



The Good News

October 2020

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

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

CHARTING THE COURSE WITH PASTOR AARON

It's hard to believe it's October already. It feels like the last four months have vanished in an instant! There have been many transitions over that time: moving through many different phases of re-opening the church as well as bidding farewell to multiple staff members and welcoming new ones. As I have reflected on the first quarter of my first year with you, an image came to mind: air travel. When you board an airplane, there are many steps that occur before your plane actually leaves the ground. I never fully anticipate how long the boarding process takes. First, you wait for all the passengers to get onboard, which is an especially long time if you are first-class or pre-boarding. Second, you wait for the baggage handlers to load your suitcases into the plane and for the plane to be fueled. Third, you wait for ground security and ground handlers to make sure the plane is safe to fly and that the tarmac is clear. Fourth, you wait for gate agents to check the flight manifest for accuracy and for flight attendants to present the in-flight safety instructions. Finally, you wait for the cabin crew to receive clearance to take off from the dispatchers after they have checked the weather, air-space conditions, and flight plans. No wonder I almost always fall asleep right as the plane takes off! It's exhausting!

The boarding process is a nice metaphor for our summer together, because, while the time has gone by quickly, I am also aware that it still feels like just the beginning of our journey. All of the transitions we've experienced since the end of May have been like our boarding process. We've taxied to the runway, and now we can see a long airstrip in front of us. It's time for us to build up some momentum as we aim to take off. I hope that my sermon series beginning on September 27 is going to help us do that. I have been working with the Generosity Team and the Vital Congregations Initiative (VCI) Team to plan a sermon series that will function as both a driving force for this year's stewardship campaign and a refocusing of the VCI.

I am so excited about this sermon series. It will help you to recall the important conversations you had during your VCI small group meetings during Lent and will help us to think of the theology of stewardship by answering the question: What does it mean to be a vital congregation? Each week will highlight one of the 7 Marks of a Vital Congregation, viewed through the lens of stewardship. Here's an outline of what I plan to preach on:

VCI Mark

Lifelong Discipleship Formation

Outward Incarnational Focus

Intentional Authentic Evangelism

Stewardship Theme

Christian discipleship requires a total commitment of ourselves.

We must be generous with the Gospel: Part 1 – Our Actions.

We must be generous with the Gospel: Part 2 – Our Words.

Spirit-Inspired Worship	Sabbath-keeping is a practice of generosity.
Empower Servant Leadership	The health of the church depends on the time we give: Part 1 – Programming.
Caring Relationships	The health of the church depends on the time we give: Part 2 – People.
Ecclesial Health	Our budget (both as a church and as individuals) shows our priorities.

I hope you will prepare for this 7-week series beginning on September 27 the way I am preparing for it: through prayer. When the series has concluded, I hope you will continue in prayer with me as we thank the Lord for the ways in which we are already a very vital congregation and as we seek the Lord’s wisdom, discernment, and strength to make us an even more vital congregation for the hope-filled journey ahead. Now, let’s take to the skies!

~ Aaron

From Rev. Erin...

I am thrilled to be joining all of you at First Presbyterian Church! Since we are connecting in various ways due to COVID-19, I have not had the chance to “meet” all of you yet, but I am looking forward to connecting with all of you over the next several weeks. I thought I would share a few things about myself, just in case we have things in common we may not realize (for instance, I found out in the last two weeks that Elizabeth Gianakakis and I are both Ithaca College graduates, and my time in New Orleans overlapped with Bruce Frank!).

Most recently I served East Bethany Presbyterian Church, where I have been a part-time pastor since 2017, in addition to working full time as the Office Manager at Genesee Country Village and Museum. My greatest passions in ministry are pastoral care and faith formation for all ages. Both of those passions take many forms: hospital and nursing home visitation; special services emphasizing growth through prayer and the sacraments; equipping church members with the skills and tools to provide pastoral care to one another; and providing fellowship, learning, and growth opportunities for youth.

I earned my Master of Divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary. I also hold a Master of Science degree in Early Childhood Education and Human Development from the Warner School of Education at the University of Rochester, and New York State teaching certifications for birth-second grade and grades 1-6. Prior to attending seminary, I taught Kindergarten for four years in Alexander, New York.

I am a cradle Presbyterian; nurtured in my faith, confirmed, and ordained as a Ruling Elder at Corfu United Presbyterian Church before departing for undergraduate studies at Ithaca College in 2001. I credit the congregations and pastors of Corfu, First Presbyterian Church in Ithaca, St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church, and First Presbyterian Church in Batavia (who sponsored me during the ordination process) for walking with me on the long path to ordination as a Teaching Elder in the PC(USA).

My husband Steven (a clergy tax accountant) and I have been married since 2014, and live together with our three adopted dogs; Teddi, McTavish, and Sammy. In our free time we enjoy traveling (when there isn’t a global pandemic) and especially enjoy spending time in the Outer Banks, North Carolina.

With gratitude for the gift of being in ministry with all of you, Rev. Erin

Living Through Giving

This coming Sunday, September 27, will mark the “official” kickoff of our Stewardship Campaign for 2021, “Living through Giving.” Pastor Aaron will be shepherding us through the Campaign over the next seven weeks, each week addressing one of the Seven Marks of a Vital Congregation and culminating in Consecration Sunday, November 8.

Despite the pandemic, First Presbyterian has remained strong due to the dedication of our new Pastor, our Temporary Supply Pastors, Church Staff and Officers and, most importantly, the members of our congregation. We were so fortunate to be able to welcome Pastor Aaron and his family to our church without a day to spare prior to New York State on Pause. Then our crack technical team took over, showcasing their expertise and enabling us to worship at Sunday services each week via livestreaming. So many individuals participated to make this a reality: our pastors, Craig, Tyler, Jared, Bruce, our cantors, guest musicians, and readers. Britta, Maria, and Tim somehow managed to keep things in order during these difficult and crazy times. In August our lovely summer weather provided the opportunity to hold outdoor 8:30 a.m. Sunday services with limited participation while still livestreaming the 10 a.m. service. Next Sunday will mark the third limited participation indoor 8:30 a.m. service. Indoor Memorial Services have been held beginning in July.

We have made it safely to this point, although to quote the Grateful Dead “what a long strange trip it’s been.” Now the work begins. Your Stewardship Committee has spent many hours (via Zoom) planning the rollout of the Campaign with Pastor Aaron’s counsel. We are extremely thankful to congregation members who have provided video vignettes of the importance of First Presbyterian in their lives. We will be sharing those vignettes with you each Sunday.

Now, we are asking you to do your part. Let us show our gratitude for God’s many gifts by choosing to return some of which we have. Throughout the next few weeks, please prayerfully consider your financial commitment to the church. Your gifts of time and talent are much appreciated but your financial support is also necessary for First Presbyterian to continue to thrive. “You will be enriched in everything so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” 2 Corinthians 9:11(NIV).

Your Generosity Team

Steve Mizelle (Chair), Faye Casey, Charlie Francis, Pastor Aaron, Rob Rhodes, William Rieth

Minute for Mission

RAIHN Update

The pandemic is affecting all of us in many different ways! RAIHN is now providing homeless families temporary housing at a motel as churches became unavailable due to COVID. Previously, faith communities had provided an evening meal and a safe place to sleep for families. Now, volunteers provide basic supplies for meals and gift cards for food. Pittsford Pres along with support congregations, St Paul’s Lutheran and Christ Episcopal, recently donated a generous amount of cash and gift cards to support four families including eight children for the week. Thank you to all RAIHN volunteers! In addition, RAIHN staff continue to make information available to volunteer coordinators about advancing racial equality. And work at the day center is continuing to focus on preventing evictions and advocating for families in need. Follow up services are provided to families after they leave the shelter program, as well. Watch for continued information about RAIHN as we continue in this unusual time.

Dear Members and Friends of First Presbyterian Pittsford,

We give thanks to God for an opportunity for in-person worship this Sunday at 8:30 am. It has been a long time since we've worshiped together in our building on a Sunday morning. For many of you, coming back into the building is an exciting prospect. We share your excitement! We also want to make sure that the worship experience is as safe as possible. In order to make that happen, it is important that everyone follows the church's in-person worship guidelines.

- In order to maintain 6 feet of distance between everyone, the seating capacity in the sanctuary is limited to 20 family units (people who live together). There is information below on how to reserve a spot for the service.
- Please use the provided hand sanitizer upon entering the building.
- Masks must be worn the whole time, in addition to being socially distanced. Pastor Aaron will remove his mask only when speaking (and will be 9 feet away from the closest person).
- There will be no congregational singing during the service.
- There will be no communion.
- The offering will not be received in the middle of the service. Instead, people can deposit their offering in the narthex.

Following the service, please do not congregate inside the building.

This is an ongoing situation that we will continuously be evaluating and potentially changing. Many of us have different levels of risk tolerance when it comes to responding to this pandemic. By following these guidelines, we are committing to try to protect all of us, including those who may have a lower risk tolerance than us. It shows we care about the good of the whole body of Christ, and that is a very Christ-like thing to do.

How to Participate in Our 8:30 am In-door Worship

We are using SignUp.com to take reservations for our early morning worship in the sanctuary.

1. **Click this link:** <https://signup.com/go/oprqkd> (you may want to bookmark it)
2. **Enter your email address:** (You will NOT need to register an account on SignUp.com)
3. **Sign up!** Choose your spots. **Please note – a “spot” is a family unit, an individual or group who can sit together. That is why there are only 20 spots available. Please leave the spot count at 1 and let us know in the comment section how many people will be in your group.** Please do not let whether you are an individual or part of a couple or larger group influence your signing up for attendance. SignUp.com will send you an automated confirmation and reminders. Easy!

So that many of us may enjoy worship: 1. if you cannot honor a reservation, please cancel it; 2. please be considerate and skip signing up once in a while

SignUp.com does not share your email address with anyone. If you do not have an email address, please contact the office Mondays, Wednesdays, or Fridays, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm and we can sign you up manually. By registering and attending worship at FPC you agree to abide by the church safety guidelines, including wearing a mask at all times.

Please note that the 10:00 am service will continue to be livestreamed only and can be watched through our website.

Vital Congregations Initiative

Vital Congregations Mark 4: Empower Servant Leadership — Heze Simmons

The Seven Marks of a vital congregation has a very vivid “Vision” statement: “By the power of the Holy Spirit, and in authentic relationships with mid councils, we seek to equip, nurture and support church leaders to empower their congregations to renew, recover and live more fully into faithful discipleship to Jesus Christ.”

There are eight core values outlined in the program. I will list four of these for I believe these are very integral to worshipping at 1st Pres of Pittsford:

1. Prayerful discernment (To be led by our faith in Jesus Christ)
2. Honest Assessment (Where are we on the Life Cycle of a Worshipping Community)
3. Resilience (The Church has demonstrated this quite effectively over the past 3 years)
4. Hopefulness in change (The search and the Call of Rev. Aaron Neff)

Matthew 9:37-38 reads “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, ask the lord of the harvest to send out laborers.” The word harvest conjures up an image for the gathering of God’s restored people. The phrase Workers for his harvest—here God is portrayed as a farmer in need of workers. This prepares for the commissioning of the twelve disciples.

- The commission, therefore, is to: Identify, nurture, and support the use of spiritual gifts of all people to serve; not just monopolized cliques of powerful people.
 - All people of God, in the image of Christ, are given fruit of the Spirit and spiritual gifts meant for building up the Church. In this way, we are all called to do our part in membership of the body of Christ. Every voice is important. Every person should be supported to use their gifts to glorify God through servant leadership.
- The 2nd commission: All voices and people are necessary, and it is noticeable when people are absent/missing.
 - In keeping with true discipleship formation, churches are called to help all members to be empowered to use their gifts in servant leadership.
 - Church will always be somewhat of a motley crew as servant leadership is diversified by language, age, race, gender, sexual preference, etc., as all people identify spiritual gifts and are trained in their call to serve.
- And finally, the 3rd commission: Nurture and encourage those specifically called and gifted for pastoral ministry.
 - God calls and equips some for the particular task of pastoral ministry which must be cultivated, nurtured, and trained.
 - Ministry can never be about a single pastor, but it is about identifying, equipping, and empowering those servant leaders God puts in our midst.

I leave you with these thoughts from Landon Whitsitt’s Theocademy – on the subject of “Being Leaders:”

- Being Christians, we are not the start-up crew, we are asked to follow Christ as participants in some thing that has already been done.
- God’s mission is always bigger than the church’s mission, we are called to be a part of it, but to follow at a distance.
- Christ is the Church’s hope. Christ will never forsake us. We are called to be a part of it in transforming all things and all people and finally,
- All God’s promises are “Yes” in Christ.

Thank you, be safe and stay healthy.

The Politics of Truth: A Study of The Acts of the Apostles

With Rev. Roderic P. Frohman, DMin(Prin)



This fall Rev. Rod Frohman will be teaching the book of Acts. Some of you went through a guided reading this spring, but this class will go into an analysis of the cultural, situational, structural, and theological underpinnings of the text. When you finish this course you will better understand the text as you read along.

In this course you will listen to the recorded weekly lecture at your convenience at home. Then on each date listed below you will be able to join into a discussion via Zoom about what you learned. There will be course work to do outside of class. Please get your

name on the list by emailing Craig craig.kunkle@pittsfordpres.org or by calling Craig at 585-586-5688.

Six Sessions Fall 2020

Class #1: October 11: "Introduction: The Double-Consciousness Narrative"

Class #2 October 18: "The Social Level of Early Christians: Were They Primitive Communists?"

Class #3 October 25: "The Long Reach of the Empire"

Class #4 November 1: "Luke's Narrative Strategy: The Paradox of Christ and Culture"

Class #5 November 8: "Luke's Theology: Christian Practice Turns the World Upside Down"

Class #6 November 15: Summary -- "The Politics of Truth"

Members with October Birthdays

Amanda Adams	Emma Hilger	James Purpura III
Jenna Adams	Sophie Hilger	Beverly Reeve
Erin Amborski	Margaret Kilmer	Robert Smith
Susan Bloch	Vicki Klie	Brenna Swetman
Linda Converse	Marjorie MacKenzie	Pem Tyler
Roberta Faloon	Dorothy Meusburger	Marjorie Wallace
Madeline Frank	Jane Milholland	June Wilson
Rachel Gartland	Dorothy Naylor	Powell Wright
Anne Glenning	Megan Nead	
Annelise Henry	Susan Patterson	

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

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



Minute for Mission

Cameron Clothing House

The Cameron Clothing House is now open by appointment only to drop off your gently used fall/winter clothing.

Two options:

1. Call 254-2697, press 5 for the clothing house to speak with the coordinator or leave a message for a call back. Once you have an appointment, you can find the Clothing House at 48 Cameron St, Rochester 14606.
2. If you are registered for attending Sunday worship at FPC, you may drop off bags of clothing in either of the two Cameron bins we always use (coat closet) when you come to church.

This is our first step in returning to our previous practice for accepting Cameron donations and we appreciate your understanding in using either of these options until we can expand. For questions, please contact Cindy Becker at 585-703-4878.

News from the Nursery School

We are very, very excited to be back



at our preschool! It has been a long time, but we are back! Yes, there are some changes, but one thing never changes—the love of learning and learning through play!! We are learning about Fall, pumpkins, and of course Halloween 😊 We are planning a pumpkin scavenger hunt, as well as practicing our safety drills. This month we will be learning about fire safety. Thank you for your unwavering and strong support! We are here together!!

Teresa Zatyko, Director Pittsford Nursery School

Taste of Cameron At Home FUNdraiser!

Friday, October 23, 4:30-8 pm

This school year, Cameron has a new on-site program for Rochester youth offering crucial support and assistance in online learning. Proceeds from this unique fundraiser will benefit this invaluable program. There will be three meal choices offered by Root Catering. Guests will have the choice to add a signature Cameron cocktail or a bottle (or two!) of wine provided by Living Roots Wine & Co. And it's all to-go from this location:

Kin Event Space

52 Sager Drive

(Behind Living Roots)

Rochester, NY 14607

Guests will be provided with a time slot to pick up the meals from Kin Event Space. Staff will be there to safely give you your meal to enjoy at home. Family style options are available if you wish to have a small dinner party at home. Floral arrangements are also available and there will be an online silent auction!

For questions on food and drink options, pricing and registering, please contact Jennifer Muniga, Cameron Ex Dir. at (585) 254.2697 or jennifer.muniga@cameronministries.org or Cindy Becker, FPC Outreach Team, at 585-703-4878

Eve Circle

We will meet on Monday, September 28, at 12:30 pm on Margaret Mecredy's patio and will discuss Chapter 4 of *Love Carved in Stone*.

Lectionary for October

October 4

18th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20
Psalm 19
Philippians 3:4b-14
Matthew 21:33-46

October 11

19th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 32:1-14
Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
Philippians 4:1-9
Matthew 22:1-14

October 18

20th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 33:12-23
Psalm 99
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
Matthew 22:15-22

October 25

21st Sunday after Pentecost


Deuteronomy 34:1-12
Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8
Matthew 22:34-46

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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

*What does it mean
to be a vital congregation?*

<p>The Rev. Aaron Neff <i>Pastor and Head of Staff</i> Ext. 25 aaron.neff@pittsfordpres.org</p>	<p>Maria DiGiambattista <i>Financial Administrator</i> Ext. 23 treasurer@pittsfordpres.org</p>	<p>First Presbyterian Church 21 Church Street, Pittsford, NY 14534 Phone 585 586-5688, Fax 585 586-8090 connect@pittsfordpres.org www.pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Worship Services: 8:30 am in-doors (by reservation) 10:00 am live-streamed Online Communion is offered on the first Sunday of each month.</p> <p>https://www.pittsfordpres.org/live</p>
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