



The Steeple Chimes

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

January, 2022

Pastor's Message

My Beloved Church Family,

When I was teaching, students would often ask me what my favorite instrument was. "Whichever one is in my hands," I would reply. The same goes for seasons of the Church year. My favorite season is whichever one we're celebrating at the moment.

Thanksgiving / Advent / Christmas was my favorite season these past two months, as this beautifully decorated time was full of music, worship, and things to do. This year, in addition to the usual activities at church, we added a Christmas Fair, a Christmas Tea, and an Outdoor Christmas Tree Lighting to the mix.

Now that we are entering January, Epiphany is my favorite season. Some of our members and friends have left for warmer climates, making our Sunday morning worship services very intimate. Because of the unpredictability of the weather, we don't have many activities scheduled, so we're looking forward to our Lenten Wednesday Night Soup Suppers, beginning in March. These, and other activities we have, are not just opportunities for worship, but also for strengthening the bonds that hold us together as children of God.

My son recently looked at a photo of me, my parents, and my brothers that had been taken in the 1950's. "Everyone looks so happy," he sighed. "Life was pretty simple then, wasn't it?" It was. We were all thin because we were physically active, despite the fact that we ate Alpha-Bits, buttered mashed potatoes, and chocolate pudding. We had plenty of time to function as a family because Mom was home, we only had one car, and our free time was not over-scheduled. Television did not rule our lives – my parents were not afraid to use the "off" button. I'm sure your lives were very similar.

We eat differently now. We shop differently. Even our social interactions are different. If I want to talk to my son, I usually just text him. To contact my friends, I e-mail them. To talk to my cousin, I identify myself to her voice mail, and wait, because she screens her calls. And, I'm very careful about what goes on FaceBook, because anything on the web lasts forever, I'm told. So much to remember! It can be quite overwhelming, and it's not going to change.

It's a relief in this ever-changing world to be able to come to church. Our silent and corporate prayer has not changed. The ability to lift our voices in song to Creator, Son, and Holy spirit has not changed. Our fellowship and love for one another has not changed.



Who knows? Twenty years from now, we may be using an offering plate with a built-in credit card swipe, texting our prayer requests up to the pulpit, and using the flashlights in our cell phones instead of candles on Christmas Eve. (And please don't tell me that there's a mega-church in Texas that already does that. I don't want to know.)

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8) What comforting words!

Thank you for all that you do for the Kingdom. May you have a blessed Epiphany – my favorite season!

With love and blessings,

Pastor Ann

zoom

Zoom Worship

We will continue to “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 our 10:30 Celebration of Worship.

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 for Sunday Worship ?

Now through January 16, inclusive, the **Meeting ID** is: **870 8219 2387** **Passcode: 567650**

January 23 through March 6, inclusive, the **Meeting ID** is: **858 4222 3925** **Passcode: 657236**

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

What are the Meeting IDs for the Tuesday Fellowship Group?

Now through January 18, inclusive, the **Meeting ID** is: **820 4624 2452** **Passcode: 675634**

January 25 through March 8, inclusive, the **Meeting ID** is: **861 5613 5656** **Passcode: 599620**

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 a passcode. (Please see paragraph 3.)

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



Birthday Blessings

January 21 – George Santos

January 22 – Betty Chatfield

January 25 – Linda Rixon

January 26 – Stephanie Horne



Prayer Corner

EACH DAY IS A GIFT FROM GOD

~Anon

He has given us morning, brightness and sun,
Laughter to share, and work to be done.
He has given us rainbows, flowers, and song,
And the hands of our dear ones to help us along.
He has given us prayer, with its wonderful power
To lighten our hearts in a troublesome hour.
He has given us blessings to brighten our way,
And always—the gift of another new day.

*The first thing I want you to do is pray.
Pray every way you know how,
for everyone you know.
Pray especially for rulers
and their governments to rule well
so we can be quietly about
our business of living simply,
in humble contemplation.
This is the way our Savior
God wants us to live.*

~1Timothy 2:1-4 The Message Bible

GOD BE IN MY HEAD

~Unknown

God be in my head and in my understanding.
God be in mine eyes and in my looking.
God be in my mouth and in my speaking.
God be in my heart and in my thinking.

*This is the day which the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.*

~Psalms 118:24

HOPE

~Pope John Paul II in speech
to 8,000 children in Guadalajara, Mexico

Prepare for life with seriousness and diligence.
Always remember that only if one builds, as St.
Paul says, on the one foundation
which is Jesus Christ, will one be able to construct
something really great and lasting.
With the liveliness that is characteristic of your age,
with the generous enthusiasm
of your young hearts, walk towards Christ.
He alone is the solution to all your problems.
He alone is the way, the truth and the life; He alone
is the real salvation of the world;
He alone is the hope of mankind.

~Submitted by Betty Chatfield

Flight 2022 Instructions

Good morning and welcome to Flight 2022. We are prepared to take off into the New Year.

Please make sure your Positive Attitude and Gratitude are secured and locked in the upright position. All self-destruct devices: pity, anger, selfishness, pride, and resentment should be turned off at this time. All negativity, hurt, and discouragement should be put away.

Should you lose your Positive Attitude under pressure during this flight, reach up and pull down a prayer. Prayers will automatically be activated by Faith. Once your Faith is activated, you can assist other passengers who are of little faith.

There will be NO BAGGAGE allowed on this flight. God, our Captain, has cleared us for take-off.

Destination – GREATNESS!

Wishing you a New Year
filled with new HOPE, new JOY,
and new BEGINNINGS!
Stay Blessed and welcome in 2022.

~Submitted by Leonora Colletti



December Worship in 2021

December 5 was the Second Sunday of Advent. The sermon was titled “The Crooked Roads Shall Become Straight.” We celebrated The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

December 12: The Third Sunday of Advent. The sermon was “A Little Christmas?” (Think about that song from *Mame*: “We Need a Little Christmas.”)

December 19: The Fourth Sunday of Advent, our Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols Service.

December 24: Christmas Eve fell on a Friday this year. Our Candlelight Service was at 7:00 p.m.

December 26 was the Sunday after Christmas. The Service was called “Carols and More Carols.” Pastor Ann talked about the story behind “Jingle Bells;” we were surprised to learn that the song had its beginnings in a church!



Join Us for Worship in January

January 2: A New Year’s theme – “Ring in the New Year,” service ending with Andy Segale playing *Auld Lang Syne* on the saxophone. Communion served.

January 9: The Baptism of Christ. Pastor Ann’s sermon is called “Baptism 101.”

January 16: The Wedding at Cana. We will unpack Jesus’ first public miracle.

January 23: “The Body of Christ.” We can’t all be an eye. Or an ear. Or a foot!

January 30: “The Importance of Today.” Yesterday has passed. Tomorrow is not yet here. Today is important!

Buildings and Grounds Update

- The church will be entering into a contract for snow removal with The Deck and Patio Company. Monthly coordinators from the Committee have been assigned to act as liaisons between the church and the contractor. (January – Jim Dean; February – Craig Satterlee; March – Larry Foray).
- The Buildings and Grounds Committee budget for 2022 that was submitted to the Session was approved by that group. The major projects for the coming year will be: (1) Replace the oil tank at the Manse; (2) renovate the bathrooms at church; (3) Seal coat and repair cracks in the church parking lot and driveways.
- Deck and Patio has completed the fall cleanup of the church grounds.
- The ceiling fans in CE Hall have not yet been replaced.
- Electrical power to the Christmas Tree in front of the church will come from the outlet at the flagpole through an extension cord to the tree across the exit driveway. The cord will be taped down across the driveway with traffic cones positioned at the crossing to slow any traffic moving over the cord.
- A plot plan of the church’s property was marked up to identify the locations for the new pole markers so the snow removal contractor will know where to plow and remove snow without damaging any church property. Craig Satterlee will install the pole markers.
- The contract for cleaning services with Lighthouse Catering was renewed, approved, and signed. The contract includes a monthly service fee of \$1,030, which is an increase of 3%. The scope of work for the contract remains the same as last year.



Masks

Due to the ongoing pandemic, we will be wearing masks in the church building. Thank you for your cooperation.

Christmas Tea

On December 4, our church held its first ever Victorian Christmas Tea. Congratulations to Jill Wilson and Leonora Colletti, who co-chaired the event, to Gary Prentiss, who prepared the food, and to the Tea Team, who worked very hard decorating, serving, and cleaning up. 24 people had a delightful afternoon, and some even dressed up British-style for the occasion. We hope to make this an annual event.



Larry, who was a waiter for the afternoon, and Leonora posed in their finery.



Althea and her friend Pam dressed for the occasion.



Kathie and Louise (center) and two friends enjoyed the luncheon.

New Members

We were delighted to welcome four new members to our church family on Sunday, December 12: Jane & Ken Longstreet, and Barbara & Dan Charnews. We celebrated the occasion with a cake at coffee hour.

We are happy to have you as members, Jane, Ken, Barbara, and Dan.



Christmas Fair

Our Christmas Fair was held on December 4 in the hallway surrounding the church courtyard. We don't know if it was our first-ever Christmas Fair, but it certainly was the first in recent memory.

We sold poinsettias, wreaths decorated by ladies of the church, one-of-a-kind gifts, and Christmas ornaments and decorations.

The funds raised at the fair will go toward subsidizing our participation in a Women's Retreat that will take place at Watson Homestead (Southern Tier of NY State) in the spring. Stay tuned for details!



A happy Christmas Fair customer sent us a photo of some of the treasures she found at the Fair.

Outdoor Christmas Tree Lighting

Our little Christmas tree, which doesn't look like much in the daylight, became truly magnificent when lit up at night. On December 19, our church, along with members of the local community, gathered around the tree for its inaugural lighting. Daisy and Junior Girl Scouts charmed us with their rendition of *Jingle Bells* and *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. Song booklets were distributed, and we sang until the crowd couldn't stand the cold any longer, at which point everyone went inside for hot beverages and cookies. The doors to the Sanctuary were flung open on cue, to a round of applause. Many folks took pictures, and some just sat in the church, reflecting on the beauty and sacredness of the season.



The Girl Scouts, getting ready to sing



Lydia and Gary showed us that Gingerbread banners are not just for kids!



Carols and More Carols

December 26 was the Sunday after Christmas. We sang the Call to Worship, the Lord's Prayer, and the Scripture Lessons. The sermon was about the story behind *Jingle Bells*; we were surprised to learn that the song had its origins in a church in Massachusetts. It was originally written for Thanksgiving; you may have noticed that Christmas is not mentioned in the lyrics at all.

After the service, we gave prizes for the prettiest and ugliest sweaters. Betty Chatfield, wearing a sweater that once belonged to her mother, won for the prettiest. Larry Foray, wearing a sweater that he claimed was a gift, won for the ugliest. (He later told us that this was the third time he won an "ugliest" prize wearing that sweater.) And Leonora Colletti, who never turns down an opportunity to wear "fun" clothing, posed in the above photo as well.

Women's Retreat

The women of our church are invited to participate in an ecumenical retreat this spring at Watson Homestead in Painted Post, New York (just west of Corning). Pastor Ann, who serves on the Board for the group that organizes these yearly retreats, will provide more details next month.

Ladies, mark your calendar for Thursday, May 5 through Saturday, May 7. Then keep your fingers crossed that it doesn't get canceled due to COVID.



(Pictured: The Chapel at Watson)

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Our *Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* Service was held on Sunday, December 19. Our Service is based on the one at The Kings College in Cambridge, England, where the nine lessons are read by representatives of the congregation and of the local community.

Our readers were: Claire Proctor, Betty Chatfield, Diane Kirchhoff, Alan Walter, Leslie Strait, Irene Lang, Rosalie Schweighardt, Linda Rexon, and Rev. Mark Tammen. Musicians Andy Segale (alto saxophone) and Leslie Strait (flute) offered musical selections, and our Women's Choir sang two carols.



Rosalie Schweighardt and Linda Rexon, two of our readers.



Leslie Strait on flute, Andy Segale on alto sax



Christmas Eve

We held our traditional Candlelight Service at 7 p.m. on Christmas Eve. The presence of church family and friends, the music, the prayers, and the beauty of the Sanctuary magnified the holiness of the night. Christ is born. Alleluia!



The Perrotta family, Christopher, Michelle, and Mom, Susan, lit the candles on Christmas Eve.



The Sanctuary looked stunning! Thank you to everyone who sponsored poinsettias.

From the Pastor's Kitchen

Growing up, I came from a “meat, potatoes, and vegetables for dinner” family. Meat, because my parents survived the Depression, and wanted the best for us. Potatoes, because my mother was Irish. And vegetables, because children were starving in China.

I still subscribe to the concept of protein, starch, and vegetables at dinner, but I try to vary the starch, because I ate enough potatoes in my youth to last a lifetime, thank you. I've added sweet potatoes, rice, macaroni, tortilla wraps, stuffing, and biscuits to the mix, but I'm always looking for new ideas.

Last week, I hit the jackpot! I found something different, containing only three ingredients: dumplings!

Bisquick has always been a staple in our house. Even the day before payday, when Mother Hubbard's cupboard is bare, one can always make something out of Bisquick, and go to bed with a full tummy. So here is a dumpling recipe that I found, using Bisquick. Mikey (Bob) loved it, so I pass it along to you.

Dumplings

2 cups Bisquick

2/3 cup of Milk

(Skim, soy, almond, whole, whatever.)

1 quart Chicken Stock

(I use chicken bouillon cubes)

Bring the chicken stock to a boil. Mix the Bisquick and milk in a separate bowl with a fork, until a soft dough forms. Drop the mixture by spoonfuls into the boiling chicken stock, and reduce heat. Cook uncovered for 10 minutes. Then cover the pot and cook for another 10 minutes. Serve immediately, right from the pot.



I served the dumplings with chicken and gravy. Gravy on dumplings – yum! You can also cook dumplings in soups or stew.



With so many sporting events cancelled due to the Omicron variant, they're going to televise the World Origami championship. It's on paperview.

Of all the things I learned in grade school, trying to avoid cooties was the last one I expected to use later in life.

When I was a kid, there were two ways to die: natural causes, and talking back to your parents.

At any given time, the urge to sing *The Lion Sleeps Tonight* is just a whim away, a whim away, a whim away, a whim away

Turns out you can just buy a birthday cake any time and eat it yourself. Nobody checks.

The reason I'm old and wise is because God protected me when I was young and stupid.

You know you're no longer in charge of your house when the dog decides what time you wake up.

My kids laugh because they think I'm crazy. I laugh because they don't know it's hereditary.

I've been in bed for 20 minutes, and I've just remembered – I only came upstairs for a pen.

Mom's favorite sayings:

- What part of no don't you understand?
- I don't care who started it!
- Money doesn't grow on trees.
- Your face is going to freeze like that.
- Your hands are not broken.
- Beds are made for sleeping, not jumping.
- No one said life is fair.
- Eat your vegetables.
- I don't know is NOT an answer.
- Because I said so ... That's why!