



First Presbyterian Church of Niagara Falls, Ny

First Pres Newsletter

December 2021



Dear Friends,

Every year as we move from one gospel to another as our focus in worship, and the days gets shorter, and the winter holidays arrive, I wonder where the time has gone. The rhythm is predictable. I should not be caught off guard. And still I am. Maybe you are too.

Last year was a challenge because we were in the midst of the pandemic. We all had to learn now to celebrate the holidays without our customary gatherings with friends and family. Traditional parties were curtailed. Travel was postponed. This year, we are facing different challenges. The rate of infections from COVID are on the rise in our community and in others across the country. Are we prepared to spend time with folks from other parts of the country? Will we gather with our friends and family?

We will figure it all out. I am certain of that. And we might wish that things were different.

Our theme this year as we work through the weeks of Advent is Close to Home. What does it mean for us to long for home? How do we build a home? Who is welcome in our home? How do we make home safe? How do we choose our home?

These questions are meant for us to consider Christ in the now and in the future, even as we remember the story of God's people as they gathered to be counted so long ago.

Friends, as this season of busy-ness unfolds before us, please take some time to rest, to renew. Find moments to meditate upon scriptures. Read through your favorite devotional. Be refreshed by the Spirit.

Continued

Continued

Here is a poem by Sarah Are, of A Sanctified Art, to start you off:

Chosen Home

There are a million ways to choose a home.

We choose to make it work.

We hang a wreath on the door of our shoebox apartment.

We invite company over.

We ask, "Would you like coffee with that?"

We choose to make the most of it.

We take up water coloring or kickboxing and show up to class.

We mostly embarrass ourselves, but we were there.

We choose to not go it alone.

We sign up to volunteer and make ourselves a name tag.

We slide weary bones into weary church pews.

We shake hands and say hello.

We let the music cover us, like a blanket, or a prayer.

We choose to love what we have.

We look in the mirror and speak kindly to our body.

We buy flowers at the market and arrange them in jelly jars.

There are a million ways to choose a home.

So like Jesus in the temple

who chose to stay,

who chose to speak,

who took up space because he knew he was home,

I invite you to do the same.

Put your body

where your soul feels alive.

Give yourself permission

to take up space there.

Stay, as long as it takes.

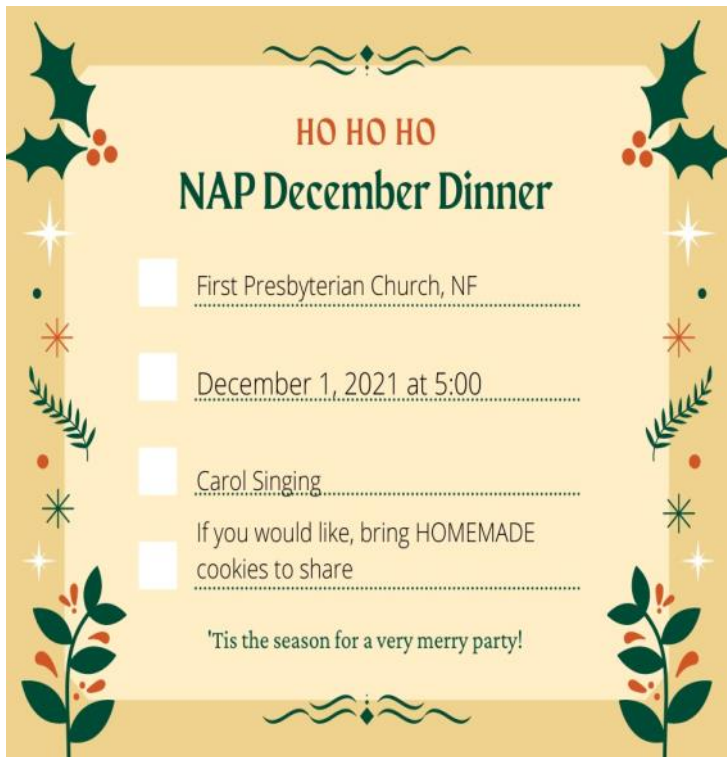
Return, as often as you need.

There are a million ways to choose a home.

Choose wisely. We need you here.

Blessings to you in this season!

Cathy



Congregation Meeting

Congregation Meeting will be held immediately following worship service, Sunday, December 12th. It is important that all members try to attend the meeting.



Hand Bell Ringing Circle

Hand Bell Ringing Circle will be on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm. There will be no Hand Bell Ringing Circle December 1st. Next Bell Ringing Circle will be Wednesday, December 8th. All are welcome. Come join the group for laughs, learning and fellowship. Musical talent not needed.



Samaritan's Operation Christmas Child Shoebox

Thank you to all who participated in Operation Christmas Child Shoebox. First Pres filled 31 Boxes! 31 kids will be touched by your generosity. Thank you Lis Slenk for heading up this out reach ministry.



Please Pray for Those Who are Sick or Shut-in



Shut-Ins

Dolores Coleman

Prayer List

Monique Wilson
Margaret Smith
Charlene Bush
Bill Karches
Micheline Bevacqua

Rev. Jon Rieley-Goddard
Robert Smith
Mark Tarbell
Andrew Hinchliffe

December Volunteer Schedule

Lay Readers

December 5 - Christine King
December 12 - John Goddard
December 19 - Lis Slenk
December 24 - Christmas Eve Service
December 26 - Carol Dashineau

Communion Servers

December 5 - John Goddard, Lis Slenk

December Birthdays

December 19 Jane MacNaughton
23 Sophia Bush
31 Charlene Bush
Happy Birthday!



Thank you to all who helped decorate the Sanctuary for the Christmas Season. As always the Sanctuary is beautiful. Thank you Lis Slenk for taking charge of the decorating.



First Pres Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm

Sunday worship service is recorded and is on First Pres' YouTube channel after 4:00 pm on Sundays for your viewing. The YouTube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSk4U35pI2I>

Elf on the Shelf

This year, instead of putting an Elf on the shelf, why not take Mary and Joseph out of your Nativity set and move them thru your house on their journey to Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph arrive at the Nativity scene on Christmas Eve.



Nativity Scene at First Pres

Budget Report for October 2021

	Actual \$	Year to Date \$	Budget YTD \$
GIVING	5,166	29,620	24,580
Investment Income, Other	15,398	29,953	25,580
TOTAL INCOME	20,564	59,573	50,160
EXPENSES	12,366	88,439	103,300
NET (Deficit)	8,198	(28,866)	(53,140)

We were positive \$8198 this month. The largest contributor to that was a rebate of \$10,051 from U.S. Gas & Electric, our gas supplier. Expenses included \$2889 for church and van insurance, and \$1765 for sealing the flashing on the bell tower. We still have a deficit of almost \$29,000 for 2021

REVERSE *advent* CALENDAR

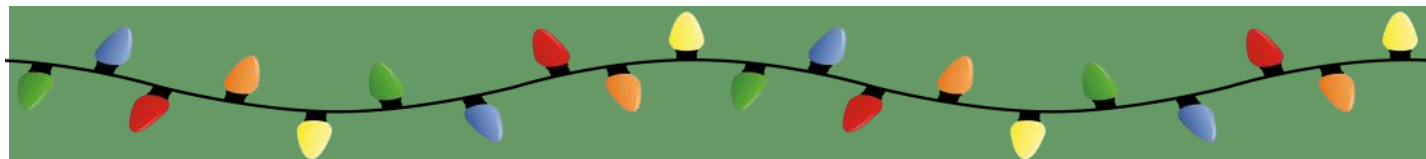
**Collect these
items each day
and then donate
to a local food
pantry on
December 24.**



*It is more blessed
to give than to receive.
Acts 20:35*

December 1	canned beans
December 2	cooking oil
December 3	boxed cereal
December 4	jar of spices
December 5	canned tomatoes
December 6	rolled oats
December 7	baby food
December 8	peanut butter
December 9	canned peaches
December 10	cake mix
December 11	tomato soup
December 12	ketchup
December 13	applesauce
December 14	crackers
December 15	pudding mix
December 16	rice
December 17	pasta
December 18	pasta sauce
December 19	chicken noodle soup
December 20	can of corn
December 21	can of green beans
December 22	macaroni & cheese
December 23	bottle of juice
December 24	muffin mix





December 2021

7"Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

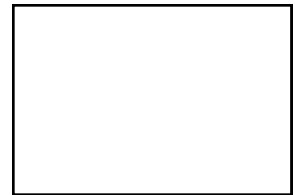
Sat

			1 NAP Dinner 5:00 pm. First Pres	2	3	4
5 2nd Sunday of Advent Communion	6	7	8 Bell Ringing Circle 5:30 pm	9	10	11
12 3rd Sun- day of Advent Congregation meeting	13	14	15 Bell Ringing Circle 5:30 pm	16	17	18
19 4th Sunday of Advent	20	21 Longest Night Service 7pm Riverside	22 Bell Ringing Circle 5:30 pm	23	24  Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm	25  Christmas
26 1st Sunday of Christmas	27	28	29 Bell Ringing Circle 5:30 pm	30	31  New Years Eve	

The Newsletter of First Presbyterian
Church of Niagara Falls, N.Y.

First Presbyterian Church
311 First St
Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Phone: 716-285-3555
Fax: 716-285-3482
E-mail: firstpresnfy@gmail.com



Return Service Requested



We're on the Web:

www.firstpresny.org

You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSk4U35pl2I>

Face Book <https://www.facebook.com/First-Presbyterian-Church-Niagara-Falls-117888153453785/>

CHURCH OFFICE

Hours: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9:00 am
to 1:00 pm

Telephone: 716-285-3555

Sunday Worship	11:15 am
Fellowship	On Hold
Communion	First Sunday of Month
Children Sunday School	On Hold
Food Pantry & Clothes	Closed
Closet	

BOARD MEETINGS

Deacons — 2nd Sunday of month—10:30 a.m.
Session — 3rd Tuesday of the month—7:00 p.m.

Rev. Cathy Rieley-Goddard office hours are Tuesday
9:30 am to 1:00 pm and Thursday by appointment.

Mask and social distancing are required at Worship
Service for those who are **not** vaccinated.

Visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/First-Presbyterian-Church-Niagara-Falls-117888153453785/>

News and letters may be submitted by mail to:
First Presbyterian Church, 311 First St., Niagara Falls,
NY 14303
ATTN: First Press



News may also be submitted via e-mail to the Church Secretary at
firstpres2@verzon.net or may be dropped through the mail slot of the church
office.

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Newsletter deadline is the 15th of the month.



**December
2021**