

First Presbyterian Church of Niagara Falls, NY

FIRST PRES Newsletter

February 2021



Dear Friends,

I feel like so much of our nation and the world has breathed a collective sigh of relief with the peaceful transition of power on January 20. As we look forward, there seems to be a lighter spirit, even as we continue to live with the effects of the global pandemic, economic challenges and the like.

At our recent session meeting, the session decided that we would continue to worship remotely to continue our efforts to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus. I have a few friends who regularly send printed copies of their sermons and the bulletin to those who do not have email or internet access. If you would like us to send worship materials to you, please call the church and leave a message. We would be happy to start doing that.

Ash Wednesday and Lent are almost upon us! We will have a Worship video for Ash Wednesday that will premiere at 7:00 PM on February 17. During Lent we will have a few ways to connect. On Sunday evenings at 7:00 we will have a Zoom discussion group to discuss Walter Bruggemann's book, *Materiality as Resistance*. These discussions will start on Sunday, February 21 and go through Palm Sunday, March 28. We are inviting the other Presbyterians in the area to join us. We will send out the link as the date gets closer. On Wednesday evenings we will have a short prayer service at 7:00 pm. They will be via YouTube. Just head over to our YouTube channel to check in for a midweek prayer.

On Feb 24, please consider joining a book discussion with folks from Buffalo and Niagara falls. This event is sponsored by Trinity Episcopal Church. The book is called *Waking Up White*, by Debby Irving.

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The author will be part of the discussion and talk about her experience with us. It promises to be an interesting evening. If you need help getting a copy of the book, please let me know.

If you did not see or hear Amanga Gorman's poem for the inauguration, please look it up. It is worthy of study for years to come. She reminds us that the future is indeed bright when we have such truth-tellers among us. These are the closing lines of her poem --
The Hill We Climb.

When day comes we step out of the shade,

aflame and unafraid

The new dawn blooms as we free it

For there is always light,

if only we're brave enough to see it

If only we're brave enough to be it

Blessings, Cathy

Lay Readers for February

February 7– Carol Dashineau

February 14 - John Goddard

February 21 - Lis Slenk

February 28 - Bill Karches

February Birthdays

February 8 Shayna Durham

11 Jonathan Bush

14 Margaret Smith

Rhoshe Jackson



Please Pray for Those Who are Sick or Shut-in

Shut-Ins



Pearl Durham
Dolores Coleman Elizabeth Ochab

Prayer List

Monique Wilson Rev. Jon Rieley-Goddard
Margaret Smith Robert Smith
Charlene Bush Bonnie Felstead
Carolyn Goddard Mark Tarbell
Bill Karches

There is sunshine and there is rain.
&

There is laughter and there is pain.
&

There is loss and there is gain.
&

There is hope in Jesus name.



Submitted by a Member of First Pres

COVID Closing

As you all know, the number of cases of COVID-19 in our area is on the rise. Our presbytery has encouraged us to return to remote worship until it is safe to gather again. Also, our public health officials are telling us this course of action is the best way we have of taking care of one another during these uncertain days. Please know that your church family is only a phone call away. Pastor Cathy is available by phone (716-310-6860) or email (firstpresnf@gmail.com). Members of the session or deacons would be glad to talk with you. If you do not know who to call, leave a message at the church office and someone will call you back. If you did not receive a weekly email from the church earlier in the year while the building was closed, we would love to add you to our list. Call the office and leave a message with your email address. We will send a weekly email to provide information about the coming week's video worship service and to keep in touch while we are apart. Friends, stay safe, take care of yourselves and one another. We all look forward to the time when we will be together again

Facebook Connections

We have a new face book page that we will use to update everyone during these coming weeks while the building is closed. Here is the link:

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

Please stop by the page and make sure you "like" it. Share it with you friends. The more people we have looking in the better! You can comment, post pictures, post a review of the church on the page. Everything you do will help you keep in touch with all of us and reach out to others who are looking for a community.

We are also part of Niagara Area Presbyterians which is a Facebook group. You can find the group by searching Facebook for the Niagara Area Presbyterians.

Budget Report for December 2020

	<u>Actual \$</u>	<u>Year to Date \$</u>	<u>Budget YTD \$</u>
GIVING	1,730	23,117	29,420
Investment Income, Other	22,107	51,326	41,125
TOTAL INCOME	23,837	74,443	70,545
EXPENSES	8,353	86,997	107,981
NET (Deficit)	15,484	(12,554)	(37,436)

We were positive for the month due to income from a USG&E utility rebate (\$5646), fourth quarter permanent endowment (\$7400), special funds (\$3199) and Marshall trusts (\$5853). The year-end deficit was cut to \$12,554.

The following letter was received from the Missions of Niagara Falls thanking First Pres and Bill Karches for participating in their Adopt a Family Program for Christmas. First Pres' participation was through the Loving Tree.

First Presbyterian of Niagara Falls
Bill Karches
311 First St
Niagara Falls, NY 14303

January 5, 2021

Dear Bill and First Presbyterian Church,

On behalf of Community Missions of Niagara Frontier, Inc., I want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the outstanding and generous lengths you went to for our Niagara County Neighbors-in-Need. The Adopt-a-Family program took some extraordinary and unique twists this year to honor and respect the guidelines of both New York State and The Mission's incredible CEO's stringent methods of safety and health considerations. WE/YOU were up for the challenge so that the many families and their children that come to us for help wouldn't be disappointed on Christmas day.

We lost some BIG sponsors that usually take from 10 to 30 families as the effects of this pandemic took its toll on area businesses, churches and agencies forcing them to downsize, layoff or close. Within those, there were people that STILL stepped up and did it as individuals or small groups. Because we were forced to tighten family gatherings, there were those that decided to spend money designated for their own family celebrations on someone else's family that they will never know or even meet. So great was your desire to help you researched and drilled down through websites until you found me, an affirmation of Western New York's greatest asset and reputation. Day after day I received phone calls and emails from individuals and families looking to participate in our Adopt-a-Family program.


You were patient waiting for the families we had to recruit through Niagara County agencies and schools within the Niagara Falls and Lockport school districts. You were zealous in getting your shopping done, mostly through online websites, and though you were isolated or even **contracted** Covid-19, so intent were you on helping others, you got the job done.

Shopping for the children wasn't enough for many of you, asking me for sizes, and specific wants and needs of the adult(s) in the household. One of you, because of a mistake I made, bought for the wrong parents and graciously and generously shopped, wrapped and gave to two sets of parents after the mistake was discovered.

When it was all said and done, you helped 115 families and 274 children, who wouldn't have had a Christmas like they did. You are WONDERFUL. You are GENEROUS, patient, kind and deserving of a place in heaven.

I can tell you that the response from those households receiving Christmas help from all of you was most humbling this year. I had many moms break down in tears over the multiple grocery store gift cards and presents you purchased for them and their children. I wish you could've witnessed the reactions of your magnanimity. That alone was a gift and a blessing.

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This was a hard year, one that we will, God willing, never see again. I am deeply sorry for all of you that lost loved ones, or were hospitalized and impacted; left to deal with the effects of this pandemic. I fervently hope we have seen the worst, now that the vaccination is arriving and being administered. I cannot imagine the heartache.

In short, an unprecedented year was confronted and dealt with, proving that the human spirit is indomitable and that collectively we can find ways to persevere. I was lucky enough to handle this program and actually meet many of you previously known only via email or phone calls, for which I am grateful.

I truly don't mean to make light of something we are all still struggling with, but I choose to see the loving and kind hearts of people making other lives brighter.

God Bless you all.

Humbly and gratefully,

Susan Dunlap Falbo

Events & Volunteer Manager

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Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/cminiagara Follow us on Twitter: [@cminiagara](https://twitter.com/cminiagara)

February 2021

Sun

Mon





Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	1 National Freedom Day	2 Ground Hog Day 	3	4	5	6
7 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Transfig- uration of the Lord Valentine's Day	15 	16 Session 7 pm	17 7:00pm Service via Zoom Ash  Wednesday	18	19	20
21 First Sunday of Lent	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Second Sunday of Lent						

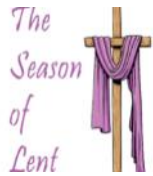
The Newsletter of First Presbyterian
Church of Niagara Falls, N.Y.

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Return Service Requested



Ash Wednesday
February 17

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: Closed

Telephone: 285-3555

Sunday Worship	On YouTube
Fellowship	On Zoom
Communion	First Sunday of Month
Children Sunday School	On Zoom
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.

The building is closed due to the Covid 19 Virus Pandemic. Worship service can be viewed on YouTube Sundays at 11:00 am. The YouTube link is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSk4U35pl2I>
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.



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