



Pres Clippings

First Presbyterian Church

www.firstpreselmira.org

June 11, 2019

Dear Friends in Christ,

Perhaps one of the hardest sayings of Jesus is this: "Whoever wants to be first must be last and servant of all." Mark 9:35. That statement goes right along with another hard statement made by Jesus: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for the sake of the gospel will save it." (Mark 8:34-35) If I had to paraphrase these hard sayings, I would say: "Following Jesus is not about self; it is about serving."

What makes these sayings so hard? When we are born and throughout our childhood, we are self-centered. That's a necessary part of survival and ultimately part of learning to take care of ourselves. As we become adults our culture has served to reinforce a me-first, entitlement mindset. So much around us whispers in our ears messages that encourage us to make our lives all about meeting our desires and that tell us that we are entitled to more (or to something.) And when we don't have our desires met or we didn't get what we felt we were entitled to, we feel hurt or angry, and are tempted to walk away. Sometimes we don't even try, saying that we can't fit it into our schedule.

Imagine if Christ had done anything to fall into the temptation to be self-serving. Yikes!

Indeed the life of a Christian is not about self; it is about serving, after the manner of Jesus. Because this doesn't come easily to us who are human, it takes a lifetime of practice to grow into a life of service. Thank God that God gives us both opportunity and time in which to practice! Thank God that God gives us the gift of mercy and forgiveness when we backslide into self-serving habits, and then gives us the chance to try again!

I believe that God intended Christian service to be an avenue of blessing – an avenue through which God can bless others. Often, however, there is a bonus to the blessing as we find ourselves blessed too.

(continued —>)

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INSERT: VBS REGISTRATION

Please Remember!

"FEED MY SHEEP"

June 16th:

**LOW SALT
CANNED
VEGETABLES**

(all varieties)

I am grateful to God for the myriad of opportunities that God puts before us to grow in service through the mission and ministries of this church. Let's not take these opportunities for granted! And if you are not yet involved in a service ministry, I invite you to jump in. At the same time, I invite you to join with me in thanking God for the many ways that so many people of this church are growing in service both collectively and individually.

Love and peace, Betsey

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THIS WEEK'S SUNDAY SERVICE

June 16, 2019 ~ 10:30 a.m.

Trinity Sunday ~ Father's Day

Cents-Ability Sunday

Knitting4Peace Dedication of Items

The Rev. Dr. Betsey Crimmins will lead us in worship and preach in the sanctuary. The **Chancel Choir** will sing. The Greeters and Ushers will be **Liz Holloway, Jill Kelley, Mike McGuire, and Karen White**. The Lay Reader will be **Kathy Menges**. The Chancel Flowers will be given by **Paul Kingsbury**. The Fellowship Hour will be hosted by **Mike McGuire and Karen White**. Childcare is available. All are welcome to attend!

CENTS-ABILITY ~ Sunday, June 16th



Cents-Ability is a small first step in the battle against hunger and poverty. Congregations invite every member — of all ages — to contribute a few cents at every meal. This simple act is an expression of thanks for what we have received. It is also a commitment to share with others in response to Jesus' command "You give them something to eat." When

members bring their offerings to church on the appointed Sunday, all of those coins "make a joyful noise unto the Lord" as they are received and dedicated.

Cents-Ability originated in 1976 as "Two-Cents-A-Meal," a project begun by Presbyterian Women to involve individuals and families in a corporate response to world hunger. Over the years, presbyteries have developed similar programs entitled Pennies for Hunger, Nickle-A-Meal, etc. Many of these programs benefit local hunger ministries as well as the national and international projects of the Presbyterian Hunger Program. (PHP).

These small acts of faithfulness can add up: One hundred persons in a congregation will contribute \$180 a month at two cents a meal. That's \$2,160 dollars a year. A 30,000-member presbytery has the potential of raising over \$1.6 million annually at a nickel a meal.

NEXT WEEK'S SUNDAY SERVICE

June 23, 2019 ~ 10:30 a.m.

Second Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev. Dr. Betsey Crimmins will lead us in worship and preach in the sanctuary. The **Chancel Choir** will sing. The Greeters and Ushers will be **Michelle Giacchino, Xavier Giacchino, Mike and Rehana Stanley**. The Lay Reader will be **Gerry Brown**. The Chancel Flowers will be given by **Brenda Miller**. The Fellowship Hour will be hosted by **Kathy Menges**. Childcare is available. All are welcome to attend!

CALL TO A

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The congregation of First Presbyterian

Church will meet on **Sunday, June 23rd**, 2019 following the morning worship service in the sanctuary of the church. The purpose of the meeting is to elect four Deacons to the Class of 2022, one Deacon to the Class 2020, five Elders to the class of 2022, and five at-large members of the Nominating Committee, and to review and receive the annual reports of committees and boards. By order of Session, Kathy Menges, Clerk Pro Tem.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS

Sunday School for children and youth has wrapped up for this school year. We thank the dedicated and loving teachers and the parents as well as the children and youth for making it a good year.

The Adult Sunday School Class will continue meeting at **9:30 a.m.** on **Sunday mornings** for the next two Sundays (June 16 and 23). During class the group will continue to study Genesis. You are welcomed to attend. Over the course of the next two Sundays, the class will make a plan for Bible study to continue over the summer. So stayed tuned for further details!

ACTIVITY BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

As a child-friendly church, we enjoy children in worship. We want to insure that children enjoy their time in church as much as we enjoy their presence. For that reason, binders containing coloring pages, crayons and a pencil and a story book, have been prepared. They can be found on the table under the name tags in the narthex. Feel free to borrow these binders and return to the table following the service.



SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

We will switch to our summer schedule for worship, on **Sunday, June 30th** at **9:30 a.m.** This schedule will continue for the months of July and August. On Sunday, September 8th we return to the 10:30 a.m. hour for worship. We look forward to seeing you there!

THANK YOU

We would like to thank **everyone** who helped and supported the Professional Clothing Sale on June 7 & 8, 2019. Everyone was excited about this new idea and everyone worked very hard to put this idea into a reality. We worked very well as a team and many new ideas were tried. The organization was excellent and it looked terrific. What a wonderful group of people! We also appreciated all of the donations of clothes and accessories. While the monetary gain was modest compared to what we had hoped, we exceeded in other ways. We shared laughter and camaraderie and we got to know each other quite well. There were many talents in our group. We should not dismiss this project. Perhaps we need to try it again and make appropriate changes. Thank you so very much.—Jane Ivanick

THANK YOU to everyone who participated in the Sunday morning worship service on June 9th...the **Chancel Choir** for singing...**Charlene McCarthy, Linda Proper, Marcia Metcalfe,** and **Carole Wereski** for Greeting and Ushering...**Fred Betschen** for Lay Reading...**Mike Crimmins** and **Mike Stanley** for leading the children in their presentation...**Kathy Menges** for assisting in the service of Membership Recognition and assisting in the Sacrament of Baptism...the



TIME TO REGISTER FOR VBS CAMP!

JULY 8—12, 2019

Monday—Friday ~ 8:45 AM—Noon

There is a “Moose on the Loose!” - Discovering God’s Forever Forgiveness! Campers will learn about...Jesus’ Invitation, Love & Forgiveness, Human Failure, and God’s Undying Love. There will be new crafts, new games, new t-shirt, new snacks and new lessons. VBS Camp is for children ages: 4 years through entering 3rd grade in the fall. The cost is \$25 per child, which includes a daily snack, t-shirt, and backpack. A celebration luncheon ceremony for the entire family will be on Friday, July 12th at Noon. Please call the church office for a registration form.

We are currently collecting: **empty toilet paper rolls, empty paper towel rolls**, small forest or camping theme **stuffed animals** and **books**. The drop off basket is located in the Mission Hall. We also are asking for a few artistic volunteers to help create large backdrops of trees, moose and some other characters from our program curriculum. We are in need of snack donations for camp. There is a sign-up sheet in Mission Hall. Please sign-up on the sheet or contact the church office if you are able to help. Thank you.

Membership Committee for hosting the Fellowship Hour...**Anne** and **Greg Lamb** for giving the Chancel Flowers, “The Chancel Flowers are given in loving memory of Anne’s mother, Marion S. Loveland, and in celebration of our 47th Wedding Anniversary.”

ATTENTION ALL MUSICIANS!

First Presbyterian Church needs YOU to help provide music for summer services until the choir reconvenes in the fall. Do you sing? Play an instrument? If so, consider volunteering your talents to enhance the weekly church service! If interested, please contact Melissa Moore at (607-426-8208) or email at melissamoore1015@gmail.com, or sign up on the schedule posted in the Betschen Choir Room. Gary Tucker is more than happy to provide accompaniment, but please allow at least a week's advance notice. Hope to see, and hear from you soon!

UPDATE ON THE WORK IN LARES PUERTO RICO

Dates for the next trip to Puerto Rico have finally been solidified. Here is the plan: during the week of **July 17-24**, a team will be in Lares working on the repair of the roof of Cuchi’s home. (Cuchi is a member of the Lares Church. She was the one who lovingly prepared delicious and hearty lunches for the teams that worked in Lares back in February and March.) During the second week, **July 24-31**, the focus will be on preparing for and providing a Vacation Bible School for the children of the church. One of the many things that Hurricane Maria took away was the availability of time and resources to provide Vacation Bible School. We are happy to help restore this ministry that is so vital in the faith development of children.

If you are interested in going for either of these weeks, please contact the church or

Joanne Tunison (739-8474) for further details. Thank you.

If you are not available to go either of these weeks but are interested in going sometime, please know there were be at least one trip in February of 2020. That gives those who are interested eight months to plan and prepare for the February, 2020 trip(s).

CIRCLE OF WOMEN

You are invited to the next Circle of Women meeting on **Monday, June 17th** at **10 AM** in the Hoffman Great Room. All women are invited.

RE-USABLE GROCERY TOTES



First Pres has had re-usable totes printed. They are available for sale. Cost will be \$10 each. They are made from washable cotton, are durable, and measure 15" x 15". Reverend Crimmins says that she has some totes like these that are over 30 years old! If you are interested in purchasing a re-usable grocery tote, please call the church office 734-1614.

HABITAT NEWS!

Thank you to **Pat Holmstrom, Jill Kelly, Desiree Rogers, Marcia Metcalfe** and **Barb Fitzsimmons** for participating in the 2019 Women's Build on May 11, 2019. Fifty local women worked on the house on Scio St. Lots of fun and teamwork!

Habitat has a need for **volunteers each Saturday** from **9 a.m.—Noon**. There are also some larger events coming up in cooperation with the Cities Rise program. **July 20th** there will be a Home Improvement Event and **August 10th** there will be a block event. If you are interested in

either of these events or signing-up for a Saturday please call the Habitat Office at 607 -734-1361.

For those who have signed up for this year's Paterson Trip there will be a Meeting **Tuesday, June 18th** at **5:30 p.m.** prior to the Mission Committee Meeting. We will discuss the new Mission Handbook, deposits etc. Thank you for your continued support of Habitat for Humanity!!

PRAYER CHAIN

Our church has a group of about 30 people who have dedicated themselves to the ministry of prayer. There are no meetings. Instead, when there is a prayer request, an email goes out to the members of the group informing them of the request and inviting them to pray at home for the person, people or situation. All prayer requests are kept in confidence by members of the group. Kelly Stewart, the Church Secretary, is the one who sends out the requests via email.

If you would like to join the prayer chain, please send an email to Kelly Stewart at kespreselem@stny.rr.com. If, for some reason, you would like to be removed from participating in the Prayer Chain, please also email Kelly with that request.

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Thursday, June 27, 2019

1 - 6 p.m. ~ Hoffman Great Room

When was the last time you thought about donating blood? A momentary inconvenience can save a life! There is a great need for blood in our area. Walk-ins are welcome at any time. You may schedule an appointment by calling 1-800-RedCross or by visiting www.redcrossblood.org

KNITTING4PEACE POD

The Knitting4Peace Pod will be having a dedication and commissioning of all the crafted items on **Sunday, June 16th** during the church service (10:30 a.m.) Please bring in any completed K4P items to the church office by Friday, June 14th.

Our Peace Pod meets every **Tuesday**, from **3 – 4:30 p.m.** in the Genesis room. We have plenty of yarn, needles, and patterns. If you can't make meetings, you are welcomed to knit or crochet at home. For further instructions and patterns, visit www.knitting4peace.org or speak with Sue Weaver or Kelly Stewart.

CHURCH OFFICE NEWS

The Rev. Dr. Crimmins will be out of the office on June 13 & 14. If you are in need of pastoral services during those days, please contact a Deacon.

SHELVING UNIT FOR SALE

There is a large shelving unit for sale in the mission hall. The dimensions are 8' height x 25" width x 45" depth. Each side has 6 adjustable shelves. If you are interested in purchasing this, please contact Norm Schamel at 426-0359. Also, Norm will deliver it to you. Thank you.

SENIOR CARE PROGRAM

The Senior Care Program, relatively new to First Presbyterian helps seniors who struggle with the expense of protective undergarments. All information is confidential and we purchase and deliver with no charge to the clients. If you know of someone we may be able to help please contact Andy and Joanne Foster at 607-732-2975. Thank You.

BONE BUILDERS

The Bone Builders group meets in the Hoffman Great Room of our church every **Tuesday** and **Thursday** from **9:30 - 10:30 a.m.** Bone Builders is run by the Chemung Volunteer Action Corps (CVAC). It is an exercise program designed to help prevent bone loss and to build on existing bone mass. The program is for both men and women. If you are looking for exercise that increases your strength and is good for your bones, consider joining Bone Builders. To join, please contact CVAC at 734-4161 for information and ask to have an enrollment packet sent to you.

CAMP WHITMAN

CALLING ALL YOUTH BETWEEN THE AGES OF 6 AND 17!



The 2019 summer camp season is coming! Check out the flyer enclosed in this issue of Pres Clippings to see all the exciting camp offerings in the 2019 season.

Camp Whitman, located on the west side of beautiful Seneca Lake, is owned and operated by our Presbytery which is Geneva Presbytery. Camper fees are reasonable because mission funding from our Presbytery and Genesee Valley Presbytery subsidizes camper's tuition at more than 50%. However, if a family in our church still needs help in paying for their camper's tuition, our church has some scholarship money available. Please speak to the pastor for more information.

Generation after generation, summer church camp proves to be a faith-building, life enriching and even life-changing experience. Apply online at www.campwhitman.org.

Greetings, FPC Family,

It has been quite a journey for us beginning in October of 2017 when FPC Elmira learned of the devastation and need of our brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico. Thus began in earnest, a campaign to "be the hands and feet of Jesus". Our mission, although far from complete, included a time of praise and worship this past Sunday. Over the course of seventeen months of planning and preparation, some will recall the many meetings and necessary forms, the time-consuming fundraising, and the seemingly endless e-mails. And during the three weeks spent on the island, others will look back upon this time as something of an odyssey with memories of a tropical climate, sumptuous food, lively worship services, and the making of many new friends. None of us, I imagine, will ever forget, the purpose of our mission, and the impact that it had on each of us.

Micah 6:8 asks what the Lord requires of his people. While the possible answers may overwhelm us, the prophet states that God simply asks us "to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with [our] God."

In Paul's letter to the Philippians, we read, "do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." (2:2-3)

In reading these two verses consecutively, they could conceivably be a "recipe" for "how to live a Christian life." I have personally witnessed all of you exemplifying the words of the prophet Micah and the apostle Paul, not just those who made the journey, but all of you who, behind the scenes, made it possible for those of us who traveled. I have been thinking on end for just the right words to say "thank you". I am not alone in this challenge, so I will borrow the words of our dear Evelyn and Cenía, and simply say "thank you", "thank you", "thank you". I continue to replay Cenía's heart wrenching account of being in her basement for more than thirty hours, simply not knowing, not knowing. (It was an incredible challenge for me to translate her story, as I tried to remain unemotional.)

Indeed, our journey is far from over. María landed on the island of Puerto Rico on 17 September as a Category 5 hurricane with sustained winds of 155 mph. The storm continued through 2 October, leaving a wake of devastation and destruction, to the tune of some \$91 billion and over 4,000 deaths. Our teams "made landfall" in Puerto Rico in February and May of 2019 with the goal of helping to restore in small part, one community, Lares. Although our raised funds of some \$30,000 are a far cry from the total estimated financial loss attributed to the storm, we have made a difference in the lives of many. I pray that you will continue to seek to serve the Lord, be it in Lares, those on the mainland recently impacted by an outbreak of tornados and subsequent flooding, Habitat for Humanity, local food banks, or in any other mission opportunities. In so doing, you are God's army of angels.

With thanks, blessings, and love,
Elder Joanne Tunison



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK...



*“Every time you smile at someone,
it is an action of love,
a gift to that person,
a beautiful thing.”*

~ Mother Teresa

The Rev. Dr. Betsey R. Crimmins, Pastor

Barbara Squires, Clerk of Session

Gary Tucker, Organist

Melissa Moore, Director of Music

Scott Kelley, Instrumental Director

Fred Betschen, Church Treasurer

Paul Kingsbury, Assistant Church Treasurer

Kelly Stewart, Church Secretary

Susan Weaver, Financial Secretary

Bella DiPofi, Child Care Giver

Sami Swarthout, Child Care Giver

James Stewart, Sr., Church Sexton

Church Office (607) 734-1614

Visit our website: www.firstpreselmira.org