

# First Presbyterian Church of Niagara Falls, NY

## FIRST PRESS Newsletter

### December 2019



#### Advent

Advent begins Sunday, December 1st. Advent is designed to prepare Christians for the annual commemoration of Christ's birth. Each Sunday of Advent, a candle on the Advent wreath is lit. Special prayers are said when lighting the candles.

#### Advent Candle Lighting Schedule

December 2, candle of Hope

December 9, candle of Peace

December 16, candle of Joy

December 23, candle of Love

December 24, Christmas Eve, Christ candle



#### Christmas Season Church Services

Sunday School Christmas will be Sunday, December 15, during the regular 11:00 am Worship Service. The Church Christmas Potluck will immediately follow the worship service.

Christmas Eve Service, Tuesday, December 24, will be at 7:00 pm. There will be no Christmas Day service so members can enjoy the day with their families.

There will be no New Year Eve service this year.

#### Sad News

Long time member of First Pres, Edward Van Valkinburgh, passed away November 7, 2019. Ed will be greatly missed.

Please keep Ed's family in your prayers.

#### Preaching Schedule for December and January

Below is the Preachers' schedule for December and January. The continuity of leadership in worship will benefit our congregation. Everyone is urged to attend worship, and support our Church.

December 1 - Rev. Stacy Otto

December 8 - Terry McIntyre

December 15 - Rev. Stacy Otto

December 22 - Lee Weinsheimer

December 29 - Lee Weinsheimer

January 5 - Rev. Stacy Otto

January 12 - Terry McIntyre

January 19 - Rev. Stacy Otto

January 26 - Lee Weinsheimer

See you in Church, Carol Dashineau

#### Christmas Potluck

The Christmas Potluck at First Pres will be December 15, following the worship service. If you are able please bring a dish to share and a place setting for everyone in your group.

All are welcome.



#### Congregational Meeting

A Congregational Meeting will be held, Sunday, December 1st., immediately following worship service to elect elders and deacons for 2020 and to vote on reducing the numbers of Deacons and reducing the Session from nine to six members.

It is important that all members attend this meeting.

### Loving Tree

The Loving Tree is in the sanctuary and decorated with cards with gift requests for each child in the family that First Pres is adopting this Christmas season. The family consists of a Mother, an eight year old boy and a five month old girl.

Please take a card (or cards) with the gift you want to purchase. Wrap your gift, place the tag on the gift and place your wrapped gift under the Loving Tree. After you have placed your gift under the tree an angel ornament will be put on the tree. The goal is to have a tree full of angels. Remember, your generosity makes you an angel to this family. Gifts are due by December 8th.

If you are unable to shop for a gift, you may make a monetary gift. The money will be used to purchase a Tops food card or to purchase gifts that have not been donated.

Remember, your help with this ministry provides a "hand-up", not a handout for a family that needs your help this Christmas.

### Hymnals

New pew hymnals have been ordered. You may make a donation in memory of a loved one and the name of the loved one will be placed in a hymnal. You also may purchase a personal copy. The cost is \$20.00 per hymnal. Place your donation marked hymnal with the name of your loved one in the Sunday collection plate.

### Lewiston Choraleer Christmas Program 2019

Saturday, November 30 , 2 pm , St. John de LaSalle RC Church, Niagara Falls

Sunday, December 1, 2 pm, Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church, Niagara Falls,

Saturday, December 7, 1 pm, St. Peter's RC Church, Lewiston.

Sunday, December 8, 2 pm, Messiah Lutheran Church, Lewiston.

Admission is \$5.00 (Children 12 and under are free). First Pres Member, Lis Slenk, is a member of the Lewiston Choraleer.

### Shoeboxes

Again this year First Pres participated in the Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry. Through the generosity of the members of First Pres, 27 shoeboxes were donated, making it nine more than last year.

Sunday, November 17, Rev Stacy blessed the boxes and Monday, November 18, Lis Slenk delivered the boxes to the pick up site in Lewiston.

Thank you Lis for again heading up the Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry at First Pres. A big thank you to those who donated a shoebox.

**Did you know this?** The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ. -Two turtle doves are the Old and New Testaments. -Three French hens stand for faith, hope and love. -The four calling birds are the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John. -The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of ...the Old Testament. -The six geese a-laying stand for the six days of creation..... -Seven swans a-swimming represent the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit--Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership, and Mercy. -The eight maids a-milking are the eight beatitudes. -Nine ladies dancing are the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit--Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control. -The ten lords a-leaping are the ten commandments. -The eleven pipers piping stand for the eleven faithful disciples. -The twelve drummers drumming symbolizes the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed. So there is your history for today. **MERRY CHRISTMAS!! ♡ yes, I said MERRY CHRISTmas because Christmas is not without CHRIST!**

This article was submitted by a member



## Letters From Route 66

“Life is what happens when you're making plans for something else.” I may not have had the saying exactly correct, but its meaning struck a chord as I found myself cruising along Route 66, contemplating how I had arrived on this historic road. Here I was, joining the entourage that had traveled this gateway to the West, particularly during the dust Bowl years of the 1930's when people, seeking a new life, set up businesses along this popular route and, in so doing, realized a prosperity they otherwise would not have had. Maybe, I too would find new life having literally driven away from a 21-year aviation career, leaving all that I knew behind in search of...what? I was compelled to seek, not knowing exactly why, nor what it was I sought; I was driven to move on with only a sense that the journey would be worth taking. Had the same pioneer spirit as those 1930 travelers captured me? Was I actually learning to take a leap of faith?

Such thoughts raced through my mind when out of the depths of the dashboard there came the voice of a radio preacher—and I was brought to an absolute standstill by a roadside oasis somewhere between Albuquerque, New Mexico and the great beyond..

*Trust in God with all your heart and learn not upon your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths.*

To “lean not upon my own understanding” was a tall order for someone who had led a military life where policy and procedure ruled, and reliance on one's own intuition and wits was crucial to getting the job done. Yet here it was, a clear declaration that God would direct the way, if only I would let Him.

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### *Continued*

That was a glorious revelation, but also one wrought with trepidation. Where would He lead me? How would I know when I got there? What would happen once I arrived?

“Trust in God with all your heart”... that would take time, and many, many more miles along Route 66. One thing I did know with certainty—my life was changed forever and, as I would later learn, this was only the beginning of a journey meant to last a lifetime. In hindsight I clearly saw how God's hand had been directing my path; but while in the midst of it, I couldn't see the destination or purpose. I guess that's why it's called faith... Faith is an amazing gift, but not necessarily one that is easily “unwrapped,” for it frequently takes us into the unknown as we answer it's call to “Keep on truckin” down the spiritual highway. However, as I was beginning to discover, faith would never steer me in the wrong direction for around every corner, and through every twist and turn God was patiently waiting for me to arrive.

As I paused in my travels for awhile at that roadside stop, I recalled that I had once heard said, “Don't worry about tomorrow—God's already there.” I taped a note to the dashboard to remind me of that crucial fact as I traversed the heartland of American.

God Speed

Pastor Stacy

### Big News

Beginning in January, there will be an EVENING BIBLE STUDY. Several people have been asking for an evening bible study. Rev. Robert DeFazio has agreed to lead the group. Time and day of the week will be published soon.

Please, prayerfully consider joining the group!  
Carol Dashineau, Clerk of Session



## Please Pray for Those Who are Sick or Shut-in

### Shut-Ins

Jean Hackenheimer Pearl Durham  
Dolores Coleman Elizabeth Ochab



### Prayer List

Monique Wilson Rev. Jon Rieley-Goddard  
Margaret Smith Robert Smith  
Victoria Stewart Gianna Horner  
Charlene Bush Bonnie Felstead

## December Volunteer Schedule

### Ushers

December 1 - John MacNaughton, John Hazel  
December 8 - Carl Slenk, John Goddard  
December 15 - John Goddard, Kirk Parry  
December 22 - John Hazel, Robert MacNaughton  
December 29 - Kirk Perry, Carl Slenk

### Lay Readers

December 1 - Lis Slenk  
December 8 - Janet Bianca  
December 15 - Bill Karches  
December 22 - John Goddard  
December 29 - Carol Dashineau

### Communion Servers (In Pew)

December 1 - John Goddard, Carol Dashineau

*Merry Christmas  
and Happy New  
Year.  
Have a safe and  
Happy Holiday*

### December Birthdays

December 19 - Jane MacNaughton  
23 - Sophia Bush  
31 Charlene Bush



## Budget Report for October 2019

	<u>Actual \$</u>	<u>Year to Date \$</u>	<u>Budget YTD \$</u>
Giving	3,403	25,145	28,020
Investment Income, Other	8,197	27,548	31,840
TOTAL INCOME	11,600	52,693	59,860
EXPENSES	11,838	75,573	99,450
NET (Deficit)	( 238)	(22,880)	(39,590)

Income this month included 3rd quarter investment income from the permanent endowment. Expenses included \$3151 for church and van insurance and \$1994 for heating system pump repair.

## Adult Classes, Sunday, 10:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room

The unit for December, is "God's Covenant" with Faithfulness the value emphasized.

December 1: "Choosing to Follow" (Genesis 12:1-9)

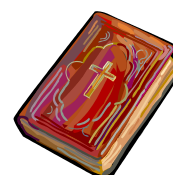
December 8: "Believing the Impossible" (Genesis 15:1-18)

December 15: "Passing the Test" (Genesis 22:1-14))

December 22: "Celebrating Promises Fulfilled" (Luke 1:46-55)







December 29: "A Life of Integrity" (Genesis 39:7-21)

Please join us for this exciting adventure into God's Word. All are welcome!





# December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> Congrega- tional meet- ing 1st Sunday of Advent	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> F.A.C.T. 9 am-Noon Giving Tuesday	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Office Closed	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> Deacon's Meeting, Lov- ing Tree Due, 2nd Sunday of Advent	<b>9</b> Office Closed	<b>10</b> F.A.C.T. 9 am-Noon	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Breakfast Club 9 am
<b>15</b> Sunday School Christmas Potluck	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> F.A.C.T. 9 am-Noon Session 7 pm	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> First Day of Winter 
<b>22</b> 4th Sunday of Advent	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> F.A.C.T. 9 am - Noon Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm 	<b>25</b>  Christmas 	<b>26</b> Office Closed	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Breakfast Club 9 am
<b>29</b> First Sunday after Christ- mas	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> F.A.C.T. 9 am - Noon New Years Eve				

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

First Press  
First Presbyterian Church  
311 First St

Phone: 716-285-3555  
Fax: 716-285-3482  
E-mail: firstpres2@verizon.net



Return Service Requested



Merry  
Christmas

*We're on the Web:*

[www.NiagaraChurch.org](http://www.NiagaraChurch.org)

## CHURCH OFFICE

Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9 am -1 pm  
Telephone: 285-3555

Sunday Worship	11:00 a.m.
Fellowship	10:30 a.m.
Adult Education	10:00 a.m.
Communion	1st Sunday of each month
Church Breakfast Club	9:00 a.m.- 2nd & 4th Saturdays of the month
Food Pantry & Clothes Closet	Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m.—12 noon

## BOARD MEETINGS

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

News and letters may be submitted by mail to:

First Presbyterian Church, 311 First  
Falls, NY 14303  
ATTN: First Press

News may also be submitted via e-  
Church Secretary at  
[firstpres2@verzon.net](mailto:firstpres2@verzon.net) or may be  
the mail slot of the church office.



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mail to the  
dropped through

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Editor/Publisher: Janet Roat  
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**Newsletter deadline is the 15th of the month.**



*December 2019*