands and feet of Christ, because Christ created an "upside down kingdom" where the first will be last and the last will be first

These activities are intended to build community where there is none. Every event has "group building" components to help youth from different schools and different social groups to interact with each other and identify as friends. We know in the beginning kids may be reluctant if they can't find "friends" who are going. We hope if they attend these events they will soon find their friendships grow with the people who do attend.

Some of these events seem like "just fun activities" - in order to include kids on the margins who may be reluctant to come, many activities will be advertised and seem like they will be all fun and games. As a parent, please don't let this fool you. These activities are advertised this way to grow the group, and introduce new kids into who we are and what we do. Every event will include prayer, disciple building, and group building activities.

Although many of these activities will include a time to reflect on our faith, these activities will not necessarily contain a "Bible Study" as adults would recognize it. Most of our youth have learned from the Bible for many years. The studies in these courses will focus on "what difference does it make" or "what's the point?". Kids in Youth Group have matured to start asking the hard questions. The Bible can help us answer these questions, but at this age youth, like Abraham in the Bible, need to struggle with their faith and how being a person of faith can change their lives.

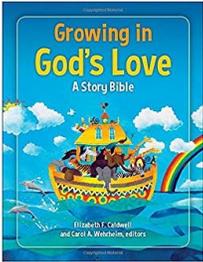
### **FPC 6th-12th Grade FORUM on Sundays from 10-11 am**

FORUM will be taught by either Pastor Jacobson, Pastor Neff, or Craig Kunkle the Sundays noted on the schedule. As has been our practice for several years, on Communion Sundays and holidays 6th-12th graders will worship with their family.

If you have questions about the 2023-2024 Youth Ministry programming, please reach out to Pastor Jacobson at 204-2012 or [erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org)

These Bible Studies are currently looking for new members! Find your place to meet and learn:

- Monday Night Basic Bible Study - Zoom led by Lucien Rouse
- Tuesday 1 pm Highlands Bible Study - at The Highlands led by Craig Kunkle
- Wednesday Night Bible Study - Hybrid Zoom and room 201 led by Pastor Neff
- Thursday 12 pm Women’s Bible Study - in the library led by Pastor Jacobson
- Sunday Morning Bible Study at 8:15 am - in the library lead by Craig Kunkle



### Bibles for Second Graders

This year we will be presenting Bibles during worship on September 10 to all 2nd graders. If you know of any 2nd graders who would like a Bible, please let Craig know in the office or by email. [craig.kunkle@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:craig.kunkle@pittsfordpres.org)

### Sunday School - Elementary Age

On Sunday mornings, following the Mouse Report, children ages 4-10 will be led downstairs to their class rooms. They will then break up into three groups based on their grade.

Pre-Kindergarten through Kindergarten will meet and can be picked up by an adult in room 5, first and second grade children can be picked up in room 6, while third through fifth grades will meet and can be picked up in room 7.

Make sure to check the bulletin and newsletter for upcoming weekly activities.

September 10	September 17	September 24
Meet your teachers	Abram and Sarai went	Jacob sees the face of God
Activity:	Activity:	Activity:
PreK-2: Sidewalk Chalk	PreK-K: Packing and a trip	PreK-K: Pew Book Marks
3-5: Rainbow craft	1-2: Packing and a trip	1-2: Pew Book Marks
	3-5: Excuses Game	3-5: Origami

### Sunday School Registration

You should have already received an email inviting you to register your child for the programs offered at church. Registration helps us make sure we have correct ages, grades, and allergy information but also lets us know which programs you plan on engaging in this year.

The form does not restrict you or your family from participating in other programs and is used for informational purposes only. The exception is for families registering for LOGOS where this form is essential for offsite events. Find it here:

<https://www.pittsfordpres.org/family-registration>

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Pittsford, New York 14534  
www.pittsfordpres.org

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<p>The Rev. Aaron Neff <i>Pastor and Head of Staff</i> 585.643.1240 aaron.neff@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>The Rev. Erin Jacobson <i>Associate Pastor</i> 585.204.2012 erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Craig Kunkle <i>Director of Christian Education</i> Ext. 30 craig.kunkle@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Britta Konau <i>Office &amp; Communications Coord.</i> Ext. 21 britta.konau@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Maria DiGiambattista <i>Financial Administrator</i> Ext. 23 treasurer@pittsfordpres.org</p>	<p>Leslie Harvey <i>Custodian</i> 585.364.2430 lharvey@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Dr. Jared Chase <i>Director of Music</i> musicdirector@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Dr. Bruce Frank <i>Associate Director of Music and Organist</i> bfrank345@gmail.com</p> <p>Dede Holmes <i>Director of Youth Choirs</i> dedeholmes1954@gmail.com</p> <p>Joshua Burke <i>Livestreaming Technician</i> josh@pittsfordpres.org</p>	<p><b>First Presbyterian Church</b> 21 Church Street, Pittsford, NY 14534 Phone 585.586.5688, Fax 585.586.8090 connect@pittsfordpres.org www.pittsfordpres.org</p> <p><b>Worship Service (starting Sept. 10):</b></p> <p><b>8:30 am in-person</b> <b>10:00 am in-person and livestreamed</b></p> <p>Communion is offered on the first Sunday of each month.</p> <div data-bbox="1008 1575 1524 1999"></div>
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