



Message from Rev. Hale

*“Arise, shine;
for your light has come...”*
[Isa. 60:1]

It’s Newsletter time again, and I’m *listening* as I sit at my desk with near-by Christmas lights “shining” over a Nativity set spread across the top of a bookcase, all principal characters in rapt attendance, and the only thing I “hear” are the seven words now carefully centered at the top of the page!

Listening is part of the ritual of every Newsletter message written. Most often, it takes a bit of time, seems to come according to its own self-determined schedule that’s totally unaware of mine! *Listening* has a “life” of its own and asserts its freedom to “be” every time!

So, friends, after six weeks of celebration, it’s time to “*arise and shine, for our light has come!*” The Nativity will be packed away, each figure carefully wrapped and all gathered in their box, now beginning to show wear at its corners. The trees with their lights will be tucked away too, covered to keep them dust and spider web free! No more basking in the soft light. It’s time to notice the daylight grow longer, the morning light come sooner, the woods fill with darkness later and later each day.

It’s time to open the nursery during worship and give our growing passel of children space of their own where they can play and learn and move freely about. Thank you, Nicole, for your caring persistence in leading this endeavor!

It’s time again for the Annual Meeting at the end of January; time to hear from our Committee Chairs and re-visit how and where we connected with the mission Christ as he led us through another year.

It’s time to gather February 14 for Ash Wednesday, walk again with Christ through Lent, gather each week for soup and study, and anticipate another Easter Morning Sunrise March 31 up on Chestnut Hill!

It’s time, dear friends, to *Arise* and embrace the ever-present life of ministry Christ calls us to as he guides us and walks right along with us to help us do. It’s time to *shine*, as we offer our best to the Lord of our lives and ever given to the good of all others.

Grateful for a new year with its call to rise and shine
as we share the Love of God together, Marilyn

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Lectionary for January / February 2024

January 7, 2024
1st Sunday after Epiphany
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 1-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

January 14, 2024
2nd Sunday after Epiphany
Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

January 21, 2024
Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

January 28, 2024
4th Sunday after Epiphany
Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28

February 4, 2024
5th Sunday after Epiphany
Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

February 11, 2024
Transfiguration of the Lord
2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

February 18, 2024
1st Sunday of Lent
Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:9-15

February 25, 2024
2nd Sunday of Lent
Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Psalm 22:23-31
Romans 4:13-38
Mark 8:31-38

**Worship Committee - Diana**

The Worship Committee and the parents of some of our little ones are collaborating in creating of new program for the children of the church...

Jesus said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." Mark 10:14

Looking towards the future and the more children we welcome at Sunday School; we have decided to start developing a new program, Children's Church, that would be geared toward any children attending worship on Sunday School Sundays. These dates will be published in the newsletter or you can get these dates from the church secretary.

What will this program look like? After Sunday School, parents and their children will join us upstairs for the first part of worship with the congregation as we do feel it is important to have the kids in church, as we love having them there! At a designated time,

before Rev. Hale's sermon, Nicole Woodhead and another volunteer will escort the children (under the age of 10) downstairs where they will follow the scripture used in the sermon, at an age-appropriate level. This will allow parents to worship upstairs, while the kids will learn the stories and concepts presented during worship downstairs. This might include a craft, short video lesson, music, and snacks. We hope to incorporate fun activities that are age appropriate and full of meaning.

This is all new, and we will be developing this program throughout this first Sunday School session, so please be mindful as we are navigating a new program for our children, that we may make changes once we get a grasp of participation and the volunteers needed. We welcome any suggestions as we will look to see what changes will need to be made.

If you have questions or want to volunteer, please contact Nicole or Diana.

Session News - Judy

Annual Meeting of the Congregation The 175th Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held **Sunday, January 28, 2024** to receive the **2024 Budget**, to approve the compensation and benefits of the minister and to receive the 2023 committee annual reports. Session approved a \$3,000 donation (\$2,440 from the Mission Challenge budget line plus \$560 from the Rummage Sale Local Mission Fund) to the family of Gabby Kranock. A card signed by the congregation was sent with the donation.

Mission Committee - Cso

Peace and Global Witness Offering: The final total for our Peace and Global Witness Offering came to \$1360. The increase is due to an additional \$210 that was made after Peacemaking Sunday. Your support for all of the Special Offerings that we participated in this year is greatly appreciated.

Christmas Themed Rummage Sale : Thank you to all who donated items to or purchased items from this year's Christmas themed rummage sale. An additional \$475 was added to the Rummage Sale Mission Fund.

Harvest Basket Collection : Julie Pagett delivered the Harvest Baskets to the two local families prior to Thanksgiving. With the cash donations she was also able to purchase gift certificates to our local Park and Shop for the families to purchase their turkey and other needed food items for their Thanksgiving dinner.



Presents for Panthers : Students and a teacher from Portville Central School stopped by the church in early December to accept our donation to their Presents for Panthers gift collection. You opened your hearts yet again and donated the following toward their cause:



61 various gift items were donated, along with 11 rolls of wrapping paper, 5 gift cards, \$100 in cash and a check from our Rummage Sale Mission Fund for \$300. Thank you for opening your hearts to help meet a need in our community.

Baby Layette Project : Kathy Hendrix reported that she delivered a total of 37 Baby Gift Bags to the Olean General Hospital this year. Yet another example of your giving hearts.

African American Center for Cultural Development : After a long wait spent looking for someone skilled at applying polyurethane and applying for and receiving a small grant through the Presbytery of Western NY, progress has been made in the refinishing of the floors in two rooms at the Center. A contractor has been found and dates have been finalized for this stage. Having the floors finished will take the Center many steps forward in being able to hold more events at the Center. There are still a few tasks to do after the floors have been completed. In the Theater Room the auditorium seats will need to be assembled and attached to the floor. The Television system will need to be assembled, and the room darkening shades will need to be installed. Another room that needs attention will be the Café Africana. It will need to be cleaned and set up again.

Donations

Hunger Fund: \$600 was donated to the **Olean Dept. of Aging** to be used to assist Portville senior citizens as needed.

Jack Shepherd Memorial Mission Fund : **Wings – Flights of Hope** received a \$750 donation and **LEEK Hunting and Mountain Preserve** received a \$600 donation.

Christian Education News - Judy

The fall session of Sunday School concluded with classes on November 12 and 19. There have been a lot of great lessons and activities for the 3 classes PK/Kdg., Young Elementary and Older Elementary led by Bizzy XXXXXXXX, Amy XXXXX and Carly Xxxxxx, respectively. The Adult Class held its first two sessions on those same Sundays, beginning with a study of Adam Hamilton's Book of Luke. The Adult Class is a self-guided format with everyone

contributing with the lessons and discussions. The remaining Adult Class sessions will be held during the Winter session. Rev. Hale is guiding our two middle school students through lessons from the Old Testament during Sunday School time.

The Advent Program "What Will You Give God?" led by Diana Dunbar was held for four Sundays beginning November 26 through December 17. Each Sunday there were 30 attending the program. The morning began with a delicious breakfast and then Diana presented the lesson followed by a related craft activity. "Thank you, Diana!" for another wonderful Advent message. "Thank you!" to everyone who prepared the breakfast dishes that were thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.



The weekly Bible Study group being led by Rev. Hale has also been meeting on Wednesday mornings. Thank you to all our teachers!

We are looking forward to seeing our children in Sunday school again in 2024! The winter session of Sunday School will be **January 14 and 21, February 11 and 25 and March 3 and 10.** There will be a flyer mailed to all our Sunday School families with more information.

And looking ahead, Ash Wednesday is February 14, 2024. Plans are being made for Lent and will be available soon. Happy New Year Everyone!

Person Care Items Collection - Judy

127! There was a total of 127 personal care items collected and boxed up to deliver to Portville Central School in December for students and their families! Thank you to everyone who contributes to this ongoing mission project. The following is what was donated:

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|------------------------|
| * 2 body washes | * 13 toothpastes | * 2 face washes |
| * 3 3-in-1 body wash/
shampoo/conditioners | * 2 pkgs cotton balls | * 7 pkgs tampons |
| * 2 shampoos | * 26 bars of soap | * 4 pkgs feminine pads |
| * 3 conditioners | * 1 shaving cream | * 3 dental floss |
| * 8 deodorants | * 3 pkg disposable razors | * 11 tweezers |
| * 21 toothbrushes | * 6 ChapSticks | * 4 cuticle trimmers |
| | * 6 emery nailfiles | |

Food Pantry News - Randy

The Portville Community Food Pantry has been BUSY! November and December have blessed the food pantry with many, many generous donations—food items and monetary. And because of the faithful committed support of so many the food pantry was able to bless many families for normal monthly needs plus extra for the holiday celebrations. All the clients are so appreciative of the extras that are given to make their meals special.

The Portville Central School National Honor Society held their annual food collection and delivered over 1,500 food items! Their format was a bit different this year as a list of specific food items was requested from the food pantry. Then each grade level PK-12 was assigned a specific food item to collect. In the past any non-perishable food item could be donated by 7-12 grades. The NHS students delivering the food collected were hard workers and even sorted the food and put it on the shelves! The food pantry appreciates all the school students, teachers, staff and administration do to organize this food collection and support the PCFP!



PCS crew
sorting
donated
food
items.





A new endeavor for the PCFP this November was participating in the Cattaraugus Gives 2023 donation program organized by Cattaraugus Region Community Foundation. FCFP treasurer Cso did all the entry work for the PCFP to be a part of this one day of annual giving by the community to a total of 92 organizations on November 28. The food pantry received \$2,525! Donations came from local supporters as well as out-of-state supporters. Thank you Cso and all the donors!

The food pantry has also received some donations from individuals that were also eligible for matching donations from those individual's employers. That's a double blessing! Food pantry volunteers are happy to provide any documentation anytime that anyone makes a donation that qualifies for an employer matching donation.

An extra "Thank you!" to all the monthly shoppers from our congregation. This is a big help to purchase the necessary food items each month to complete the inventory to satisfy the client choice nutrition guidelines. Everyone doing a little adds up to a lot!

Property News - Norm

SANCTUARY CLEANING SCHEDULE: It is a new year with an updated Sanctuary Cleaning Schedule getting posted in the Quilt Room soon. Many names are already on it for cleaning.

THIS YEAR YOUR NAME WILL BE KEPT ON THE LIST UNLESS YOU TELL ME YOU WANT IT REMOVED. AND . . . if you would like to be ADDED to the list, please let me know as soon as possible. Many times, two people work together. A new schedule will go up near the end of February. The January and February dates have are already filled. I am available for any help to those who may be new additions to the cleaning schedule.

The vacuum cleaner and supplies are kept in the room at the end of the hall on the second floor past the bathrooms. Cleaning includes running the vacuum cleaner in the Quilt Room, Narthex, and the Sanctuary. Light dusting and a general picking up of anything are "as needed." Dates are usually four times or so during the year. Some people like to do a month at a time. You may trade dates if something comes up. Your name beside the date is the Sunday to have the church cleaned. Keeping the church looking nice is everyone's concern. Your help is greatly appreciated!

Norm King's email is listed in the Contact Directory should an emergency arises and you cannot clean the Sanctuary.

Welcoming Christmas



For
 Unto us a
CHILD
 is born
 Unto us a **Son**
 is given, and the
 Government shall be
 Upon His shoulders,
 and His Name shall be called,
 Wonderful, Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace!
 Isaiah 9:6



January/ February Birthdates to Remember



Jan 2 Richard
 Jan 3 Dan
 Jan 7 Sandi
 Jan 7 Riley
 Jan 10 Owen
 Jan 17 Jack
 Jan 20 Alex
 Jan 22 SJ
 Jan 22 Emmy
 Jan 27 Jean
 Jan 30 Mazey

Feb 2 Max
 Feb 5 Pamela Alejandra Lopez
 C.
 Feb 5 Wanda
 Feb 6 Amy
 Feb 10 Briar
 Feb 13 Barb
 Feb 13 Terry
 Feb 22 Amelia



From the bottom of my heart, may I thank you for the generosity of yours for the beautiful card and message and gift within! I am eternally grateful for our hand-in-hand life together here sharing the ministry of Christ.

Thanks, Everyone....Love, Marilyn



**Our heartfelt condolences to
 Sue and Steve
 On the death of Sue's father, Walt
 On December 3, 2023.**





01/01 *New Year's Day*, Church Office - Closed
 01/02 PWNY COM (MKH), 9:00 a.m.
 01/03 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
 01/06 *Epiphany of the Lord*
 01/07 Worship Service/Communion,
 10:00 a.m.
 Cso – Elder for the Month
 01/09 PNC - Jamestown - 6:00 p.m. (MKH)
 01/10 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
 Mission Committee Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
 01/14 Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
 Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
 2023 Annual Reports Due
 01/15 MLK, Jr. Day/Church Office Closed
 01/17 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
 Session, 4:30 p.m.
 01/21 Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
 Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
 01/22 Food Pantry Prep Day
 01/23 Food Pantry Prep Day
 01/24 Food Pantry, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
 No Bible Study
 01/28 Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
 175th Annual Congregational
 Meeting After Worship



02/04 Worship Service/Communion,
 10:00 a.m.
 Norm – Elder for the Month
 02/06 PWNY COM (MKH), 9:00 a.m.
 02/07 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
 02/11 Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
 Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
Transfiguration of the Lord
 02/14 *Ash Wednesday*
 Ash Wednesday Service, 7:00 p.m.
 02/18 Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
 02/19 Presidents' Day/Church Office Closed
 02/21 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
 Session, 4:30 p.m.
 02/25 Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
 March/April newsletter info due
 02/26 Food Pantry Prep
 02/27 Food Pantry Prep
 02/28 Food Pantry, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH -
 PORTVILLE, NY**

19 North Main Street
 P.O. Box 765
 Portville, NY 14770
 Voicemail: 716.933.6426
 Email: portville.presbyterian followed by
 @gmail.com

Sunday School: 9:00 am - ages 3 to adult
 Please check web site for dates when Sunday School
 meets.
 Worship Service: 10:00 am

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 Our Website:
www.portville.presbyterian.org