



First Presbyterian Church, Niagara Falls, NY Newsletter September 2022



Dear Friends,

A couple of weeks ago, one of our great modern theologians, Frederick Buechner, died at the age of 96. I have been reading tributes about him over the past few days and am reminded of what I liked about him so much, when I first learned of his work.

He was a down to earth thinker. His ideas were about everyday things and how we might be able to find God in the ordinariness of everyday life. He was a prolific writer of books including memoirs, theology, and fiction. This month, I share some of his words with you.

When being interviewed by someone at the New York Times in 1982 Buechner said, *"What I propose to do now is to try listening to my life as a whole ... for whatever of meaning, of holiness, of God, there may be in it to hear. My assumption is that the story of any one of us is in some measure the story of us all."*

In his book, *The Clown in the Belfry*, he writes this about saints and sinners:

Who wants to be holy? The very word has fallen into disrepute—holier-than-thou, holy Joe, holy mess. And "saint" comes to mean plaster saint, somebody of such stifling moral perfection that we would run screaming in the other direction if our paths ever crossed. [...] And yet we have our moments. Every once in a while, I think, we actually long to be what out of darkness and mystery we are called to be; when we hunger for holiness even so, even if we would never dream of using the word. There come moments, I think, even in the midst of all our cynicism and worldliness and childishness, maybe especially then, when there is something about the saints of the earth that bowls us over a little. I mean real saints. I mean saints as men and women who are made not out of plaster and platitude and moral perfection but out of human flesh. I mean saints who have their rough edges and their blind spots like everybody else but whose lives are transparent to something so extraordinary that every so often it stops us dead in our tracks. Light-bearers. Life-bearers.

And from his final book, *A Crazy Holy Grace*, he says:

The final secret, I think, is this: that the words "You shall love the Lord your God" become in the end less a command than a promise. And the promise is that, yes, on the weary feet of faith and the fragile wings of hope, we will come to love him at last as from the first he loved us—loved us even in the wilderness, especially in the wilderness, because he has been in the wilderness with us. He has been in the wilderness for us. He has been acquainted with our grief. And, loving him, we will come at last to love each other too so that, in the end, the name taped on every door will be the name of the one we love.

Friends, this is a great time to listen to your life. Expect to find God along the way. Spend time in the here and now, not preparing for the future, not thinking about the past. Listen to the now. What is God calling you to find? To do? To become? The answers might surprise you.

Blessings,

Cathy

First Pres was in the News

First Pres was featured in the August 10 issue of the Niagara Gazette in an article by Mark Scheer.

The article was about First Pres place in history in the City of Niagara Falls. How First Pres Session worked to get the church building in the National Historical Register so the church would survive urban renewal reuse.

The article also mentioned that First Pres is in the process of applying for grants through the State of New York Office of Parks Recreational and Historic Preservation. If approved the grant would help make much needed repairs to the church and preserve a nearly 200 year historic church in downtown Niagara Falls.

Link to the article is below

https://www.niagara-gazette.com/news/local_news/members-of-historic-falls-church-hope-state-rings-bell-on-preservation-effort/article_bdf8508c-0861-11ed-9384-97f54ae0289b.html



Riverside Church, at 815 84th Street, Niagara Falls, is hosting the Niagara Area Presbyterian dinner, Wednesday, September 7, at 5:00 PM.

Fellowship, good conversation and a meal will be enjoyed by all. Everyone is welcome.

The following poem was sent to Pastor Cathy from a member of the Niagara Falls Community after he read the article about First Pres in the Niagara Gazette.

A Beacon

by Steven G. Ryder, Sr.

Consider this:

In our city there are many
vacant buildings
of all different sizes.

All built by dreams and plans,
except for one structure:
a church founded in 1824.

It stands amongst the empties,
as a beacon of hope,
as a center of forgiveness
as a welcoming door of love.

A tower inviting all to come,
come to Jesus,
for he loves you
and cares for you.



Operation Christmas Child Shoe Boxes

First Pres will again participate in the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child Shoe Boxes. School supplies, summer items like flip flops and small toys are perfect for this project. Keep Operation Christmas Child Shoe Boxes in mind when you see a sale. Monetary donations to help with postal cost are welcomed. See Lis Slenk for more information.

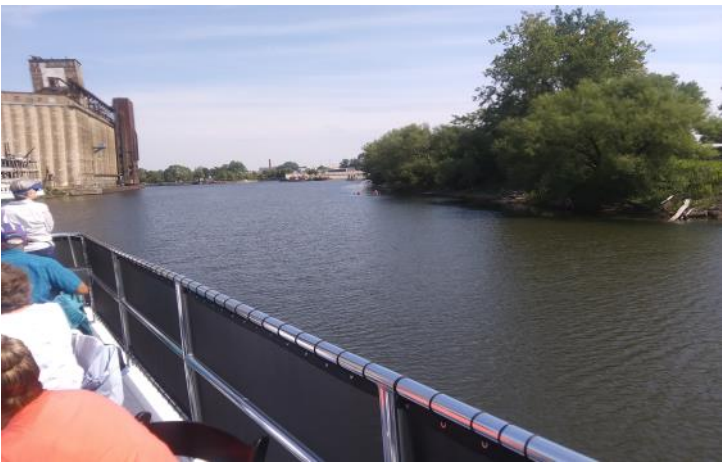


First Pres was on the Move

In August, some First Pres members and guests made a trip to Canalside in Buffalo. The morning started with a guided boat ride down the inner harbor of the Buffalo River followed by a tour of Canalside and ended with lunch at Canalside.

Members and guests learned how the opening of the Erie canal lead to the growth of Buffalo and that at one time in Buffalo's history it was the largest exporter of grain. They also learned of the efforts of several environmental groups to clean up the waters of the Buffalo River to return the shores and water to a home for wildlife.

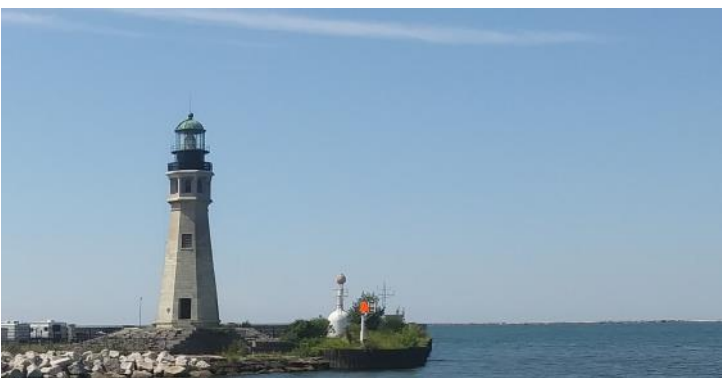
Below are a few pictures of the boat ride.



Grain silos on the left. Restoration efforts of the shoreline on the right



Going under the SkyWay bridge with the Marine Museum ships in the background



Light house at the mouth of Lake Erie and the Inner Harbor



Grain Silos and cruise boat under restoration

Please Pray for Those Who are Sick or Shut-in



Shut-Ins

Dolores Coleman
Abraham McLarahmore
Dom DeFazio

Prayer List

Charlene Bush	Margaret Smith
Bill Karches	Monique Wilson
Joe Mallory	Mark Tarbell
Jeffery Street	Micheline Bevacqua

September Volunteer Schedule

Lay Readers

September 4 - John Goddard
September 11 - Lis Slenk
September 18 - Carol Dashineau
September 25 - John Goddard

Communion Servers

September 4 - John Goddard
Dori Parry

September Birthdays



September 5 Bill Karches
11 Blanche Belin
20 Monique Wilson
John Hazel
28 Janet Bianca

Sunday Worship on You Tube

Each week the Sunday morning worship service is video-recorded. The video is uploaded to First Pres Niagara Falls early in the week. Check it out.

The link to You Tube is

youtube.com/channel/UCV8PmvV_gWm7wiggyI-q03g.



September days are here with summer's best of weather and autumn's best of cheer.

Let us pause briefly on September 11 to remember those who lost their lives in the twin towers tragedy and for those who so gallantly risked their lives to save the lives of others.



Budget Report for July 2022

	<u>Actual \$</u>	<u>Year to Date \$</u>	<u>Budget YTD \$</u>
GIVING	4,445	22,010	25,662
Investment Income, Other	8,040	15,548	16,331
TOTAL INCOME	12,485	37,558	41,993
EXPENSES	10,234	66,612	78,057
NET (Deficit)	2,251	(29,052)	(36,064)

We were positive for the month due largely to investment income. Income included 2nd quarter dividends from the permanent endowment and first half dividends from the Special Funds account. Expenses included \$3069 for church and van insurance and \$404 for electric.



2022

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

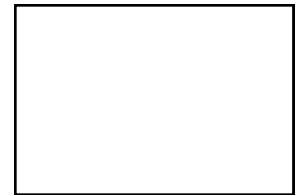
Sat

				1	2	3
4 <i>Communion</i>	5 LABOR DAY <i>Office Closed</i>	6	7 <i>NAP</i> <i>dinner, Riverside</i> <i>5:00 PM</i>	8	9	10
11 	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 <i>International Day of Peace</i>	22 	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

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

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Return Service Requested

HAPPY
Labor Day

We're on the Web:

www.firstpresnfny.org

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

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
Communion First Sunday of Month

BOARD MEETINGS

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.

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.

September 2022

