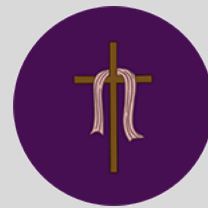




FIRST PRESS

Spring 2022

Volume 28, Issue 3



We are about to enter one of the most mysterious and impactful seasons of the church year: Lent. From the Old English term meaning 'lengthening,' Lent marks longer days and shorter nights. It is also a season in our faith where we remember the events leading up to and including the death of Jesus Christ, particularly the 40 days he spent in the wilderness at the start of his ministry. This is why Lent is 40 days, excluding Sundays, beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 2, and ending on Maundy Thursday, April 14. During this season, the Church calls her members to greater contemplation of the mysteries of faith and to acts of mercy and generosity. You can read on later in this newsletter for some Lenten activities to enhance your experience of the season!

On the five Sundays in Lent we will be looking very carefully, through worship and preaching, at a familiar and well-loved story in the New Testament: the Parable of The Prodigal Son. Each week we will look at the story from the perspective of its various characters: the father, the Prodigal, the older brother, the father's servants, and the community. My hope and prayer is that our closer look at this story will lead us into a deeper understanding of God's grace and the good news of our faith in Jesus Christ. The music and liturgy of the season, while slightly less exuberant than the rest of the year, will enhance our reading and understanding of the Scriptures as it always does.



The liturgical color of Lent is deep purple, a somber and contemplative tone. You'll see purple in the paraments and vestments of our worship, and in the various elements that enhance our worship space. Purple foreshadows the wounds that Christ will endure on our behalf as he takes the slow, painful walk to Calvary. On Palm Sunday the liturgical color changes to red, a regal color as Jesus marches triumphantly into Jerusalem. On Maundy Thursday, the day on which we commemorate the first Lord's Supper, we will be awash in white and light, which gradually gives way to the darkness of Good Friday. The darkness continues through Saturday, accompanied by silence and great expectation, to open with shouts of joy and bright gold and pinks and yellows for Easter morning.

The days ahead are full of potential: for learning, for growth in God and community, for worship, and for gratitude in the life-saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I look forward to spending my first Lenten and Easter season with you!

Now a word about FPC's newsletter. After consulting with staff, we believe that a seasonal newsletter will better share information with our community and be a more efficient use of our staff's time. Instead of rushing each month to send out a new newsletter, we plan to send out newsletters according to the seasons of the year and the church. This current newsletter takes us through spring and into the early days of summer. The next edition will keep us informed about summer and early fall activities, and so on. This routine invites us to think forward and dream and plan according to how God is leading us, and it will give you much more content to read and advance notice on important church and community events. Please remember that any member of the church can contribute to the newsletter and I hope you will!

Read on about how our life together will take shape this Spring and through the important events in our pursuit of following Jesus. Welcome home!

Andrew

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NURSERY STAFF

GAIL PARSONS
PARISH ASSOCIATE

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

MONDAY THRU THURSDAY
9:00-4:00
FRIDAYS
9:00-2:00

PASTOR ANDREW'S
OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY:
SABBATH DAY OFF AND
OUT OF OFFICE
TUES., WED., THUR.
IN OFFICE 9:30-4:00
FRIDAY:
STUDY DAY OFF CAMPUS,
SERMON PREPARATION,
HOSPITAL/NURSING HOME
VISITS



The Orchestra of
Northern New York

Comes to FPC Watertown

Sunday, April 3, 2022
3:00pm

Tickets: onny.org or at the door.

MENDELSSOHN Hebrides Overture (Fingals Cave), Op. 26

WANAMAKER Still Life in Motion (2021)

Commissioned work made possible by a NYSCA Individual Artist Grant Program
Concerto with 2022 YAC Winner

DARIE Waves (2021)

RUTTER Distant Land (1991)

MILHAUD La Création du monde, Op. 81a (1922-23)

Pre-Concert Conversation:

Gregory Wanamaker

*Featuring the premiere of a new work by Gregory Wanamaker, commissioned
by the NYS Council on the Arts Individual Artist Program.*

We All Have Our Courtyards

by Ann Weems

*We all have our courtyards,
those times and places we face
like Peter
when we must decide
to stand up and say whether we know him or not.*

*Those crossroads in our lives,
when we go along with things as they are,
or we say, as Luther did,
Here I stand, I can do no other.
We all have our courtyards....*

*Lent is the time to prepare for our courtyards,
the time to listen to who he says he is.
And he did, you know,
He did tell us who he is.
He is that one who brings good news to the poor,
freedom to the oppressed, sight
to the blind ...
that Holy One who said,
Follow me.
Feed my sheep.*



Preaching in a time of deep political polarization is fraught with challenge. Add a pandemic that forces worship to go virtual and the challenge magnifies. Give-and-take exchanges that are a normal part of in-person gatherings are now replaced by an experience that feels unilateral. Pulpit statements can sound one-sided and void of parishioner input. For congregations where most everybody shares a common political ideology, this might not be a problem. But preachers in more diverse settings face a range of politically charged criticisms.

These days, many worshipers seem ready to assign a political motive to a preacher's every utterance and silence. Say too much or too little (or nothing at all) about Black lives mattering, about arson and looting after the police killing of George Floyd, about the Capitol riot, or about Amanda Gorman's inaugural poem and you're apt to be viewed as hyperpartisan or politically out of touch. I realize that the manner in which one speaks on such subjects matters hugely. But in some congregations, even if you preach a deeply biblical sermon on Philippians 2:3 - "in humility regard others as better than yourselves" - you should be ready for the charge that you just took an underhanded slap at Donald Trump's narcissism. I've been there.

I'm hardly without conscience or conviction on matters that strike at the heart of the gospel or tear at the moral fabric of society. I'm certainly not afraid to speak candidly to biblical justice and faith-filled hope. But what I'm not willing to do is trade in the gravity of my calling as a pastor for the sake of satisfying particular partisan loyalties. I'm not interested in becoming a political animal.

When preaching a sermon or addressing a congregation in tense times, I have several principles that guide me.

If the goal of a good sermon is to help individuals meet God or be met by God, which seems right to me, I want to try to say things that have biblical resonance, create spiritual footing, and help reveal Christ's presence in the world. If I am to contribute words that are supposed to bring understanding to a cultural or political event, I want those words to offer new insight and fresh perspective. If they merely state what everybody already knows from the news cycle, listeners will only be waiting to see if my words confirm their partisan leanings.

Perhaps most urgent of all, I want to avoid contributing to a crisis prevalent in our time, namely, the subordination of faith to politicized identities and partisan politics. It wasn't always this way or this extreme. But increasingly, people in the pew derive their moral meaning from their politics. Instead of allowing their theological convictions and values to shape their political perspectives, many Christians now interpret faith through the prism of their political ideology.

The preacher's task is to help people focus on their religious identity ahead of their partisan identity, and not all language helps with this task.

In the end, I want my preaching and pastoral leadership to help people increase the abundance of their life in Christ. Creating a more just and humane world begins with the construction of spiritual, moral, and aesthetic lives, not principally political ones.

That's my view, at least. I've disappointed plenty of people over the years by what I've said or not said from the pulpit. But helping fashion spiritually deep lives (including my own) remains my goal and calling.

Peter W. Marty is editor/publisher of The Christian Century and senior pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Davenport, IW. Reprinted with permission.

Welcome Home

LENT AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN WATERTOWN

The Parable of The Prodigal Son is beloved in the church as it is a story of amazing Grace and unconditional love. During the Sundays in Lent we will look at this beloved Parable from the perspective of the different characters in the story. What was it like for the younger son to be welcomed home? How did the older son feel about what the father did when the younger son came home? How about the father's servants?

Wednesday, March 2: Ash Wednesday

12:30pm Spoken Midday Prayer in the Chapel with the imposition of ashes.

7:30pm Traditional Sanctuary Worship with music and the imposition of ashes.

Sunday, March 6

10:00am Welcome Home, Part 1: Squandered

The Sacrament of The Lord's Supper

Child care available ~ No Sunday School

Sunday, March 13

10:00am Welcome Home, Part 2: What Greater Love?

Sunday school and childcare during worship

Sunday, March 20

10:00am Welcome Home, Part 3: In Defense of Older Brothers

Sunday school and childcare during worship

Sunday, March 27

10:00am Welcome Home, Part 4: The Banquet

Sunday school and childcare during worship

Sunday, April 3

10:00am Welcome Home, Part 5: Grace is Unfair

The Sacrament of The Lord's Supper

Childcare available

No Sunday school



A traditional way to celebrate Palm Sunday is to read the Passion Narrative of Jesus. The Passion Narrative is a patchwork of the various accounts of Jesus’ final days from the four gospels, usually read in parts by designated readers and the congregation. To honor this tradition, our Palm Sunday celebration this year will be called “Palms to Passion.” The service will follow the last several days of Jesus’ life with readings from the Bible, special music by FPC’s choir and musicians (including “The Palms”), and thoughtful readings from poetry and prose. There will be no sermon that day; instead, the music and the words of Scripture will speak for themselves.

The Great Mystery of Easter

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 14th

7:30pm Tenebrae and Holy Communion

A Tenebrae is a worship service of gradually lighting and then gradually extinguishing candles as a symbol of Jesus’ coming into and being taken from the world. This service will recall the events of the first Last Supper, and will include the sacrament for us to share together. The service ends in almost complete darkness as Good Friday begins.



GOOD FRIDAY, April 15th

Community Good Friday/Stations of The Cross, Time and Locations: TBD

12:30pm The Seven Last Words of Christ

A quiet service of readings, silence, and reflection, held in FPC’s Sanctuary during the time when Jesus was crucified. This service will remember Jesus’ final words.



EASTER SUNDAY, April 17th

Sunrise Service at Thompson Park, Time: TBD

8:30am Morning Spoken Prayer and Holy Communion

This service will be held, weather permitting, on FPC’s labyrinth.

9:00am Come and Go Easter Brunch, Fellowship Hall

10:00am Morning Worship with Molto Brass and Choir





Music! Lent, Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Easter

We enter the Lenten Season on **Ash Wednesday, March 2**, with a 7:30 p.m. worship service in the sanctuary. The choir will sing Stainer's *God So Loved the World*.

On **Sunday March 6**, Agnes McCarthy will offer three pieces on solo violin, and the ladies of the choir will sing *Arise, My Soul, Arise*, by Dan Forrest.

On **March 13, Lent 2**, the choir will sing an old favorite, *The Power of the Cross*, by Getty and Townend; Clancy Cox will offer a solo.

On **Lent 4, March 27**, David Elmer will be the soloist and the choir will sing a new anthem, *Come to the Table*, by David Angerman. **Lent 5, April 3**, will feature Holy Communion. The Adult Handbells will play, and the organ Communion voluntary will be *Sicilienne* by Maria-Theresia von Paradis. The organ prelude will be Gothic Fanfare, by Lester Groom (which was Andrew & Katie Long's wedding processional.)

Pastor Andrew has designed a new, dramatic **April 10 Palm Sunday** service, opening with The Palms by Faure. The organ will be heard on César Franck's *Pièce Héroïque*, foreshadowing the events to come. The choir will offer two anthems, *Jerusalem, Behold Your King!* by Barrett and Angerman; and *For Everyone Born, a Place at the Table*, by Tom Trenney. Pastor Andrew and Carl will play an organ-piano duet, *Shout to the Lord!*, with the choir joining in at the end. Andrew will play a piano postlude by Rachmaninoff.

On **Maundy Thursday, April 14**, our service will be at 7:30 in the sanctuary. David Elmer is making a large wooden cross, which will be carried down the aisle. Andrew is making a set of candles to mark the abandonment of Jesus by his disciples, as the sanctuary grows ever darker with the Tenebrae (Growing Shadows) service. The choir will sing Tom Fettke's very powerful *Via Dolorosa-the Way of Suffering*; and, in total darkness, *Christ, We Do All Adore Thee*, by Dubois.



He Is Risen! Alleluia! **Easter, April 17**, will be a day of triumphant sounds. Molto Brass will return in full quintet force, playing a 15-minute prelude starting at 9:45 a.m. They will join us on the hymns and the *Hallelujah Chorus*, with choir, congregation, and organ. The brass and organ will play Handel's *The Trumpet Shall Sound* during the Flowering of the Cross, and the offertory will be *Praise to the Lord*, arranged by Hopson. And for the first time since 2019, the organ will be heard on Widor's Toccata in F from the Fifth Organ Symphony.

Carl Bingle, FPC Organist

The trumpeters and musicians joined in unison to give praise and thanks to the Lord. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, the singers raised their voices in praise to the Lord and said: "He is good; his love endures forever."

~ 2 Chronicles 5:134

MMM Plans to Send Small USA Shallow Well Volunteer Group to Malawi in 2022

Since its inception, Marion Medical Mission has built its well program around the close, hand-in-hand working relationship between our American volunteers and our incredible African Partners. The ultimate goal has always been to create a sustainable, affordable well-building program run by Africans for the benefit of the poorest of the poor in Africa. The coronavirus pandemic prevented MMM from sending teams of American volunteers in both 2020 and 2021. In spite of this unwelcome change to our standard approach, our African Partners were able to meet and exceed our goals both years ... 3,172 wells were built in 2020 and 3,413 wells were built in 2021!

While these accomplishments highlight the competency, drive, and dedication of our Partners, the American volunteers were sorely missed and the program's organizers - in both the US and in Africa - want American volunteers back on the ground in Africa! The covid pandemic is unfortunately still with us and continues to present both health and travel risks. In light of that, the board of directors of Marion Medical Mission has reluctantly decided this year we will not be taking applications for new volunteers. Instead - assuming conditions permit - MMM plans to send a small group of experienced MMM volunteers to work on the ground with our African partners.

We believe the experienced volunteers will be able to give the MMM board of directors a good idea of the strengths and opportunities present in the well-building program after two years of operating without American volunteers ... all toward the end of making our beloved well-building program the best it can possibly be. We appreciate more than we can say the interest that all our friends and supporters have in the continued success of Marion Medical Mission. It saddens us to be facing a third well-building season without the participation of new volunteers ... fresh eyes, hands, and hearts are an integral part of our American volunteer teams.

We want to share the miracle that is Marion Medical Mission with you and look forward to a return to some sense of normalcy in our volunteer teams in 2023! If you have felt the call to come work with us in Africa, we truly hope you keep that fire alive and make plans to apply in 2023!

Uchindami kwa chiuta!! Glory to God!! 2022 GOAL = 3,000 Protected Shallow Wells
Follow us at www.mmmwater.org



Take Out **PULLED PORK DINNER**

To benefit **Malawi Early Literacy Team**

March 30, 2022

4:00-6:00 p.m.

\$10

At First Presbyterian Church of Watertown
403 Washington Street, Watertown, NY

Dinner will include:

pulled pork, roll, parsley new potatoes, coleslaw, corn and a brownie for dessert!

**Proceeds will provide books, teacher training, and the MELT1 Mobile Library
to remote villages in the Northern region of Malawi**

Call Heather White, 315-778-9867 with questions



40 Cans (or boxes) For Lent

The 40 days of Lent are a time of reflection on Scripture, of strengthening our faith, and committing acts of mercy and generosity. Some people observe Lent by 'giving up' something. At FPC Watertown we're going to observe Lent by collecting something: non-perishable goods for the Watertown Urban Mission!

Each member of the church is invited to collect all 40 of the items listed below - one for each day of Lent. You can use a box, a bag, or a crate. Then we ask that you bring your items on Palm Sunday where they will be blessed during worship. As you collect one item per day during the season, remember the many blessings you have received and ask God's blessing on those who will receive the food.

If you are unable to attend worship on Palm Sunday, volunteers will be available to pick up at your home or office. Volunteers will also be available to assist getting your items into the church.

1. Peanut Butter
2. Jelly
3. Tomato Soup
4. Canned Chicken
5. Pasta
6. Spaghetti Sauce
7. Cereal
8. Oatmeal
9. Canned Green Beans
10. Canned Peaches
11. Canned Carrots
12. Applesauce
13. Rice
14. Dried Beans
15. Canned Tuna
16. Rice
17. Flour
18. Sugar
19. Macaroni and Cheese
20. Hearty Soup
21. Chicken Noodle Soup
22. Hamburger Helper
23. Canned Corn
24. Baked Beans
25. Granola Bars/Protein Bars
26. Canned Pears
27. Coffee
28. Toilet Paper/Baby Wipes
29. Mayo
30. Instant Mashed Potatoes
31. Canned Mixed Veggies
32. Crackers
33. Cornbread Mix
34. Canned Fruit Cocktail
35. Feminine Hygiene Product/Diapers
36. Tooth brush
37. Toothpaste
38. Bath Soap
39. Shampoo
40. Antiperspirant/Deodorant

Love was in the air at the St. George Ferry Terminal on Valentine's Day, and it wasn't about the couples celebrating Valentine's Day.

The SSG Michael H. Ollis, the first of three new Staten Island Ferry boats, set sail for the first time, carrying hundreds of passengers from St. George to Lower Manhattan in style.

The state-of-the-art, \$85 million vessel is named in honor of hometown hero Staff Sgt. Michael H. Ollis, a New Dorp native who died at age 24 while saving a Polish soldier from a suicide bomber in Afghanistan in August 2013.



SSG Michael H. Ollis was in a platoon from Fort Drum that was adopted by First Presbyterian Church and Michael kept in contact with the church during his deployment.



During worship on March 13 we will take time to mark the 2-year anniversary of the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and light candles in memory of all that have been lost to the disease. We will also ring the church bell approximately 129 times, one toll for each person lost to COVID-19 in Jefferson County.

The Wired WORD

A NEW BIBLE STUDY BEGINS MARCH 8.

Starting Tuesday, March 8, join Pastor Andrew for a new Bible study called "The Wired Word." "The Wired Word" is a casual but meaningful way to study the Bible through the lens of current events. Each week Pastor Andrew will email you a study guide on Thursday that highlights current events in the news, questions to consider, and scripture references for study. We'll then gather by Zoom on Tuesday for a weekly discussion. In order to participate in this exciting study, you must have a working email address and access to Zoom. Please contact Pastor Andrew if you need any assistance. Study Starts March 8. **Please RSVP to Pastor Andrew by March 3 at: andrew.long1085@gmail.com**

MARCH



March 1 Jean Sturtz
 March 5 Logan Deem
 March 6 JoAnn Tousant
 March 6 Carol Murray
 March 7 Shirley Parker
 March 8 Cassandra Elmer
 March 9 Jean Bach
 March 11 Martha Adams
 March 13 Eugene Hayes
 March 14 Alice LeRoy
 March 17 Ken Thompson
 March 18 Jason Rudd
 March 18 Aiden Thomas
 March 19 Becky Brown
 March 22 Todd Thiebeau
 March 23 Robert B. Brown
 March 23 Linda Briggs
 March 24 Carl Bingle
 March 26 Sarah Deem
 March 29 Matthew Willaman
 March 29 Henry Kandler
 March 31 Michele Bariteau

APRIL



April 1 John Stirling
 April 3 Bob Gorman
 April 3 Bettina Rutigliano
 April 4 Deanna Nelson
 April 5 Peter Thomas
 April 5 Ben Azah
 April 6 Maureen Gorman
 April 8 Donna Dayger
 April 8 Brie Thomas
 April 9 Day Hills
 April 10 Charles Kimball
 April 10 Malory Saki
 April 11 Scott Green
 April 13 Michael Green
 April 14 Bunny Gorman
 April 18 Kiera MacDonald
 April 21 Emily Sprague
 April 21 David Hodge
 April 22 Barbara Case
 April 23 Lynn Pyke
 April 24 Betty Ann Vollrath
 April 24 John Tinsley
 April 25 Roger W. White, Jr.
 April 25 Meredith Bonisteel
 April 27 Peter Salmon
 April 27 Melissa Elmer
 April 27 Ella Walton
 April 28 Mariana Hiotis
 April 29 Frost Haviland
 April 29 Elsa Gleason
 April 29 Ezra Gleason
 April 30 Bob Sturtz

MAY



May 1 Matt Gorman
 May 4 Sarah Sinclair
 May 7 Katrina Cox
 May 7 Ruth Chiumia
 May 8 William Kandler
 May 9 Judy Morley
 May 9 William Gleason
 May 10 Christina MacDonald
 May 10 Garren Gorman
 May 11 Gini McCreary
 May 11 Sue Kitto
 May 11 Urban Hirschev
 May 11 Gerda Barbour
 May 12 Evelyn Atashili
 May 14 Carole Brown
 May 15 David Elmer
 May 16 Mary Sanford
 May 17 Martha Brown
 May 19 Katja Stevens
 May 20 Connor Way
 May 20 Sarah Gerot
 May 24 Derick Vernyuy
 May 25 Toni Silliman
 May 25 John Pike
 May 25 William Pike
 May 28 Stephanie Green
 May 30 Carolyn Osborne
 May 30 Laura Enow
 May 31 Thomas U. Walker, Jr.



Sunday, June 5

Holy Smokes

PENTECOST
BBQ

First Presbyterian Watertown

The Holy Spirit came down on the disciples like tongues of fire, so to celebrate Pentecost we're going to send up some smoke! Following worship on June 5, weather permitting, join your church family for the HOLY SMOKES PENTECOST BBQ on FPC's labyrinth and front yard! We ask you to bring a side dish to share if you are able!

*It will be great fun for the whole family!
 Invite a friend!*

A Mother's Day Prayer

by The Rev. Dr. Diane Moffet, President/ED of the Presbyterian Mission Agency

*God of all mothers,
Stand with us as we celebrate
Those who have mothered,
Those who are mothering
and those who will mother.*

*Abide with us as we honor
Those who found ways to give life
And nurture children
even in the midst of the
Middle Passage.*

*Slavery.
Jim Crow laws.
Racism.
And hatred that threatened
To take away life before it was given.*

*Stand by us as we acknowledge mothers who stand at the border
Seeking life for their children and families
Only to have those children snatched from their hands
By cruel, callous laws that are indifferent to human suffering.*

*Walk with us as we lift up mothers
Who are frail and in the final season of living.
Mothers who have given more than they ever received.
Mothers who have cared for, caressed and counseled us.
Who have etched their mark upon our flesh.
Mothers whom we grieve because they have died
And their memory leaves us wanting ...*

*Comfort us as we remember mothers
Who are homeless and hopeless,
Who are locked up and locked out of their
Children's lives because of
Incarceration.
Or mental disorders
Or self-imposed imprisonment
That inhibits one's ability to mother.*

*Like our earthly mothers,
You have given us life
And brought us forth
To be a source of life and light in this world.
You have blessed us with your merciful love
Even when our behavior breaks your heart.*

*Forgive our rebellious, wayward ways.
Heal our lives and the planet in which we live.
As we enter the celebration of Mother's Day
Make us grateful for your unwavering
Mercy.*

*Love.
Provision.
Patience and
Guidance.
And help us to share the same with others.
Amen.*



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If you miss a week of worship it is just a click away.
The service can be found in podcast form;
just visit our website at www.watertownfirstpres.org.

It's Still About Jesus

by Ann Weems

No matter how we dilute the word of God,
It's about Jesus.
No matter how we pretty up the story,
It's about Jesus.
No matter how many times we go to our national assemblies and vote,
It's still about Jesus.
No matter how many times we distract ourselves with meetings
And church work and the good ole Stewardship Campaign,
It's still about Jesus.
Jesus, the Lamb of God,
Jesus, the Light of the world,
Jesus, the Bread of Life,
Jesus, the Prince of Peace,
Jesus, the One chosen to bring good news to the poor,
Jesus, the one sent to proclaim liberty to the captives and to set free the oppressed.

Jesus is my shepherd
I shall not
I shall not want.

