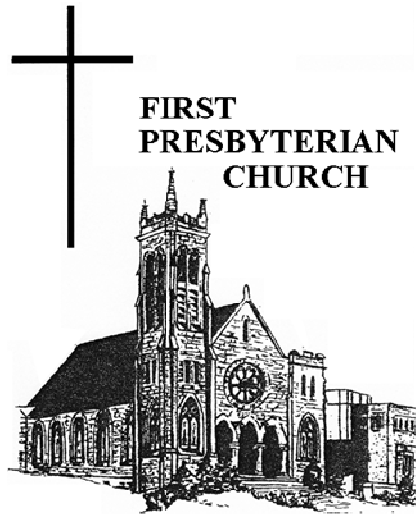


From: First Presbyterian Church <churchoffice@oleanfpc.ccsend.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 10:02 AM
To: Olean FPC
Subject: November Newsletter & Calendar



O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. ~ 1 Chronicles 16:34 and many other places in the Bible.

As I have shared several times, my morning planning and devotional time begins with giving thanks for three things. So, I want to give thanks for November even though it arrived way too early.

November is upon us, and I think I am about to be ready for August. November arrives with the celebration of All Saints Day and a time change, then moves on to the Election, then Veterans Day, then Thanksgiving. For me, time is flying by, but I don't want to rush past these events because they all have something in common. They all involve gratitude.

For me, All Saints' Sunday, the first Sunday of November, is when we sing with exuberance and thanksgiving, "For all the Saints who, From Their Labors Rest." It is a time of thanksgiving for all those who have made such a difference in our lives but have died and gone home to be with God. There is a line in the song that always brings tears to my eyes:

And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
and hearts are brave again, and arms are strong.
Alleluia, Alleluia!

It reminds me of the deep pain of loss but also the hope of being reunited.

Then there is election day, which will stir things up no matter the results. In terms of gratitude, I am not thinking in terms of election season being over or who won but rather giving thanks for our democracy, which, imperfect as it is, is still a blessing.

As Churchill said, drawing on an unknown source on November 11, 1947,
“Many forms of Government have been tried and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise.”

Indeed, **it has been said** that democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.

<https://richardlangworth.com/worst-form-of-government>

This was said on Veterans Day, our national holiday (November 11), honoring veterans of the armed forces and those killed in the country's wars. The observance originated in 1919 on the first anniversary of the 1918 armistice that ended World War I and was known as Armistice Day. This is a third opportunity to give thanks as we express gratitude to all those who served in the military and remember those who lost their lives in service to our country.

And then there is Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving in the United States has been observed on differing dates. From the time of the Founders. President of the United States, George Washington proclaimed the first nationwide thanksgiving celebration in America marking November 26, 1789, "as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favours of Almighty God", and calling on Americans to "unite in most humbly offering our prayers and

supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions."

Abraham Lincoln made it a national holiday in 1863, but the date of observance varied from state to state. The final Thursday in November had become the customary date in most U.S. states by the beginning of the 19th century. Because of the ongoing Civil War, a nationwide Thanksgiving celebration was not realized until Reconstruction in the 1870s. On December 26, 1941, Roosevelt signed a joint resolution of Congress changing the official national Thanksgiving Day to the fourth Thursday in November starting in 1942.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanksgiving>

It's a month of gratitude and a time to
Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;
Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your many blessings, see what God hath done.

And to that I add the sign upon my door from Philippians 1:3-5a,
"3I thank my God every time I mention you in my prayers. 4I'm thankful for all of you every time I pray, and it's always a prayer full of joy. 5I'm glad because of the way you have been my partners in the ministry of the gospel."

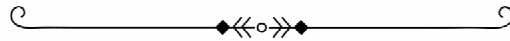
I don't know what this November will bring, but I do know that, as Jimmy Buffett sang, we can face the world with an attitude of gratitude:

They say this is the showdown, they say it's us or them
They just can't see that us and they were relatives and friends
I made a little song up, put it on the charts
Says, "Come on, people, everybody open up your hearts"

An attitude of gratitude when push has come to shove
Eliminates combatitude and changes fear to love
An attitude of gratitude, hooray, for what's okay
Say, "Thank you" with infactitude, and it's a brand-new day

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. ~ 1 Chronicles 16:34

Peace and Blessings,
Pastor Bruce





St. Stephens Episcopal Church
and
Bethany Lutheran Church
in cooperation with the
Greater Olean Association of Churches

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER

Thursday, November 28th 2024

Home Delivery: 10:30 am to 2:00 pm

Take Outs Available: 11: 00 am to 2:00 pm

NO IN-CHURCH DINING

PLEASE contact us ahead of time for a Turkey Day Takeout by calling 716-372-5628 and giving your name, address and phone number for delivery, by November 25th so we make sure we have enough food and drivers - thanks!

**Take Outs at St. Stephens Episcopal Church (Genesis House side)
109 South Barry Street, Olean, NY**

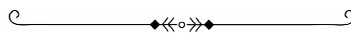
Dinner includes turkey, mashed potatoes with gravy, stuffing, corn, green beans, cranberry sauce, a roll, and a dessert.

Needed Items: Sweet Breads, pre-packaged cookies, and fruit pies (apple, blueberry, cherry, peach, etc. *(Please no Pumpkin or Custard Pies due to Health Code Regulations)* ***Please use back entrance for all drop offs***)

Volunteer Drivers needed for Home Deliveries. Please call 716-597-5406.
Leave your name, contact phone number and times you can deliver meals.

We welcome cash donations. Please make checks payable to St. Stephen's Church
(Please note "Thanksgiving Dinner" on your check or envelope)

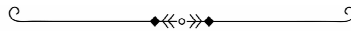
Donations can be mailed to: St. Stephens Church, PO Box 446,
Olean, NY 14760 or dropped off at 109 South Barry St., Olean
(Please use back entrance for all drop offs)



Tour Anyone?

Do you know where the kids meet for Sunday School? Have you seen the new Christian Ed Office? How about the nursery? When was the

last time you walked through the building? If you're interested in a tour let Bruce or Lanna know and one of us will take you through!



MEF Activities

Thankfest 11-9-24 We plan to eat at 5:30. Turkey, beverages, and table service will be supplied. Please indicate on the sign-up sheet in Fellowship what you plan to bring. We will also do a white elephant gift exchange. Bring a wrapped gift that is \$10.00-\$15.00 value and identify it as a man, woman, or child. Please no junk items. It should be a fun evening. So please plan to attend.

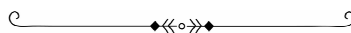
Keynote Chorus Concert 11-10-24 at 2:00pm. Please plan to attend this concert. A free will offering will be taken to benefit the church. A coffee hour will be available after the concert.

Thank you for your cooperation with labeling and using ceramic cups instead of disposable cups during coffee hour and meals. Disposable cups will remain available as needed.

We are interested in resuming two volunteer advent activities. This includes Ringing the Bell for the Salvation Army and Christmas Caroling. A sheet is in Fellowship Hall. Please let us know if you are interested by indicating on this sheet.

We are in need of goodies for coffee hour. Thank you for your generosity.

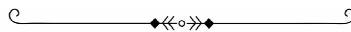
Several years ago Bruce asked members to bring in an ornament for the kids Christmas tree. A lot of these ornaments were home made and quite beautiful and special. A couple years ago Carol expressed an interest in only using ornaments the kids had made for their tree. Therefore I took these ornaments and I planned to get a new tree for these ornaments. This year there will be a new small tree in Fellowship Hall for these ornaments and you are encouraged to bring an ornament to decorate this tree.



Facebook

Did you know we have two pages on Facebook? There is one called Olean First Presbyterian Church and one called Olean FPC Disciples.

Next time you're online check them out and "like" them so they come up in your feed. There will be pictures of things happening in the church, daily devotions, announcements of events, as well as live streaming of Sunday worship and Thursday vespers. Keep in the loop!



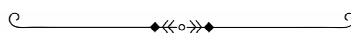
Deacons

The Deacons meet monthly and are currently in the Fall program of taking mum plants to our Friends at Home. The eight members have church members that they regularly visit and keep them informed of our Church's activities. We take prepared dishes to members recovering from hospital procedures and other medical issues. We continue our "card ministry" to celebrate birthdays and special events of each member.

As a way of saying thank you to the congregation for their support of our committee, we have donated \$500 to the Roof Fund. We continue to provide canned goods and food items to the Pastor's Emergency Food Supply, which is available for his use when approached by community members.

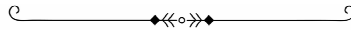
We accompany Pastor Bruce to assist in delivering communion to home-bound members when requested. We keep in touch with our college students by the sending of cards of encouragement. We also distribute the Sunday morning chancel flowers to various members. When called upon at times of bereavement, we support the families during their time of loss.

Respectfully submitted,
Barry Hurley, Moderator



Presbyterian Women

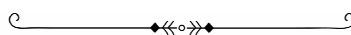
All ladies are invited to attend Presbyterian Women on the third Wednesday of each month at noon. Folks bring their lunch and eat together as they have a short business meeting and then a Bible Study with Bruce. It's nice fellowship with other ladies of the church. Give it a try!



First Presbyterian Church of Olean
Regular Session Meeting
October 7, 2024 @ 4PM

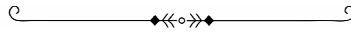
PRESENT: Wendy Brand, Doug Cashing, Marlene Lang, Bruce Levine (moderator), Louie McClure, Chris Norton, Craig Polson EXCUSED: Punkie Sinesiou, Steve Yehl

- Doug is working on updating Staff Manual. Staff evaluations will probably be done within the next month.
- Burt distribution approved: \$15,000 to Southern Tier Symphony, \$10,000 to Swizzy's Cause @ YMCA and \$20,000 to First Presbyterian Church for roof project from the Burt Fund.
- Roof Update: Currently, money in hand \$38,504.32; pledges \$20,250; Grand total is \$58,754.32
- The new copier has been installed and paid for.
- The SS kids are writing and preparing for Christmas pageant. Literacy of Love continues to be their mission project.
- In addition to passing out Halloween candy, we will have a basket raffle. There will be an adult basket, an older child basket and a younger child basket.
- Roof Update: half of the underlayment has been delivered and is sitting in the parking lot.
- Hand rails should be installed this week (hopefully).
- Louie is getting bids to clean the rain gutters of the church.
- For All Saints Day we will do candle lighting for saints in our life.
- Andrea's Recognition Sunday will be October 20.
- FYI: Marilyn Hale, Portville Presbyterian, is retiring in June 2025.
Chris Norton, Clerk of Session



Bible studies

Interested in reading and studying together about the Bible? There's one Thursday evenings at 7 and one Sunday mornings at 9:30. Both last no longer than an hour and move at the class's pace. It's led by Bruce and is very informal... and comfortable to ask questions. You can join anytime, there's no real beginning or end.



Youth Corner

The students having been working and studying hard this fall: making cards for Meals on Wheels recipients, helping out with weekly church responsibilities, and writing their own Christmas play. All while focusing our studies on the Gospel of Mark. They are learning about what it means to truly follow Jesus- and putting it into practice!

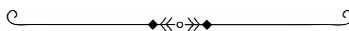
Advent will be here before we know it; and while we are enjoying the annual Fall celebrations we know that the beginning of the new church year is right around the corner. Once again, we will be offering up Advent challenges to our congregation this year. Our challenges support organizations such as the Genesis House, Literacy of Love, the SPCA, and the Olean Food Pantry. We will also be broadcasting our challenges on our Facebook page, so share them with your friends and family. The more participants, the more good we can do!

We also have many small side projects that are continuous opportunities for you to put your faith into practice. We continue to collect cards for the shut-ins who receive Meals on Wheels. There is a collection box in Fellowship Hall. Please fill out a birthday or holiday card (or 10) and deposit them in the box. We continue to collect bottle slips to donate funds to Literacy of Love. There is a collection envelope for those on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Noisy Cans happens during worship every 4th Sunday; the students collect loose change to support the Olean Food Pantry. There are also Kindness Tokens for use in Fellowship Hall, along with a Prayer Bowl. Directions for use of these items are posted by their location.

As I mentioned, the students have also been preparing their own Christmas play once again. The performance will occur during Sunday

worship on December 22. We hope you will join us to celebrate the birth of Jesus!

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving!
 Carol McClellan, CE Director



[Click here to download calendar.](#)

November 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 10am Coffee & Conversation at N. Union St Tim Hortons	2 Set your clocks back tonight
3 Team 1 9:30am Bible Study 11am Worship – Communion	4 4pm Session	5 6:30pm Scouts	6	7 1pm Deacons 5:30pm BYO Dinner 6:30pm Vespers 6:30pm Scouts 7pm Choir 7pm Bible Study	8 10am Coffee & Conversation at N. Union St Tim Hortons 7:30pm Fish Club	9 5pm Thankfest
10 Team 2 9:30am Bible Study 11am Worship 2pm Keynote Chorus Concert	11 Veterans Day	12 6:30pm Scouts	13 4pm MEF Meeting 5pm CE Meeting	14 Bruce Off 5:30pm BYO Dinner 6:30pm Vespers 6:30pm Scouts 7pm Choir 7pm Bible Study	15 Bruce Off 7pm Bird Club	16 Bruce Off
17 Team 3 9:30am Bible Study 11am Worship	18	19 10am Branch at La Dolce Vita 6:30pm Scouts	20 Noon PW Meeting	21 5:30pm BYO Dinner 6:30pm Vespers 6:30pm Scouts 7pm Choir 7pm Bible Study	22 10am Coffee & Conversation at N. Union St Tim Hortons	23
24 Team 4 9:30am Bible Study 11am Worship – Noisy Cans	25 Bruce Off	26 Bruce Off 6:30pm Scouts	27 Bruce Off 5pm Finance Meeting		29 Bruce Off	30

First Presbyterian Church | PO Box 1608 212 Laurens Street | Olean, NY 14760 US

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