



The Fredonia Presbyterian

May 2023
Newsletter of the
Fredonia
Presbyterian
Church

From Our Pastor

Fennel for Fodder?

Remember when Yoga was new and weird, maybe even scandalous (at least in the Bible Belt of East Texas)? Remember when online dating was a last resort and you'd see if your 8th grade teacher was on it just to laugh at him (cruel, I know—God forgive me and my friend group)? There are so many things in our lifetimes that move from foreign and disparaging to commonplace and embraced. This is my set up.

In Duke Divinity's news circuit, I read an article about Gen Z. *Simple* polls show that they aren't religious. But, *in-depth* polls prove otherwise. Gen Z may say they don't follow a religion—and that may be true—but they are indeed doing religious, spiritual things. For instance, they report using crystals and herbs, in a meaningful way, weekly. Remember yoga.

I nor the article am suggesting we swap crystals for bulletins, but there's something here about Gen Z needing something hands on, something to ground them. One church, who saw a group of Gen Zers struggling with loneliness and isolation (remember this gen missed prom and first years at colleges), started a bread baking group. It wasn't a Bible study; it wasn't a bait and switch. Literally, bread baking. This introduced Gen Z to the idea and the space of church.

Another component to Gen Z not being religious is that their parents didn't invite them, insist they go, or go themselves to church/temple/mosque/etc. So, these places feel completely foreign and the idea of them going to a weird space to follow a teaching they don't know with rituals that are not on tiktok is just too much. So, really, we all share something similar—the spaces and practices Gen Z inhabit are foreign to us and ours to them. Feels like a good place to start.

As you pray for our church and for Gen Z, pray that we might create spaces and rituals to make together. Careful that our prayers are not as something *they* have to do, but us: an invitation to participate and insistence that we learn too. Who knows what a little sage gathering could do!?

For more fodder, visit faithandleadership.com and then search "Forget doom and gloom".



Images from Bing images, Susan Royal, Carol Groat, Allison Wheeler.



The Fredonia Presbyterian



LIFE GIVING WATER

By Joe Calarco

Spring...is a time of red breasted Robins, yellow headed daffodils, multicolored blossoms, green sprouting leaves, gray-blue skies, gray-white clouds, golden sunshine, and ...life giving rain. As rain brings renewal and regrowth to nature, the water has a life of its own.

Spring rains swell the shallow creek; once more it rushes over and around rocks, winding its way downstream, to its ultimate destination, the ocean.

Ever flowing, never knowing, where it's going
Ever onward, ever forward, ever homeward

Water is the source of rejuvenation and resurrection, not only physically, but spiritually as well. John the Baptist, baptized Jesus in the water of the Jordan River. It is a rite of cleansing sin from the soul and creating a new life.

One of the highlights of our prison weekend was a forgiveness ceremony. On Saturday morning the men were given a small piece of paper. During the day they were to list on one side all those whom they had hurt, asking for forgiveness. On the other side they were to write a list of all those who had hurt them and who needed their forgiveness. (Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.)

At the evening ceremony, we were all gathered in our makeshift chapel in the gym. Before the rows of seated men, was a table with a large glass bowl of water. What the men did not know was that the lists were written on rice paper that dissolved in water. After a group prayer of confession and forgiveness, one by one, the men came up front and placed their list into the bowl of water. As a team member stirred the water, the list literally disappeared. It was a sort of baptism. They were given a new spiritual life. One man said that he felt washed clean of his sins and he felt God's forgiveness and love.

Our lives are like the creek; we go with the flow, over and around the obstacles of life, not really knowing where we are going. Everyday we continue onward, forward, until finally, we are homeward.

During Worship, after our public confession, Rev. Holly dips her fingers into the water of the Baptism font, proclaiming the assurance of pardon. She gives thanks for God's grace, "knowing this grace, may all God's people say,





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Notes from the Session:

April 20, 2023 - In attendance: Rev. Clark-Porter, Janine Scaccia, Cori Coia, Carol Calarco, Jeff McMinn, Sandy Johnson, and Susan Pepe

After opening with prayer the agenda and April minutes were approved.

- **Pastor's report:** Many conversations and much planning and paper work that included: working with our insurance company, streamlining Equal Exchange's book keeping, organizing clean up day, tuba concert, and blood drive (26 pints were collected and we have been so asked us to do another blood drive), plan for a Sunday away, plan Holy Week including the services shared with Fredonia's United Methodist Church (the shared Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services were well received), continue to work with the Randolph church, help with the planning of the Presbyterian Women's retreat happening in our church, discussion of a Girl Scout Sunday now that we again have a scout troop using Fellowship Hall, Bible study at Fredonia Place continues.
- **Clerk of the Session**, Sandy reported that the Antiracism Task Group of the Presbytery is presenting a Zoom study of the book, Be the Bridge: Christian Response to Racism.
- The **Deacons** are hosting an area wide PW retreat in our church on May 6.
- Session continues to discuss the budget.
- **Mission** Yard Sale date has been set for Saturday, June 3. Fredonia Place will be doing a food drive for our food pantry and the Methodist Church is interested in doing some cooking for the pantry patrons.
- Necessary background checks and sexual harassment "courses" for employees and our **Christian Education** staff and volunteers are complete.
- The **Buildings and Grounds** discussion centered around the condition of the front steps and how successful the April clean up day was.
- Discussed rental of Fellowship Hall.
- Cori reported that one of our **Earth Care** projects, returning cans to Can King for the deposit, has started to generate revenue. Clean up of route 39 is scheduled for April 29 at 10 AM.
- There will be no July meeting. Holly will use that time to begin working on the by-laws.
- Each session member is working on a "job description" for the committee(s) they chair.



The Fredonia Presbyterian

The Antiracism Task Group of the Presbytery of Western NY presents **Be the Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation**

A Lunch & Learn Book Discussion every Thursday in May and June 12-1 PM via Zoom

Rev. Tara L. Eastman (Jamestown Presbyterian Church) and invited guests, will facilitate a discussion of the book. A commitment to attend as many sessions as possible and to read the first chapter before the first meeting is requested. A Zoom link will be given when you register.

If you would like more information, you may contact Rev. Eastman at

revtleastman@gmail.com

Thank You to everyone who was able to contribute to this year's Hygiene Kit Drive.

We delivered 48 kits to Church World Service.

24 from Fredonia Presbyterian
24 from Dunkirk Presbyterian



Thank You to the Route 39 Clean Up Crew!

Five items the Food Pantry could really use more of for the May 20th pantry are

Cereal

Canned Soup

Jars of Spaghetti Sauce

Cans of Baked Beans

Canned Tuna or Meat



Umbrellas, bare feet, a good book, and a tree. It must be **spring!**





The Fredonia Presbyterian

Theology on Tap:

I am so glad our church is one where people feel comfortable asking questions. Recently, we were asked about our sanctuary and the proper uses of it. Can it be used for more than just worship? Session suggested that our newsletter could share the answer, and that this might be a great new tradition of sharing a theological question in each edition of the newsletter.

What questions do you have?

Below are screenshots from our Book of Order under the Worship section (please, read them before moving on).

Because of our theology (which dates back to John Calvin's time, based on scripture), our denomination believes weddings can happen anywhere! Baptisms, anywhere! worship, yup-- anywhere! We affirm that all ground is holy and that church grounds are no more holy than anywhere else. We affirm that God lives everywhere and is not confined to a church.

I used to detest churches that met in defunct grocery stores, but once I understood the theology, it made the scrappiness and the grass roots of grocery churches more profound.

In reverse, our sanctuary is no more holy or sacred, theologically speaking, than a bar or a rotten barn or a back alley. We, the people--myself included!--might hold more respect for our sanctuary, but even that notion should be challenged. Imagine how we might see the world anew if the back alley full of rats and mangey cats is given the same sacredness as our own worship space?

My church in Austin was a South By South West venue. Pink, Lady Gaga, Iron and Wine, The Chicks, Bruno Mars, and many, many others have housed concerts in the sanctuary. They do worry about the stained glass, but other than that, Central Presbyterian sees it as an outreach. And it works. The artists and the ticket holders have said so many wonderful things about Central because of it. At most, people have attended church because of it. At the least, people have commented that they know one church that has changed their negative connotation of church.

As an example: Our baptismal water comes out of the sink, and it is not special. But, I don't think the water that the Pope blesses is special either. I think it's just water. Always. What makes it sacred is what we do with it.


As an ordained, Masters of Divinity holder, my job is to bring together theology, ecclesiology, liturgy, the sacred text, church history, sociology, ethics, and so much more to FPC. I know there should be balance in how we use our sanctuary. And, I know that not everything goes. I also know that our sanctuary is a huge tool for us to point to Christ--the same guy who you found outside of synagogue more than inside and if he was inside, he was usually making someone mad. Our sanctuary is a community holder and anything we get to create community, even if it's not in our name nor in the form of worship, we get to create space for communion and that's the idea.

—- *Pastor Holly*



The Fredonia Presbyterian

May 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
			Cassadaga Band rehearsal 6-9 PM			Farmer's Market 10-1 Masonic Temple Presbyterian Women of Western NY Retreat 9 AM - 1:30 PM Fellowship Hall
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Worship and Communion 10:30 Rev. Holly leaves for Texas			Cassadaga Band rehearsal 6-9 PM	Private Event 12-1 PM	Rev. Holly returns	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Worship 10:30 Blanket Sunday Mothers' Day			Bible Study. Fredonia Place 1 PM Cassadaga Band rehearsal 6-9 PM	Session Meeting 6 PM		Food Pantry 10-12 Farmer's Market 10-1 Masonic Temple
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Worship 10:30			Compeer Adult Meeting 12-2 PM Cassadaga Band rehearsal 6-9 PM			
28	29	30	31			
Worship 10:30						



The Fredonia Presbyterian

Prayer List

Marge Benton
 Gina Waite Platt
 Donna Heintzman
 Judy Sumpton
 Dick Ackley
 Dick Watt
 Joy Hite
 Joe Dolce
 Michelle Patterson
 Zachary Dloniak
 Deb Harris
 Sandy McBride
 Adrianna Rodriguez
 Susie Harris
 Jordan Mendyk
 Tracy
 Jennifer
 Kurt
 Jessi
 Dylan Pillsbury
 Tom Withington
 Lorraine Withington
 Alice Sanders
 Tyler Bahr
 Mary Ann
 Toni-Jo Mitchell
 Sheri DeLong
 Dorothy Ebling
 Aunt Sally
 Susan Guziec's parents
 Bill
 Baby Cassandra
 Johnson Family
 Scott
 Peggy Tiffany
 Kathy
 Holly
 Autumn
 Rey Spangler
 Julie Newell
 Nick & Lucy, his dog



May Birthdays

13 Susan Mintun
 16 Meredith Zebracki
 17 Janine Scaccia
 Maia Amatuzzo
 18 Susan Pepe
 19 Reneé Salamone
 22 Carolyn McMinn



May Anniversaries

1 Tom & Joan Van Dette
 9 Crista & Ron Hagberg 2017

Sympathy is extended to the family of Lauren Arch who recently passed away.



Please keep in your prayers

Our Local Partners in Ministry: Narcotics Anonymous and Compeer Chautauqua.

Our Global Partners in Ministry: Friends of the Presbyterian Education Board in Pakistan and Church World Service.

Fredonia Presbyterian Church
219 Central Avenue
Fredonia, NY 14063

Churchwide YARD SALE



The annual yard sale will be held Saturday, June 3, 2023
From 9-3

You may begin bringing items to the church library on
Tuesday, May 16. There is usually someone at the church
on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-3.
If you will need help moving something to the church please
call the office, 716-679-1501.

Please consider signing up to help with this year's sale.
Remember, we do not sell clothing.