



Message from Rev. Hale

*How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
 All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
 They feast on the abundance of your house,
 and you give them drink from the river of your delights.
 For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light. [Psalm 36:7-9]*

Here in the New Year of 2023, we’re going forward by looking back. Twenty-five years ago we came together here by the “river” of God’s delight, this beautiful Allegany River. This Psalm was our call to worship that long ago Sunday afternoon in November of 1997 for the service of ordination that officially installed me here as your minister.

It was a relief for you that your search for a pastor was ended! It was a relief for me that my search for a “call” was ended! And thanks be to God that in both of those “ends” was a *beginning* of our ministry together, our life together as the Body of Christ gathered in this place, our life together as this *family of faith*.

How precious is your steadfast love, in each of our lives, O God! How very precious, as God’s love is the foundation of the relationship we keep together; it is the foundation of all the ministry we seek to “be” and “do” together.

Thank you all for the surprise celebration that brings this verse to “light” in this new year, in the first place! You put so much heart and care preparing and communicating and flawlessly executing all the meticulous details that came together for such a totally wonderful time together. Thank you all for answering the “call” to come to dinner and celebrate! It was one of the happiest events in my life to be shared with family and friends.

So much has changed over the years, yet we continue to *feast on the abundance of God’s house*—this house that gathers all our worship life and fellowship time and our memories and our hearts given to the *Lord of our lives!* Together let us thank God for *every bit of life we have as the Body of Christ*; drawn to this place by the Spirit and led from this place by the Spirit to carry the witness of God’s *precious steadfast love* into the world!

Grateful for the life of faith we share as we go into a New Year....Marilyn

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Lectionary for January / February

January 1 First Sunday of Christmas

Isaiah 63:7–9
Psalm 148
Hebrews 2:10–18
Matthew 2:13–23

January 8 Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7;10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

January 15

Isaiah 49:1–7
Psalm 40:1–11
1 Corinthians 1:1–9
John 1:29–42

January 22

Isaiah 9:1–4
Psalm 27:1, 4–9
1 Corinthians 1:10–18
Matthew 4:12–23

January 29

Micah 6:1–8
Psalm 15
1 Corinthians 1:18–31
Matthew 5:1–12

February 5

Isaiah 58:1–9a [9b–12]
Psalm 112:1–9 [10]
1 Corinthians 2:1–12 [13–16]
Matthew 5:13–20

February 12

Deuteronomy 30:15–20
Psalm 119:1–8
1 Corinthians 3:1–9
Matthew 5:21–37

February 19

Transfiguration of the Lord
Exodus 24:12–18
Psalm 2 or Psalm 99
2 Peter 1:16–21
Matthew 17:1–9

February 26

First Sunday of Lent
Genesis 2:15–17; 3:1–7
Psalm 32
Romans 5:12–19
Matthew 4:1–11

Mission News - Cso Woodworth

The Mission Committee wants to shout out a huge “Thank You” to everyone who participated in any of the many mission opportunities that were provided to our congregation during the months of November and December.

Our annual **Harvest Basket Collection** was the perfect Thanksgiving gift to two families in the area. Thank you to Portville Central School for working with Julie Pagett in providing contact information for the two families that were able to pick up our donations of food and gift cards before Thanksgiving. And “**Thank You**” to all of you for picking up a tag and returning the item on your tags to make this another successful Harvest Basket.

But wait there’s more from this “giving congregation”! Thank you for the 75 donated children’s books to **Gift-A-Book**. Thank you to Judy XXXXXXX who removed price stickers, secured labels inside the books, and delivered them to the Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center before the Christmas Holidays. The staff there are very appreciative of this ongoing project to support their efforts for children.

But that’s not all . . . Just a week after the Harvest Basket Collection, you responded oh so generously to our “**Presents for Panthers**” collection of Christmas gifts to students at

Mission News - cont.



Portville Central School. With a list of suggested gifts, 5 large boxes were packed with gifts for pickup by Gary XXXXXXXX and his PCS elves. Also included with these gifts were wrapping paper and ribbons. Also included in this donation were your gifts to our Personal Care Collection. Judy reported that toothpaste, toothbrushes, dental floss, disposable razors, shaving cream, body wash/shampoos, and deodorants were among the items that were picked up.

But you weren't done with your giving . . . there's even more . . . Our **Baby Layette** basket overflowed with your gifts of love . Kathy XXXXXXXX delivered the following to Olean General Hospital's Maternity floor in December. . . Be certain to check out the picture of the 5 nurses from the hospital holding bags with newborn items in them on the Mission Bulletin Board. Your donations included the following items: 25 baby blankets, 67 bibs, 2 bath sets (towels and wash cloths), 1 crib sheet, 27 sleepers, 1 Sippee cup, 3 packs of diapers, 21 pairs of socks, a hat plus the love and best wishes from our congregation to the new parents who will be given one of these packages.

With the retirement of **Dr. Janet Guyer**, the PCUSA Missionary we have supported for many years, the Mission Committee selected **Rev. Cheryl Barnes** as the new PCUSA Missionary to support. Rev. Barnes is working as an education facilitator through the Church of Central Africa Presbytery in Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. We are looking forward to hearing more about her Mission work.

Mission News - cont.

Donations: From JSMMF a donation of \$750 was sent to Wings, Flights of Hope and \$500 was sent to LEEK Hunting and Mountain Preserve; and from Hunger Fund a donation of \$600 was made to the Cattaraugus County Department of Aging to assist with meeting the needs of low income Portville area Senior Citizens.

Food Pantry News - Randy

Happy New Year from the Portville Community Food Pantry! As we head into the New Year, I would like to give a brief update on the events as 2022 concludes.

First off, many know our wonderful friend, Stephanie, has retired from her longtime post as Community Food Pantry Coordinator. One of her last actions was finding a replacement. She was successful in finding this person. After some creative discussion, I said ok, let's do it !!!! Wish me luck. God Bless and thank-you Stephanie for all the years you gave to the food pantry.

The past couple months saw an increase of people using the Food Pantry. We had 4 or 5 new families apply for the first time as well a few individuals. The food pantry is providing support for approximately an additional 40 people of our community.

The students from the Portville Central School National Honor Society held their yearly food drive and collected 2500 food items. They not only unloaded the school bus but also helped sort the donated food into categories. This equates to about 1500 pounds of much needed food to support our mission.



THANK YOU

PCS

NHS



Food Pantry News cont. - Randy

And a heart felt thank-you as well to many other organizations and individuals who have made both food and cash donations. I can assure you every food item, money donation, and the time to help is very much appreciated.

Thank you to our very special congregation. Your support is amazing in so many ways. The food pantry looks forward to continuing to meet the needs of our community.

Christian Ed News - Judy

The fall session of Sunday School began on September 25 and was held on 6 Sundays through September, October and November. The classes were well attended with enthusiastic students excited about the lessons and activities Bizzy XXXXXXXX and Amy XXXXX presented. Thank you to Heidi XXXXXX and Kari XXXXX for helping with the elementary class as it is a large group. The weekly Bible Study group being led by Rev. Hale has also been meeting on Wednesday mornings. The Adult Class facilitated by Stephanie XXXX met for 6 times also studying the book "Words of Life" by Adam Hamilton. This is about the ten commandments. And the Advent Program with the theme of Light led by Diana met 4 Sundays November 27 through December 18 for a meaningful message and activities for children and adults. Julie XXXXXX has led the American Sign Language class after worship through the fall. It has been informative and fun with many helpful handouts and online resources to guide our learning. Julie has presented basic lessons of the alphabet, words, phrases and everyday questions and answers to have conversations with sign language and communicate along with seasonal and holiday lessons that have been fun.

The winter session of Sunday School will be January 8 and 15, February 12 and 19 and March 12 and 19. There will be a flyer mailed to all the families of Sunday School children with more information. Heidi XXXXX, Nicole XXXXXXXX, Carly XXXXXXXX, Kari XXXXX and Jessianne XXXXXX have volunteered to help with the elementary class for 5 of the 6 winter session classes. One more helper is needed for March 19. Please contact Judy if you are willing to help for that date. Thank you to our teachers and helpers! And looking ahead, Ash Wednesday is February 22, 2023. Plans are being made for Lent and will be available soon.

It would be nice to finish the remaining 4 Adult Class lessons during the winter session. It is an easy curriculum with a book, video and leaders guide. If you are interested in being the facilitator for the Adult Class to finish the four lessons, please see Judy .

A Note of Thanks . . . Shirley

Hello to you all. I pray that you will have a blessed New Year where you are ever aware of God's presences and love for you even when you are preoccupied. Our living God is a God of the details of our lives and if we trust in him, he will bring good out of bad; joy in times of sadness, comfort in times of distress, and peace in times of turmoil.

In the years that I took care of Ron, God blessed us with his strength and love. And we were so blessed by so many of you, our church family, with prayers, cards and giving of your time in acts of kindness. All of it was so appreciated and heartwarming and eased the weight of the challenges we faced each day. Thank you so much!

For any of you who were not at Ron's funeral and did not hear of the very real way God gave me such peace and comfort in Ron's passing, I would be very happy to share that with you. It has been such an awesome gift.

May God bless you with His peace, grace and mercy,

25th Ordination Anniversary Celebration



Birthdates to Remember



- Jan 2 Richard
- Jan 3 Dan
- Jan 7 Sandra
- 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
- Feb 5 Wanda
- Feb 6 Ray
- Feb 6 Amy
- Feb 10 Briar
- Feb 13 Barb
- Feb 13 Terry
- Feb 22 Amelia

happy birthday!



Our heartfelt condolences to Steve and Mary on
 the death of Mary's mother,
 Leila.
 September 23, 1933 - November 24, 2022



Rev. Hale & family @ her 25th Ordination Celebration.





Dates to Remember

- 01/01 Worship Service/Communion, 10:00 a.m.
Diana – Elder for the Month
- 01/02 Church Office Closed
- 01/03 COM (MKH), 9:00 a.m.
- 01/04 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
- 01/08 Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service/Epiphany, 10:00 a.m.
- 01/09 Lectionary Group (MKH), 9:00 a.m.
- 01/11 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
Worship taking Christmas décor down, 11:30 a.m.
Mission Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
- 01/15 Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
Annual Reports Due!
- 01/16 MLK Jr. Day/Church Office Closed
- 01/18 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
Session, 4:00 p.m.
- 01/22 Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
Annual Congregational Meeting
After Worship
- 01/23 Food Pantry Prep Day
- 01/24 Food Pantry Prep Day
- 01/25 Food Pantry open 9:00 a.m. – noon
- 01/29 Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.



Dates to Remember

- 02/01 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
- 02/05 Worship Service/Communion, 10:00 a.m.
Mark – Elder for the Month
- 02/07 COM (MKH), 9:00 a.m.
- 02/08 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
- 02/12 Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
- 02/14 Lectionary (MKH), 10:00 a.m.
- 02/15 Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
Session, 4:00 p.m.
- 02/19 Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
- 02/20 Presidents' Day/Church Office Closed
Food Pantry Prep
- 02/21 Food Pantry Prep
- 02/22 Ash Wednesday
Food Pantry, 9:00 a.m. – 02:00 p.m.
Ash Wednesday Service, 7:00 p.m.
- 02/26 Worship Service, 10:00 a.m.
March/April newsletter info due

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - PORTVILLE, NY

19 North Main Street
PO 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
Worship Service: 10:00 am

Website:
www.portville-presbyterian.org