

Presbyterian News



EDITION

May 2021



May



304 Broad Street
Oneida, NY 13421
315-363-7590

e-mail: oneidafirstpres@oneidafirstpres.org

Website:
oneidafirstpres.org

CHURCH STAFF

Choir Director
Stephanie Gwilt

Organist
Melinda Phoenix-Heart

Church Secretary
John Merritt

Treasurer
Frank Kordziel

Financial Secretary
Pat Thorpe

Clerk of Session
Pat Thorpe

Custodian
Jennawade Skellham

First Presbyterian Church of Oneida Guidelines for Church Services

Entry – All Entries can now be used to access the church.

Masks – Masks must be worn into and out of the church. While sitting in the pew for service the mask is optional.

Singing - Masks are required when singing.

Distancing – Worshipers are to be six feet apart. There will be a bulletin on the pew where you can sit. The pew in front of and behind you should be empty. Families may sit together, however the worshipers to the left and right of the family need to be six feet apart. When entering and exiting please try to stay six feet apart.

Collection plates – Collection plates will be at all entry and exit points.

Hand Sanitizer – There will be hand sanitizer at all entry and exit points. There are also individual bottles in the pews.

Communion – The first Sunday of every month. Communion elements will be provided at the entrances to the sanctuary.

Drinking Fountain – The drinking fountain will be covered and unavailable until further notice.

Coffee Servers – Coffee hour is suspended until further notice. Please keep your cards handy in case restrictions are lifted later in the year.

Nursery – Nursery services are available. Parents must accompany their children while they are in the nursery.

Live Streaming – You can still watch the service on FB live. The IT committee is currently working on a way to broadcast services for live streaming. We will update the progress of that in the future.

The staff of First Presbyterian Church of Oneida welcome you back to worship. We will do all that we can to make your worship as stress free as possible. If you have any questions concerning these guidelines feel free to email the office oneidafirstpres@oneidafirstpres.org, or call 315-363-7590.



The fog of the broken heart.

It's a dark fog that slyly imprisons the soul and refuses easy escape. It's a silent mist that eclipses the sun and beckons the darkness. It's a heavy cloud that honors no hour and respects no person. Depression, discouragement, disappointment, doubt... all are companions of this dreaded presence. The fog of the broken heart disorients our life. It makes it hard to see the road. Dim your lights. Wipe off the windshield. Slow down. Do what you wish, nothing helps. When this fog encircles us, our vision is blocked and tomorrow is a forever away. When this billowy blackness envelopes us, the most earnest words of help and hope are but vacant phrases. If you have ever been betrayed by a friend, you know what I mean. If you have ever been dumped by a spouse or abandoned by a parent, you have seen this fog. If you have ever placed a spade of dirt on a loved one's casket or kept vigil at a dear one's bedside, you, too, recognize this cloud.

If you have been in this fog, or are in it now, you can be sure of one thing — you are not alone. Even the saltiest of sea captains have lost their bearings because of the appearance of this unwanted cloud. Like the comedian said, "If broken hearts were commercials, we'd all be on TV."

Think back over the last two or three months. How many broken hearts did you encounter? How many wounded spirits did you witness? How many stories of tragedy did you read about?

My own reflection is sobering:

The woman who lost her husband and son in a freak car wreck.

The attractive mother of three who was abandoned by her husband.

The child who was hit and killed by a passing garbage truck as he was getting off the school bus. His mother who was waiting for him, witnessed the tragedy.

The parents who found their teenager dead in the forest behind their home. He had hung himself from a tree with his own belt.

The list goes on and on, doesn't it? Foggy tragedies. How they blind our vision and destroy our dreams. Forget any great hopes of reaching the world. Forget any plans of changing society. Forget any aspirations of moving mountains. Forget all that. Just help me make it through the night!

The suffering of the broken heart.

Go with me for a moment to witness what was perhaps the foggiest night in history. The scene is very simple; you'll recognize it quickly. A grove of twisted olive trees. Ground cluttered with large rocks. A low stone fence. A dark, dark night.

Now, look into the picture. Look closely through the shadowy foliage. See that person? See that solitary figure? What's He doing? Flat on the ground. Face stained with dirt and tears. Fists pounding the hard earth. Eyes wide with a stupor of fear. Hair matted with salty sweat. Is that blood on His forehead?

That's Jesus. Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Maybe you've seen the classic portrait of Christ in the garden. Kneeling beside a big rock. Snow-white robe. Hands peacefully folded in prayer. A look of serenity on His face. Halo over His head.

A spotlight from Heaven illuminating His golden-brown hair. Now, I'm no artist, but I can tell you one thing. The man who painted that picture didn't use the gospel of Mark as a pattern.

Look what Mark wrote about that painful night.

When they reached a place called Gethsemane, He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." And He took Peter and James and John with Him. Horror and dismay came over Him, and He said to them, "My heart is ready to break with grief; stop here, and stay awake." Then He went forward a little, threw himself on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, this hour might pass Him by. "Abba, Father," he said, "all things are possible to Thee; take this cup away from Me. Yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt."

He came back and found them asleep; and He said to Peter, "Asleep, Simon? Were you not able to keep awake for one hour? Stay awake, all of you; and pray that you may be spared the test: the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Once more He went away and prayed. On His return He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know how to answer Him.

The third time He came and said to them, "Still sleeping?"

Still taking your ease? Enough! The hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed to sinful men. Up, let us go forward! My betrayer is upon us." — Mark 14:32-42, NEB

(Continued on the next page)

Look at those phrases. “Horror and dismay came over Him.” “My heart is ready to break with grief.” “He went a little forward and threw Himself on the ground.”

Does this look like the picture of a saintly Jesus resting in the palm of God? Hardly. Mark used black paint to describe this scene. We see an agonizing, straining, and struggling Jesus.

We see a “man of sorrows.”¹ We see a man struggling with fear, wrestling with commitments, and yearning for relief.

We see Jesus in the fog of a broken heart.

The writer of Hebrews would later pen,

During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, He offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save Him from death. — Hebrews 5:7, emphasis mine.

My, what a portrait! Jesus is in pain. Jesus is on the stage of fear. Jesus is cloaked, not in sainthood, but in humanity.

The next time the fog finds you, you might do well to remember Jesus in the garden. The next time you think that no one understands, reread the fourteenth chapter of Mark.

The next time your self-pity convinces you that no one cares, pay a visit to Gethsemane. And the next time you wonder if God really perceives the pain that prevails on this dusty planet, listen to Him pleading among the twisted trees.

Here’s my point. Seeing God like this does wonders for our own suffering. God was never more human than at this hour.

God was never nearer to us than when He hurt. The Incarnation was never so fulfilled as in the garden.

As a result, time spent in the fog of pain could be God’s greatest gift. It could be the hour that we finally see our Maker. If it is true that in suffering God is most like man, maybe in our suffering we can see God like never before. The next time you are called to suffer, pay attention. It may be the closest you’ll ever get to God. Watch closely. It could very well be that the hand that extends itself to lead you out of the fog is a pierced One.

Session Notes

The session met and discussed several items concerning worship. We will remain at 2 rows separating church attendees until more of the Covid restrictions are lifted. Masks are to be worn entering and exiting church and when we stand to sing.

The sound system was serviced by DCI sound systems. The mikes at the pulpit, in choir loft and hand held all work. DCI recommended that ONLY the technology committee members, the organist and choir director touch or adjust the system. DCI said this is a complicated system and we may want to invest in a less complicated system in the future. Thank you for being so patient as we work with our sound system and the Facebook worship broadcast. The session would like to hear from our virtual worshipers on their experience with our worship service. Please e-mail the church at oneidafirstpres@oneidafirstpres.org or call the office 315-363-7579 or send us a note.

We will observe Remembrance day on May 30th this year. If you have a loved one that you would like to remember, please give us their name to be listed in the bulletin. The carnations will be 50 cents each.

Our church was honored to receive a bequest from Jeannine Fariel. Jeannine was a long time devoted member of this church. This bequest will be placed in our investment account in her honor.

The Stone Street entrance from the chair lift to the stairs leading to the auditorium we be painted before the carpet that the PW has purchased is installed. We thank all of you that have contributed to the Christmas Festival to make this happen.



The Presbyterian Women are looking for volunteers to help staff Second Hand Rose. If you know of anyone one who wants to donate a couple hours of their time to help with this wonderful church mission please contact Nancy Rinehard @ 315-368-7939 or nrinehard@gmail.com



LONG TERM PRAYER CONCERNS

For the month of May 2021

Bill Ausman	Jean Kowalik
Alan Baur	Florence LaRock
Bryce Bechtel (friend of Zach Thompson)	Sydney Lusher
Steve Blair (friend of Ginny Pendleton)	Maribeth Matthews
Jeffrey Bortle (Sandy Glynn's son)	Jason Maycock (Sandy Glynn's brother)
Anthony Bonacci	Marian Meyers
Eleanor Breckenridge (Sue Borchardt's mom)	Larry Moorehouse (Bill Butler)
Bob Butler	Tom Panasci
Marty Canning	Mary Patricia
Pam Carrigan	Doug Rosekrans
Scott Colvin	Sally Smith
Glade Cook Jr. (nephew of Warrens)	Rich Snyder (Jennifer Colvin's neighbor)
Jonathon Eastman	Eugene Sweet (Jim's brother)
John Ferguson	Judy Sweet
Jillian Felt	Harold Thompson
Linda Gaut	Betty Thorpe (Jim's aunt)
Becky Grasso	Grace Warren
Sherry Harrison	Christopher Wuest
Jamie Hubbard	Bill Young
Wendy Holtz	Jerry Karen
Millie Johnson	Michelle Angelia
Horace Keller	Heather
	Patrick Vicky

Thank you for your prayers. If you know of anyone who is sick, in the hospital, or in need of our prayers, PLEASE call the Church Office, 363-7590 or Jan Whiting, Prayer Chain, 363-4392.

SHORT TERM PRAYER CONCERN

Sandy Glynn

Joyce Helms

Becky Ewen

If you have a prayer need, there are cards in the pews. Fill it out and hand it to an usher. If you know of anyone who is sick, in the hospital, or in need of our prayers, PLEASE call the Church Office, 363-7590 or Jan Whiting, Prayer Chain, 363-4392. Please let us know also when they are healed and can be taken off the prayer list.



ELDERS

CLASS OF 2021

Becky Williams
Randy Bonville
Doug Lippert
Carol Wells
Lucille Merriman
Mike Merriman
Pat Thorpe

CLASS OF 2022

Blakelynn Fox
Eli Pfluke

CLASS OF 2023

Paul Mancarella
Nancy Rinehard
Jan Whiting

SHORT TERM PRAYER CONCERNS:

Sandy Glynn (knee surgery)

FAMILY AND FRIENDS WHO ARE GRIEVING FOR:

Helen Gassmann, Joyce Helm's sister

SPECIAL CONCERNS:

All first responders and health care providers who are on the front line during this global pandemic.

The Pastor Nominating Committee: Jenn Colvin,
Kim DeRuby, Paul Mancarella, Lucille Merriman,
Jan Whiting and Andy Williams

MISSION EMPHASIS:

First Presbyterian Church, Ilion
Church of the Lakes, Inlet
First United Presbyterian Church, Little Falls
First Presbyterian Church, Lowville
Special Offerings of the PC(USA)

DEACONS

CLASS OF 2021

John Merritt
Jennawade
Skellham
Cindy Bonville
Chrissy Thompson

CLASS OF 2022

Rose Lockwood
Doug Lockwood
Kathy Nichols

CLASS OF 2023

PRAY FOR OUR TROOPS: Pray for those who are stationed in non-combat zones: Sebastian Powers, Stephen Cafalone, Kiernan Masner, Jack Sharkey, Mark Sia, Zane Mechalke, Peter Thompson, Howard Bantle, Nicholas Young, Philip Messina, Ryan Geer, John Goodwill, Jeff Carpenter, Errol Crossman, Corey Reed, Michael McMahon, Andrew Fargo, Jim Jennings, Nate Borchardt, Michelle Ludwig, Colin Whitcombe

Those currently serving in a combat zone:





The next meeting of the Presbyterian Women will be Tuesday May 11 th. Please come at 10 and help us decide on our June Luncheon. Looking forward to seeing you all!

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – Our 23rd year of Remembrance Sunday will be on May 30. We remember our loved ones with flowers in the sanctuary: around the communion table, along the stained glass windows and by the choir. If you would like to fondly remember a loved one, please list their name on the pink envelopes that are in the pews, or on a sheet of paper, or email or call the church office with the name of your loved one. Enclose 50 cents per person and write “Remembrance Sunday” on the outside. Please include your name and phone number in case we have a question with the spelling of the name. Please have them into the office by Monday, May 24th The names will be listed in that bulletin for those who can’t attend the service.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 10 a.m. Worship Communion	3 7 p.m. Committee Meetings	4	5	6 4 pm - Connection	7	8
9 <i>Mother's Day</i> 10 a.m. Worship	10	11 10 am - Presbyterian Women's Meeting	12	13 4 pm The Connection	14	15
16 10 a.m. Worship 50 Year Members	17	18 6:30 p.m. Deacons Meeting	19	20 4 pm The Connection	21	22
23/30 9 a.m. Sunday School 10 a.m. Worship Remembrance Sun- day(30)	24/31 7 p.m. Session (24) Meeting OFFICE CLOSED Memorial Day (31)	25	26	27 4 pm The Connection	28	29

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
304 Broad Street
Oneida, NY 13421

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**DEADLINE FOR THE JUNE
NEWSLETTER IS MAY 24th**

