



# The Good News

July/August 2020

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

<https://www.pittsfordpres.org/live>

## CHARTING THE COURSE WITH PASTOR AARON

My family is slowly settling into our new home in Fairport. We love being so close to the Trolley Trail and the Erie Canal along which we've already taken many bike rides. Everything is finding its place in our house, which is feeling more and more like our own place. I believe it's true in general, but particularly when unpacking a new house, that raising three small children requires a lot of team work. Laura and I try to help each other to save ourselves time and effort, and our communication is important. In particular, listening is important. However, I don't always listen as carefully as I should. Recently, I was going into our basement for a project I was working on, and, since I was already going down there, Laura asked if I could also bring up something she needed from the pantry. I agreed, but was so focused on my own thoughts that, within the 10 seconds it took me to get to the pantry, I had already forgotten what she asked me to do. Can you relate?

The chances are good that you can relate. Research shows that, despite spending much time every day listening, most people are actually very poor listeners! We are often too distracted or too uninterested to listen well. Proverbs 18:2 says, "A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing personal opinion." Later in that same chapter, another proverb says, "If one gives answer before hearing, it is folly and shame" (18:13). It seems these proverbs are holding a mirror up to the human experience and showing that many of us are often talking at one another, not talking with one another.

As your new Pastor, I come to you with experiences, ideas, hopes, and desires. I bring all of that with me in order to help lead you so that, together, we can discover a future yet unknown. However, I want to follow the wisdom of Proverbs so that I'm not just "expressing personal opinion" without first trying to find "understanding," which is why I am committing to a year of listening. Listening allows for true learning to take place. It allows for people to truly connect to each other. I want to spend my first year with you trying to listen deeply. I want to listen to understand who you are: your history, your traditions, and your values. I've enjoyed the opportunities to get to know many of you over Zoom, phone calls, emails, and the occasional in-person meeting. I want to create more opportunities for us to get to know each other, even while we are still physically distancing. So, I'm asking if you would sign up to meet with me on a Zoom call, so that I can get to know you and learn about what you love and value about our church. Please help me get to know our church, and let's listen intently to each other as we embrace what God has in store for our future.

If you would like to sign up for one of the following times to meet with me, please contact the office ([connect@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:connect@pittsfordpres.org)) and indicate which one or two dates work for you. We will be talking within small groups. It's possible to have a productive conversation with a group size of about 20 people. More dates will be added as needed. Thanks!

Thursday, July 16 – 7:30-8:30pm

Thursday, August 13 – 7:30-8:30pm

Sunday, July 19 – 4:00-5:00pm

Sunday, August 16 – 4:00-5:00pm

~ Aaron

We hope many of you had the opportunity to pray with your Pastors when we led the Prayer of Lament and Reconciliation that was posted to YouTube earlier in June. This moment we are facing as a nation regarding the reality of racism is too important to go unaddressed by Christians. This moment requires self-examination and, most importantly, listening. Along with Carol Anne Strawbridge and Rod Frohman, Aaron will be leading an 8-week conversation for our congregation on the topic of racism. This is designed to be a conversation, not a lecture or a study. We will be reading book chapters and articles, but this is not an academic course. We will be watching videos, but this is not entertainment. This will be a conversation. We will be listening and talking to each other.

We invite you to join the conversation. Everything we will be reading, listening to, and watching will be accessible to teenagers; so this invitation is open to youth and adults alike. We will be meeting Sundays from 7:00-8:00pm over Zoom, beginning on Sunday, July 19, and ending on Sunday, September 6. Prior to each meeting, we will have an assignment to read, listen to, or watch. At the meeting, we will open with a reflection from Scripture, followed by an open dialogue of our reactions to that week's assignment. If you are interested in participating, please contact the office ([connect@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:connect@pittsfordpres.org)).

## Vital Congregations Initiative

### Vital Congregations Mark 2: Intentional Authentic Evangelism—Barbara Smith

The second mark of Vital Congregations is Authentic Evangelism or we can call it “sharing our faith in Jesus Christ in our relationships with others in our lives.” The Bible tells of Jesus meeting a Samaritan woman at a well. Jesus first comes close to her, he draws her into conversation, and consequently, into relationship. The relationship comes first, then Jesus talks with her, offering her a “drink of water that will satisfy her thirst forever.”

At a weekly virtual meeting of the National PCUSA Vital Congregations pastors cohort, Ray Jones spoke about this mark of vital congregations, saying that over the decades evangelism has evolved from being in your face, preachy and demanding, to “contextual.” That is, actions show we are one with Christ and we add words that reflect that, within the context of the situation. For example, in his one trip to the store in weeks, Ray realized communication and interaction are not really what people want to do at the store right now. But he found himself trying to connect visually with a friendly smile. If we do someone a favor or unexpected service, we do it without necessarily stating we are doing this as a disciple of Christ. However, when the situation lends toward talking about our faith, acknowledging our source of strength, or offering a prayer—authentic evangelism happens! So this mark calls us to reach out to others, even at a time like this. Be open to greeting others (safely). Listen to those who may be stressed or anxious in this time of uncertainty. Pray. Send a note to say thank you to front line persons that you may know. And let's look forward to a time when we can meet directly with others again—and share our faith in Jesus Christ in both our actions—and sometimes our words.

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### Members with July and August Birthdays

Brady Adams	Lydia Diekmann	Mary Jo Hultz	Emily Oldfield	Rachel Taylor
Wendy Amborski	Caleb Drake	Addie Ivey	Owen Oldfield	David Testa
Oliver Ash	Arthur Falter	Sophie Johnson	Sadie Oldfield	Carol Tiemann
Madeline Ashworth	David Ferris	Gerry Johnston	Sonja Poe	Evan Michael Tome
Robert Avery	Sylvia Fix	Geraldine Kelly	Marissa Polizzi	Ginny Vorhis
Cindy Barben	Anne Francis	Bob Klie	Joseph Reiners	Piper Wilson
Nancy Chesterton	Charlie Francis	Alexa Knapp	Robert Shone	Donald Zimmer
Brandon Cooper	Meredith Glenning	Sara Loveys	Maria Smith	Mary Ann Zipfel
Martha Crawford	Caroline Hill	Will Marsh	Tim Smith	
Dick Crawford	Daniel Holmes	Daniel Mecredy	Kevin Steele	
Matthew Crowley	Abigail Howard	Gail Miller	Ryan Steele	

*Wishing you a birthday that is full of laughter, love, and special moments!*

(if we missed you—please let the office know)



### Children's Choir

A huge THANK YOU to our young singers for preparing your videos for the *Change My Heart* choir. Your efforts came together to make a memorable video that enriched our Sunday service and touched many hearts. It would never have happened without the collaborative efforts of Bruce Frank, Jared Chase, and especially Craig Kunkle. I can't thank you enough for your expertise and patience with this project to see it to completion.

In humble gratitude, Dede Holmes

Katherine, Matthew, Benjamin and William Gianakakis, Hadley Irwin, Charlotte Keller, Lily and William Wright. You are all rock stars!

### RAIHN Update

The week of June 22 would have been our host week to have RAIHN families at First Pres. But like many other things, everything is different! RAIHN is now housing families at a motel and the volunteer congregations are providing some basics food needs along with Wegmans cards. Coordinators from FPC, along with Christ Episcopal and St Paul's Lutheran, appealed to their volunteers for monetary donations in lieu of the usual volunteer time. Thanks to their generosity, \$150 in gift cards plus basic groceries were provided for four families currently in the program.

Thanks to all for support of the RAIHN program!

### Deacon Events

Cooking Club – Sunday, July 12, 6pm - Zoom virtual cooking club - We send out recipes and menus and then we all cook "together" and share fellowship time dining.

Gaming Group - We have been meeting on Game BoardArena.com on various nights to play 7 Wonders, Carcassone, Stone Age, Tokaido, Sushi Go, For Sale and Puerto Rico.

Sign up for either of these events by emailing [dtraina@rochester.rr.com](mailto:dtraina@rochester.rr.com) or calling the office (586-5688).

## Lectionary for July

### July 5

**5th Sunday after Pentecost**  
 Genesis 24:34–38, 42–49, 58–67  
 Psalm 45:10–17 or Song of Solomon 2:8–13  
 Romans 7:15–25a  
 Matthew 11:16–19, 25–30

### July 12

**6th Sunday after Pentecost**  
 Genesis 25:19–34  
 Psalm 119:105–112  
 Romans 8:1–11  
 Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23

### July 19

**7th Sunday after Pentecost**  
 Genesis 28:10–19a  
 Psalm 139:1–12, 23–24  
 Romans 8:12–25  
 Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43

### July 26

**8th Sunday after Pentecost**  
 Genesis 29:15–28  
 Psalm 105:1–11, 45b or Psalm 128  
 Romans 8:26–39  
 Matthew 13:31–33, 44–52

## Lectionary for August

### August 2

**9th Sunday after Pentecost**  
 Genesis 32:22–31  
 Psalm 17:1–7, 15  
 Romans 9:1–5  
 Matthew 14:13–21

### August 9

**10th Sunday after Pentecost**  
 Genesis 37:1–4, 12–28  
 Psalm 105:1–6, 16–22, 45b  
 Romans 10:5–15  
 Matthew 14:22–33

### August 16

**11th Sunday after Pentecost**  
 Genesis 45:1–15  
 Psalm 133  
 Romans 11:1–2a, 29–32  
 Matthew 15:[10–20] 21–28

### August 23

**12th Sunday after Pentecost**  
 Exodus 1:8–2:10  
 Psalm 124  
 Romans 12:1–8  
 Matthew 16:13–20

### August 30



**13th Sunday after Pentecost**  
 Exodus 3:1–15  
 Psalm 105:1–6, 23–26, 45b  
 Romans 12:9–21  
 Matthew 16:21–28

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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

*“Listening allows for true learning to take place. It allows for people to truly connect to each other. .”*

<p>The Rev. Aaron Neff <i>Pastor and Head of Staff</i> Ext. 25 aaron.neff@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>The Rev. Carol Anne Strawbridge <i>Temporary Supply Pastor</i> Ext. 41; Monday CAS@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>The Rev. Steve Michie <i>Temporary Supply Pastor</i> Ext. 42; Wednesday, Thursday smichie.sm65@gmail.com</p> <p>Craig Kunkle <i>Director of Christian Education</i> Ext. 30 craig.kunkle@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Tyler Logan <i>Director of Youth Ministry</i> Ext. 31; tyler@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Britta Konau <i>Office &amp; Communications Coord.</i> Ext. 21 britta.konau@pittsfordpres.org</p>	<p>Maria DiGiambattista <i>Financial Administrator</i> Ext. 23 treasurer@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Tim Carder <i>Custodian</i> Ext. 33; tim@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Dr. Jared Chase <i>Director of Music</i> musicdirector@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Dr. Bruce Frank <i>Associate Director of Music and Organist</i> bfrank345@gmail.com</p> <p>Dede Holmes <i>Director of Youth Choirs</i> dmh91654@frontiernet.net</p> <p>Dr. Mary Carlson <i>Director of Hand Bell Choir</i> mcarlson74@gmail.com</p>	<p><b>First Presbyterian Church</b> 21 Church Street, Pittsford, NY 14534 Phone 585 586-5688, Fax 585 586-8090 connect@pittsfordpres.org www.pittsfordpres.org</p> <p><b>Worship Service: 10:00 am live-streamed</b> Online Communion is offered on the first Sunday of each month.</p> <p><a href="https://www.pittsfordpres.org/live">https://www.pittsfordpres.org/live</a></p> <p></p> <p></p>
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