



The Good News

December 2014

For the members and friends of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN-CELL

LECTIONARY FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

2nd Sunday of Advent December 7

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

3rd Sunday of Advent December 14

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126 or
Luke 1:46b-55
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

4th Sunday of Advent December 21

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:46b-55 or
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

1st Sunday after Christmas December 28

Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalm: 148
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40



Martha and I always throw in a GPS of some sort into the car when we head to Washington, DC. It is a city of broad avenues and monumental buildings, its principal streets proceeding straight for a time, before ending in a traffic circle from which other straight-line streets radiate.



Urban designer, Pierre L'Enfant, was determined to design Washington differently from European capitals that are noted for their broad processional avenues. The problem, as L'Enfant and those who commissioned his work were aware, is that straight avenues, while offering majestic vistas, also hasten the journeys of invading armies. Washington's streets are deliberately plotted out to confuse.

At the beginning Mark's gospel to which we turn in Advent, the street is a straight line. It is not a circle, but a straight path. It is a direct point A to point B. "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

This is quite different from American arenas of the 1870s and 80s. Then the most popular of sports involved walking in circles on dirt tracks. Men and women raced around the clock for six days at a time, and the bleachers were packed with spectators. The sport was *pedestrianism*. Walking in circles, day after day after day.

According to *The Washington Post* (March 30, 2014), these foot-races would last for 144 hours straight. Competitors would nap on cots briefly and push themselves to the edge of physical and mental collapse. And the fans? They loved it!

Competitive pedestrians were our country's first celebrity athletes. Their pictures appeared on trading cards. By the end of the 1800s, pedestrianism died. Not because fans got bored with watching people walk in circles, but because of race fixing and doping. One famous pedestrian was caught chewing a substance that gave him an unsportsmanlike advantage -- coca leaves.

Laugh as we might, we pedestrianism Presbyterians should admit that we spend a lot of time walking in circles.

- We keep eating the same kinds of junk food, and wonder why it's hard to lose weight.
- We keep picking on family members in exactly the same way, and then are surprised by a blow-up or fight.
- We keep repeating the same things and then complain that we don't feel inspired or that we are bored.

We're pedantic Presbyterians practicing our pedestrianism! In fact, one of the definitions of the word "pedestrian" is "lacking distinction, ordinary." The time has come for us to break out of our endless loops and take a look at a greater, more distinctive destination.

Mark tells us that the good news of Jesus Christ begins with the appearance of John the Baptizer. He is the one who fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight'" (vv. 1-3). Take the endless circles of life and stretch them out. Create a line to Jesus Christ -- point A to JC.

Advent gives us an opportunity to do this. Gifts to Cameron or Grace House are a wonderful way to share. Planning on a mission trip (a team heading to Texas on New Year's Day – see Dan Harrison)

November 23 – Christ the King Celebration
November 23 – Food for Pittsford Food Cupboard
November 23 – Advent Brunch and Wreath Making
November 23 – Lecture - the Pentateuch with Dr. Frohman
November 30 – Advent 1 – Wreath and Advent Calendars
December 2 – Candlelight Nite and AGO concerts
December 7 – Advent 2 and Communion
December 8 – Mary Cariola Christmas Service
December 12 – Optimist Christmas Dinner and Music
December 14 – Advent 3 Worship
December 14 – Ham Supper at 5:30
December 14 – Cordancia and Choirs at 7:00
December 21 – Advent 4 Worship and Celebration
December 24 – 4:30 Family Nativity Celebration



Next summer, we are leading a group of 35 youth and adults from First Presbyterian Church on a mission trip to Kingston, Jamaica. **JASY, or Jamaican Advantage thru Sports for Youth**, is a week-long sports camp for under-privileged youth who live in the slums and disadvantaged areas of Kingston. The camp is

organized and run entirely by our volunteer team, with support from friends in St. Patrick's Foundation and Kingston.

Our favorite part about mission trips is helping other people and making a difference in their lives. The camp offers a time for campers to meet new friends from other neighborhoods, bond with adults and youth who share the same Christian values and beliefs, and be fed both physically and spiritually in a safe and loving environment. We realize how important sports can be in teaching about teamwork, leadership, determination and positive attitudes; all values reinforced during our week with the Jamaican youth.

On Sunday, December 7th, we will be holding our "Sponsor a Camper" campaign, in which you will learn a little more about JASY camp and the positive impact it has made on the Jamaican youth who attend the camp, as well as the First Pres youth who have volunteered in the past. We are also asking for your financial support. Would you please consider making a donation for the camp? You can sponsor a camper for the week for \$60 or help fund lunches or sports equipment for the campers at any donation amount. JASY is a registered charitable organization. You can donate by check directly to JASY or to First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford and note JASY 2015 in the memo. We would love to tell you more about our mission in Fellowship Hall after both services on the 7th.

Every child has a dream and a desire to be all that he or she can be. Sponsoring JASY camp will help us change the lives of these campers and hopefully be a life changing experience for our volunteers. Thank you for your support!

Joelle Truax, Jonathan Kim, Louise and Tom Thompson and Dan Traina

**Optimists December 12th - It's Christmastime! Time for Music,
Singing and, of course, Food!**

There will be entertainment while we dine consisting of song and dance from "Company B" featuring our own Dede Holmes. After another sumptuous chicken dinner from Rene's Cafe, we will enjoy the musical stylings of Steve and Ashley Danyew. Both Steve and Ashley are choir members and also serve as our Bell Choir Directors. Seasonal Carol singing will be provided for your participation. So done your red apparel, warm up your vocal chords and join us to celebrate the birth of our Savior.



*We gather at 5:30pm in the Fellowship Hall with dinner being served at 6:00pm. Tickets @ \$10 will be on sale in the Fellowship Hall following both services on Nov. 30 and Dec. 7 or maybe purchased in the Church office during normal business hours. **Reservations or ticket purchase appreciated prior to Dec. 10th.** Please bring your table service (plate, cup and silverware) along with a paper product donation to the Pittsford Food Cupboard. For further information contact Bob Thompson.*

CONCERT SERIES 2014-2015

December 14, 2014—Sunday 7pm Sacred Favorites: Christmas

Many of you enjoyed our 2006 and 2008 **Sacred Favorites Concerts** featuring our Chancel Choir directed by Dr. James Douthit, and with special guest tenor soloist Harold McAulliffe. Dr. Douthit has compiled another program of favorites featuring **all** our church choirs. For **Sacred Favorites: Christmas**. It will be an evening of Carols and Anthems, with arrangements by Handel, Rutter, Lauridsen, and Danyew. In addition to our voice and bell choirs, Cordancia Chamber Orchestra, tenor soloist Harold McAulliffe and organist Dr. Bruce Frank will participate. Conductors will be James Douthit, Dede Holmes, Steve Danyew, and Ashley Danyew. Mark your calendars now and join us for some joyful and inspiring Christmas music.



COME AND ENJOY

"It's A Wonderful Life" will be performed at our church on Monday, December 22 at 7:00 pm. The actors from Spotlight Theater in Fairport will entertain us with their talented students. Proceeds will go to our Mission Commission. Tickets will be available in Fellowship Hall December 14 & 21 and at the door before the show December 22. Cost is \$10 with a family limit of \$40.



PITTSFORD FOOD CUPBOARD DONATIONS – SUNDAY NOVEMBER 23. You can bring items for the Pittsford Food Cupboard on Sunday, November 23. If you want to join the Magi, you can bring things on the 1st Sunday of Advent, too . . . November 30. There will be lots of space in the chancel where you can give thanks to God and offer gifts of food. This year's Generosity Team decided not to combine Stewardship with needs of the Food Cupboard, but people around us still need help. We will transport your gifts to the Food Cupboard. What a magnificent way to **Give Thanks, Honor Jesus and Do Mission!**
<https://www.facebook.com/PittsfordFoodCupboard>

**ENCOURAGED TO BE LIGHT
(A brief Stewardship update)**

Thank you to everyone who has provided a commitment card!

As of November 18, we know the following:

- 1 55% of family units have responded
- 1 \$2371 is average commitment
- 1 \$571,300 committed for 2015 thus far
- 1 \$48,262 in new and returning promises
- 1 \$561,175 commitments at this same time last year



Cards available at the office (585)586-5688 or online response is available by entering this into your browser - <http://www.pittsfordpres.org/2015-stewardship> or you can go to website at www.pittsfordpres.org scroll to the bottom of the page click on 2015 Commitment click on Submit your 2015 Stewardship Commitment online

We are fortunate to still have almost 200 pledging units available to help make this year's campaign a glowing success. Your support, in any amount you are able to give, will help us to ensure that we can fulfill the church's mission to be "light in the world."



News from the Nursery School-PCNS

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Downstairs in the preschool the children are very busy in the classrooms, preparing handmade gifts for those they love. Beginning December 16th if you are a First Presbyterian Church member and you have a child preparing for preschool, you have first preference from then until December 31st. To register your child for the upcoming school year. Please come see me in my office in the preschool for a registration packet, they will be available starting December 1st. We wish all of you a joyous holiday season and many blessings in the coming year. Thank you for all your support and as always, please come visit!

Teresa Zatyko, Director PCNS

WEDNESDAY EVENING BOOK CLUB UPCOMING SCHEDULE

All meetings are at 7:30 PM

Dec. 10 **"The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother"** by James McBride at the home of Nancy Sprenkle.

"The son of a black minister and a woman who would not admit she was white, James McBride grew up in "orchestrated chaos" with his eleven siblings in the poor, all-black projects of Red Hook, Brooklyn. "Mommy," a fiercely protective woman with "dark eyes full of pep and fire," herded her brood to Manhattan's free cultural events, sent them off on buses to the best (and mainly Jewish) schools, demanded good grades, and commanded respect. As a young man, McBride saw his mother as a source of embarrassment, worry, and confusion—and reached thirty before he began to discover the truth about her early life and long-buried pain."

STEPHEN MINISTRY DECEMBER



Are you experiencing a storm?

Storms are unanticipated happenings. Health problems, a job lost, stress over money can happen to anyone anytime. The Holiday Season can often bring depression as well. So if you are currently going through a stormy time and would like to have someone who can walk with you, think about Stephen Ministers. Stephen Ministers are trained and compassionate. They are ready to help you seek to bring joy back into your life. Everything is confidential. Don't weather the 'storm' alone.

To learn more about Stephen Ministry for yourself or someone you know, contact one of our Stephen Leaders: *Jane Hunter, Alice O'Dwyer, Barbara Smith, Dick Sprenkle, Carol Tiemann* or one of our pastors. **Our Stephen Ministers are here to care!**

Join the FPC Fall Intergenerational Beginning & Intermediate Handbell Choirs!

December 1, 8, 13, 14, 22. Come ring with us! Opportunities for ringers of all ages and abilities. The Beginning group is open to people of all ages - no musical experience required! Learn and polish your music reading skills and beginning bell technique in a fun environment. The Intermediate group is open to people of all ages who have a little bit of prior ringing experience. If you read music and are looking for a little bit more of a challenge, this group is for you! Each group will play two times in worship during this Fall session. Please let us know you're coming by sending us a quick note: ashley@ashleydanyew.com. Looking forward to ringing with you! Ashley & Steve Danyew

Youth Happenings {7th-12th Grade}



SO-SO

SUNDAY NIGHTS

7:00-8:30PM

7TH-12TH GRADERS

September 14th
September 28th
October 5th
October 26th
November 2nd
November 16th
November 30th
December 14th
January 4th

January 18th
February 8th
February 22nd
March 8th
March 22nd
April 12th
April 26th
May 3rd
May 17th

Upcoming Events

Nov. 21 - Sky-Zone

Nov. 22 - Stuff-A-Bus

Dec. 6 - Scrooge Party

Dec. 13 - Snow Tubing

Dec. 16 - JPC Christmas Party

Dec. 18 - TBT



Mission Trips:

Flower City Work camp: March 29- April 2

Philadelphia Mission Trip: July 26-August 1

[contact Joelle for more information]

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

MARY WELLER ~ will meet on Monday, December 8 at 11:30 AM in Fellowship Hall. Please bring your lunch and least coin and enjoy the fellowship and help work on a new blanket. All women of the church are invited to attend. If not a regular member, please contact Shirley Lawrence.



NAOMI CIRCLE ~ will celebrate the holidays with their annual Christmas luncheon! Date and location will be decided at the November circle meeting.

Details will be in the Sunday bulletin and callers will be contacting members soon. Questions call BJ Vesling or Beverly Reeve.

ANTHONY CIRCLE ~ Our circle emphasizes mission and women's fellowship. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 16 at 9.30am in Room 200—all women are invited to join us. For more information call Janette Henderson.

EVENING CIRCLE ~ will have its holiday get-together at the home of Norma Ryther on December 7 at 6 P.M. Call Norma for details, if needed.

THE PENNY PINCHER SALE ~ continues in the Fellowship Hall after church services on November 23, 30 and December 7. Please help us by supporting the Presbyterian Women Mission Fund and give a family member, friend, or even yourself a chance to receive a perfect gift.

POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS ~ will be available in the Fellowship Hall on November 30, Dec. 7 & 14 after both morning church services. Dedications may also be mailed to the church [Attention: Poinsettia Dedications] until December 12. Flowers will be \$7, please make out checks to the church. If there are any questions, please contact Norma Ryther.

CHRISTMAS GIFT LIST FOR ELDERS AT KIRKHAVEN

The leaves are falling, and soon families and communities everywhere will start preparing for the upcoming Christmas season! Here at Kirkhaven, we're playing Santa for our 147 elderly residents who call Kirkhaven their home, and once again, we seek your help in providing gifts to make their season brighter. Below find a suggested list of items that would be appreciated. Please note that we cannot accept homemade food gifts. All food items must be commercially prepared and packaged. Please deliver gifts to Kirkhaven by December 12 and we will wrap them.

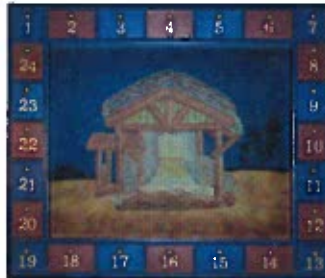
Large print cross-word puzzle books	Stationery with Stamps
Large print find word search puzzles	Ladies hair Brushes
Sudoku puzzles	Lap Robes
Playing cards,	Perfume
Large print playing cards	Unopened lotions, bath powder
Large piece puzzles	Nail polish
Games	Combs
Coloring books, crayons	Cookie tins, hard candy
Socks both men and women's	New Stuffed Animals
Rain bonnets	After shave lotion
Scarves	Calendars
Gloves, mittens, ski caps—new	Slippers, both men's and women's
Men's baseball caps—new	Jewelry—a big favorite for the Ladies



Advent Brunch November 23rd

Come make your
Advent wreath.
Fellowship with us,

Preparing for Christmas this year we have several tools for your use. At the Advent preparation brunch on November 23rd you can make your family a wreath to light. There will also be adult devotionals and family calendars for you to pick up starting Nov. 23rd.



FROM LEGEND TO HISTORY - THE FIRST FIVE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

An Introduction to their myth, message and metaphor taught by DR. Rod Frohman
Sundays at 11:30am – 12:30pm --The Chapel (accessible by elevator) -- Light Snacks will "tide us over"

Session 1	23-Nov-14	<i>What is the Pentateuch / Torah All About?</i>
Session 2	30-Nov-14	<i>The Uses of Hebrew Scripture by Jews and Christians</i>
Session 3	7-Dec-14	<i>Israelite Religion in the Context of Her Neighbors</i>
Session 4	14-Dec-14	<i>Israel As Yahweh's Partner</i>
Session 5	4-Jan-15	<i>The Human Person as Yahweh's Partner</i>
Session 6	11-Jan-15	<i>The Nations as Yahweh's Partner</i>
Session 7	18-Jan-15	<i>Creation as Yahweh's Partner</i>
Session 8	25-Jan-15	<i>Summary of the Course</i>



Christian Education

Upcoming Events

Men's Prayer Breakfast	12/7 7:00 am
Mary Weller Circle	12/8 11:30 am
Optimists	12/12 5:30 pm
Evening Circle	12/7 6:00 pm
Anthony Circle	12/16 9:30 am
Not so Basic Bible study	Mondays 7:30 pm
Prayer Support Group	Mondays 11:30 am
Wednesday Evening Book Club	10/15 7:30 pm
Lectionary Study	Wed. 7:15 pm
Men's Ecumenical Group	Thursdays 7:15 am
Friday Women's Bible Study	Fridays 9:30 am
Friday Night Fellowship	3rd Fri. of month 6:30 pm
Adult Study	Sundays 8:15 am

Christmas Pageant Volunteers Needed

Children are invited to sign-up to help with the pageant. During sign-up please specify if you are available to help during worship on Nov. 30, Dec. 7, or 14 for Advent Candle lighting or Dec. 21 for the full pageant.

Faith and Film Series

Continuing Friday December 5th at 5:30pm we will be offering Veggie Tales - The Little Drummer Boy. Come learn about the true meaning of Christmas in one of Veggie Tales newest additions.

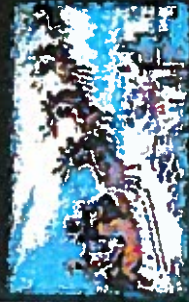


Come Celebrate Advent ... join us for faith, fun & fellowship

Sunday, December 14th
Ham Dinner &
Sacred Favorites Christmas Concert

5:30pm – Ham Dinner (with homemade desserts)
7:00pm – Choir & Cordancia Concert

Tickets on sale starting November 23rd
Adults - \$7
Children - \$3



Shhhhh...it's a secret! surprise visit
from our north pole guest



MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS

Kristen and Steven MacLean hail from Massachusetts and are big Red Sox fans. They have a 13 year old daughter, Kali, who is currently in our Confirmation Class. They enjoy the beach and spend one month each year in Ocean Park, Maine with family and friends.

Debbie Matrachisia lives in Penfield with her two children: Jeffrey is 25 and a graduate student at UB and her daughter Jessica, a student at Allendale, is 13 and is in our Confirmation class. Debbie worked in Children's Ministry organizing family events and a midweek program at a local church for about 7 years and has been a hairdresser for 20 years. She enjoys Chautauqua, the symphony, Walt Disney World and hiking.

Philip Robinson is a long time resident of Pittsford with two daughters, **Allison**, 16 and **Colleen**, 12. He is a previous member of Christ Clarion. Philip is a Computer Programmer with a local company and enjoys golf.

Carrie DiPasquale is the mother of a wonderful 10 year old daughter, Paige, who is enjoying Sunday School here. Carrie is an Office Manager and Medical Insurance Biller for a Psychiatry office. Her interests are in camping and photography. She fondly remembers having Carol Gavett as her nursery school teacher here.

Caroline Kilmer is the mother of two daughters, 16 and 12, and a son 14. Her husband is a physician and Caroline is a nurse with a visiting nurse service. Her interests are running and gardening.

Susan Patterson is a responder on a VA crisis hotline. She is active in our Optimists and RAIHN programs and sings in the Eastman Rochester Chorus. Susan enjoys her home and yard work.

James Frame is a Financial Manager at Harris RF Communications. His interests are golf, reading and Syracuse University basketball.

Kristen and Mike Thon were married at first Presbyterian on September 6 of this year. Kristen is in sales and marketing support at Desk Set in East Rochester and Mike is in Real Estate. Kristen is learning to play the banjo.

Lori Kornfield lives in Pittsford with her husband, Bryan and is a mom to two sons, a 4 ½ year old and a one year old. She is excited to be joining this church and incorporating God into her life and the lives of her children. Lori is an RN, but currently is a stay-at-home mom. She enjoys reading and greyhound rescue.

Clara and Van Travis are delighted to be joining so many friends and their son's family in this congregation. They also have a daughter who lives in Philadelphia with her family. Van taught at Cornell and Clara has aptly juggled being a real estate broker, retail store -owner, professional mom, and avid quilter.

Jan Currie is delighted to once again be an active member of this congregation. She first joined in 1962, and among other things taught Sunday School, sang in the choir, and served as a Deacon. Jan and her husband Gordon, a professor emeritus of internal medicine at the University of Rochester, are blessed to have four sons and two grandchildren.

Christmas at Grace House

Christmas is approaching and Grace House has 50 beds this year to help men come home from prison. As you may know these men come with one set of clothes, a bus pass and nowhere to go. Grace House provides for their needs through people like us who are motivated by Christ's message.

The men are told of our donations and why we helped them, and that now that God has touched their lives also. After serving 704 men since 2008, 346 men have dedicated their lives to Christ; they have a 70-80% success rate, as determined by not consuming drugs or alcohol, remaining crime free, and not returning to incarceration. We are asking for donations to help with a Christmas Party for the residents on 12-17-14

Gifts for men /50 Residents

Winter outerwear, gloves, hats, coats, boots,
Underwear & socks, hygiene products

Most of the residents are fathers, so another way to be a blessing to them is with toys for their children. These gifts will be given to the men and then the men will deliver the gifts to their children. Many of the children have never had a Christmas with their father.

Gifts for boys and girls Between ages 5-18

If you are able to provide any of the above items, please place them in the GRACE HOUSE bin in the Fellowship Hall so that they can be delivered on November 30.

Christmas Cards

If while you are making out your Christmas Cards, you may have a extra one or two, there are some lonely soldiers who might enjoy receiving one. One choice might be:

A Recovering American Soldier
c/o Walter Reed Army medical Center
6900 Georgia Ave
NW Washington, DC
20307-5001



THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS PRESENT! Buy an animal (or a share) from Heifer International for that special person. Your tax deductible contribution will help the Sunday School's mission project, the Heifer Fair and families in developing countries. Shares will be on sale in Fellowship Hall After each service beginning November 23 – December 21.