



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ORONOCO

A SMALL CHURCH WITH A BIG MISSION

November 2021

All Saints' Day Commemoration

This year, we will once again be taking some time to commemorate those who have gone before us – those who have been beacons of hope and grace and love in our lives but whose light now fills the halls of heaven. Throughout the month of October, we will have the colorful prayer flags and some markers available in the back of the sanctuary. Putting one name on each flag, please feel free to honor as many people as are near and dear to your heart so that during our All Saints' Day commemoration on **Sunday, November 7**, we may be surrounded by the vibrant color and light of those whom we love and miss.



*If you cannot come into the building or don't feel comfortable returning yet, feel free to email any names to Pastor Lisa, and she will make the name banners for you to make sure they're included. Names need to be received by **Thursday, November 4** to be included*



Pastor: Rev. Lisa Johnson

Church Staff
Secretary: Brianna Clement

Organist: Katha Johnson

Mike Rand, Clerk of Session
Ellen Warner, Ruling Elder
Lance Sorensen, Ruling Elder
Ron Peterson-Rucker, Ruling Elder
Janice Ostrom, Ruling Elder
Todd Wickre, Ruling Elder
Brenda Longman, Ruling Elder

Church Leadership

Kim Stanton, Treasurer
Gail Rucker, Deacon
Ellen Simon, Deacon
Joanne Schenck, Deacon
Cindy Luhman, Deacon
Karen Peterson-Rucker, Deacon



From the Pastor ...

November.
Thanksgiving.

They sort of go together, don't they?
Like turkey and gravy.
Like stuffing and ... well ... everything (because really, we all know that stuffing is the whole point and goes with *everything, right?*)

Lots of things focus on thankfulness this time of year – décor, cookies and other goodies, magazine articles and blog posts galore, even all sorts of apparel. There are a few hashtags that float around social media throughout November – “thankfulness a day” challenges that encourage people to name one thing they're thankful for every day throughout the month.

And truly, thankfulness is a beautiful thing. Yet sometimes, in the midst of hard and stressful times, it can be admittedly hard to find that wide open, lighthearted thankful headspace. That doesn't mean those moments and people and experiences and blessings that we're thankful for aren't there. I just means we might have trouble recognizing them through the fog of our own exhaustion, fear, anxiety, or grief.

But what about gratitude? Is there a difference between thankfulness and gratitude?

I think there is. There is a depth and a breadth to gratitude. There are layers of meaning and experience wrapped up in gratitude – layers that can be both pleasant and painful, wonderful and wearying. You can express gratitude from a place of difficulty and distress. In a blog post for Psychiatric Medical Care, Susan Rhoades writes, “We may feel thankful for [people, things, or experiences in our lives]. However, gratitude goes much deeper than this. It is a state of being, where you feel a sense of appreciation that comes from deep within.”

And in this particular time and place that we're all inhabiting right now, so, so many of us are struggling with things – COVID, mental health, grief and loss, illness, conflict, and so much more. The nonchalance of thankfulness may feel out of reach right now, and that's okay. You're in good company. Hear the words of the psalmist:

*I cry out to you, Lord.
You are my rock; don't refuse to hear me.
I'll be just like those
going down to the pit.
Listen to my request for mercy
when I cry out to you,
when I lift up my hands
to your holy inner sanctuary. ...
Bless the Lord
because he has listened
to my request for mercy!*

*The Lord is my strength and my shield.
My heart trusts him.
I was helped, my heart rejoiced,
and I thank him with my song.
~ Psalm 28:1-2, 6-7.*

It cannot be denied that there's a power in gratitude. On its page dedicated to gratitude, 7 Summit Pathways lists out some of the benefits of gratitude in our lives. 7 Summit Pathways is an addiction treatment center in Florida – certainly a place and an experience that understands excavating the power of gratitude even from the dark and difficult places, from rock bottom. Gratitude helps create healthy habits. It increases resiliency and empathy. It opens the door to more relationships, and it enhances mental strength and self-esteem. Throughout the rest of Psalm 28, the psalmist makes it clear that things are hard – that s/he has been through some tough times. Actually, with the present tense used in that very first line, the psalmist is *still going through those tough times. And yet, the psalmist finds a center of gratitude in the midst of that storm ... and that center is God. The God who loves us. The God who keeps us. The God who hunkers down in the midst of the tough stuff with us so that we are never truly alone.*

So in the name of gratitude – finding it, clinging to it, inhabiting it – I want to leave you this month with some questions to encourage you to explore gratitude with some questions from 7 Summit Pathways:

- What aspects of your city or neighborhood are you grateful for?
- What have others done in your life that you're grateful for?
- Who is someone that really listens when you talk, and how does that affect you?
- What's a stressor you're grateful to have put behind you this year?
- How many of your basic needs do you not have to worry about meeting today?
- What's the best thing about your home, and have you taken the time to enjoy it recently?
- Have you had a chance to help someone recently, and how did that make you feel?
- What's something you look forward to in the future?
- What's something enjoyable you get to experience every day that you've come to take for granted?
- What's a hard lesson that you were grateful to learn?
- What about today has been better than yesterday?
- What's an aspect of your physical health that you feel grateful for?
- What happened today/yesterday/this week/this month/this year that you're grateful for?
- What's an aspect of your personality that you're grateful for?
- How have you used your talents recently, and what have you enjoyed about doing that?
- What relationships are you grateful for?
- What's one thoughtful thing someone did for you recently?
- What's an aspect of how you were parented for which you feel grateful?
- What's one thing you've enjoyed about doing your job recently?
- What made you laugh or smile today?

Pastor Gina

Keeping Up with the Smith-Mathers



For the last few years, we've been helping to support Shelvis and Nancy and their family with our 2nd Sunday Spare Change offering and our prayers. Of course, we can always pray from anywhere, but if you can't be here in person to contribute to our Spare Change offering, you can still help support Shelvis and Nancy. Visit their Presbyterian Mission Agency page:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/shelvis-and-nancy-smith-mather/>. From there, you can click on the green box under their (completely adorable) family picture that says, "Give to the ministry of Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather." This will redirect you to a page that describes RECONCILE, the organization that Shelvis and Nancy continue to work with in South Sudan and Uganda. If you click the yellow "Give" box on that page, you'll be redirected to the PMA donation page.

You can also click on the blue box that says "Subscribe to our letters" to start receiving Shelvis and Nancy's occasional updates in your inbox. They send a wonderful, entertaining, touchingly personal update roughly quarterly.



Scripture readings for September

Sunday, November 7 – 1 Kings 19: 1-18

Sunday, November 14– Amos 1: 1-2; 5: 14-15, 21-24

Sunday, November 21– Isaiah 9: 1-7

Sunday, November 28– Jeremiah 19:1 4-14

1st Sunday of Advent

Next Session meeting:

**Wednesday, November 1
6:30 p.m.**

Next Presbytery meeting:

**November 11 & 12
Stated meeting
(via Zoom)**

Current Worship Requirements

It is such a joy to be back together for worship!! I love not being the only one in the building on Sunday mornings!

Just a reminder about the main requirements for coming back to worship in the building:

- Until further notice, masks are **required** regardless of vaccination status
- Sanitize your hands upon coming into the building
- Maintain social distancing in the building, both the sanctuary and the fellowship area

Because of these precautions, the Session has decided that we can return to singing in worship, so feel free to belt it out on Sunday mornings!

And, of course, if you're not comfortable coming back to worship in person yet, we will continue to livestream our worship services on Sunday mornings directly on our website. *I know that we've had a number of glitches with this streaming, and for that, I apologize. I am continuing to learn as we go with this technology. I think I have them all worked out now. As far as I can tell, even when the streaming is not working perfectly on the website, it seems to still work on our Facebook page.*



Oronoco Food Shelf Monthly Item

We've got a new monthly piece that will be showing up in the newsletter! The OFS volunteer responsible for ordering has given us a list of monthly needs – a specific item that the Food Shelf could use that month. This monthly item will also be posted on our church Facebook page, so feel free to find it every month and share the image!



November Star Word Prompt

How has your star word inspired thankfulness in you this year?



Amazon Smile



We've been signed up with Amazon Smile for a few months now and are already seeing funds trickling into the church from other's designated purchases, so a huge **THANK YOU** to those who have already designated our church as your organization of choice!

Still unsure of how Amazon Smile works? For your designated organization, Amazon donates .5% of eligible Amazon purchases to that organization. There are two ways that you can designate our church:

- 1) Type this link into your web browser and click the "Start shopping" button. <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/41-1434567>. Another page will pop up with a checkbox that says, "Yes, I understand that I must always start at smile.amazon.com to support Presbyterian Church of ORONOCO." Click the checkbox, then click the "Start shopping" button. Anytime that you shop with Amazon after that, you need to do so by going to <http://smile.amazon.com>, not the regular Amazon homepage.
- 2) Go to the Amazon homepage and type "Amazon Smile" into the search bar. If you've already got a charity that you've been donating a portion of your Amazon purchases to and would like to switch to the church, simply click on the "Change my organization" link. If not, search for "Presbyterian Church of Oronoco" and select us as your designated organization.



Prayer Requests

"Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." ~ Philippians 4:6-7

And so we lift up **Sandy Bowers, Curt Burt, Helen Craft, Janice Ostrom, Carol Tiede, and Linda Sorensen** in prayer.



Daylight Savings Reminder

Just a reminder that daylight savings time ends on **Sunday, November 7**. Remember to turn your clocks **BACK ONE HOUR** on Saturday night ... unless, of course, you want to hang out at church for an extra hour!

Advent 2021: Salvation Comes...

As we journey through the season of Advent together this year, we'll do so with different Scriptures that give voice and vision to the coming Savior. We'll begin with the words of three different prophets who foretold the coming of God's salvation – the prophet Jeremiah, the prophet Ezekiel, and the prophet Isaiah. And just before we celebrate the birth of the Christ-child on Christmas Eve, we'll move to the prophetic words that begin the gospel of John. We'll spend the season contemplating the ways in which salvation comes:

- November 28 – Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14: Salvation Comes in the Waiting
- December 5 – Ezekiel 37:1-14: Salvation Comes in Breath
- December 12 – Isaiah 55:1-13: Salvation Comes in Abundance
- December 19 – John 1:1-18: Salvation Comes in the Word



Online Giving

We have recently set up a special account with the Presbyterian Foundation that affords us the capacity for online giving. *NOTE: This is different than the automatic electronic giving that many of you have already signed up for. This online giving does not affect that monthly or bi-monthly system in any way.*

This online giving is both safe and secure. It can be a one-time donation or can be set up on a schedule. It's a great opportunity for anyone who can't join us and contribute an offering on a regular basis. It's also a great opportunity for guests, whether they're here for a Sunday morning service or a special service like a wedding or funeral.

You can find the "Give Now" button on our website.



Christmas Cookie Sale

Date: **Saturday, December 4**

Time: **9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

Cost: **\$7 per pound**



We've had so many people asking about our Christmas cookie sale again – asking Pastor Lisa, asking through Facebook, calling the church, and asking various congregation members. After much

discussion with both the Session and the congregation after worship, we've decided that we can hold our Christmas cookie sale again this year but with a few alterations to procedure.

1. All boxes will be prepackaged by church volunteers wearing masks and gloves. There will be 2 different weights: 1 lb. and 2 lbs.
2. All boxes will include the same kinds of cookies. To ensure that, we're going to ask everyone who wants to contribute cookies to bake 20 dozen of *one kind of cookie instead of all sorts of different kinds. We'll also have a sign-up to be sure we don't end up with multiple people contributing sugar cookies or gingerbread cookies (so if you want to contribute one of those, sign up early!)*
3. Everyone coming to pick up a box of cookies will sign up beforehand using a Google form (*in progress*). *On the form, people will let us know what size box they'd like (and whether they'd like more than one box), whether they want a nut-free box, what time they'll be picking up their box in 15-min. slots, and who will be picking it up. We'll be able to limit the responses to 10 people per 15-min. slot so we don't have crazy traffic back-ups on Minnesota Ave. .*

We'll label the boxes:

- a. By the name of who's picking it up
- b. By weight
- c. With a list of the cookies in the box
- d. If it's a nut-free box

As always, we make sure everyone knows that our cookies are all baked in private homes, so we cannot guarantee no cross-contamination for nut allergies.

Also, we are considering a “drop in” time to come pick up cookie boxes at the end – perhaps the last 30 mins. – for anyone that didn't or couldn't sign up using the Google form. For that drop-in time, it would be first come, first serve. When the cookie boxes are gone, they're gone.

On December 3, we will also need at least **6 people** to pack and label the boxes. And on December 4, we'll need at least **6 people** to help distribute the boxes and make change. There are 2 sign-up sheets on the bulletin board at church – one for the cookies (please write what kind of cookie you're planning on making/bringing so we don't double up) and one for those coming to work either on Friday or Saturday (or both!)

We've got full-sized fliers as well as ¼-sheet mini-fliers that need to be distributed around the area. We've also got a Facebook event (search for “Oronoco Christmas Cookie Sale”) that you can share on your own Facebook pages. Help us get the word out!

Directory Update

It's time to update our directory again, friends! As we work on additions/corrections, there's a large-print copy of the directory on a table in the fellowship room. If you're coming into the building, please take a look at it. Make any additions or corrections that need to be made. If your entry is still fine as is, please make a note on the page so we know you've looked at it – a checkmark or “ok” or something like that. If you're not coming back into the building yet, Brianna will email out a PDF copy. You can reply with any additions or corrections that need to be made. You can also email Brianna a new picture if you'd like a different one. *Please don't send these corrections to Pastor Lisa.*



Advent Readers

Believe it or not, Advent is just around the corner! The first Sunday of Advent is Sunday, December 1. If you're interested in being one of our Advent readers/candle lighters, please add your name to the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Readings are already ready and will be in a labeled envelope hanging below the sign-up sheet, so you can take them with you for practice that day. In advance, thank you!

Advent readers needed:

- Sunday November 28
- Sunday, December 5
- Sunday, December 12
- Sunday, December 19
- Friday, December 24



At-Home Advent Wreaths

I know that a lot of people enjoyed their at-home Advent wreaths that we made and used during virtual worship last year. I hope you can find some time to reassemble your wreaths this year so you can continue using them in your home, even if you're coming to worship in person as well.

I'll be putting together some at-home Advent prayer and devotional material that will go along with our worship readings – something that you can use either yourself or with your family/household throughout the week. For those who usually get your newsletter via email, I will email you a PDF. For those who usually get your newsletter as a hard copy, I will mail you a copy.



Nominating Committee



We're coming up on that time of year when the nominating committee will be contacting people to fill some of our open positions in church leadership for next year. We will be looking for:

- 2 ruling elders/Session members
- 1 deacon
- Members for a few committees for next year: budget, audit, and nominating committees

Please prayerfully consider how God may be calling you to help serve and lead this congregation that we love so much. If you are feeling called to any of those positions, please talk to Pastor Lisa, Ron Peterson-Rucker (chair of the nominating committee), or any other Session member.



Winter Weather Procedure

As the winter months are once again upon us, just a reminder that occasionally, we do have to close church due to weather and road conditions. The following are our procedures when this happens:

- Pastor Lisa and the session member assigned to open and close the church for the month will make the decision
- Pastor Lisa will send out an all-church email alerting people of the closing. It will also be posted to our Facebook page (Presbyterian Church of Oronoco) and our website.
- Session members will call people to let them know of the closing using set calling lists that we have established
- Pastor Lisa will contact KAAL, KTTC, KIMT, and Fox 47 to put the cancellation on to local "Closings and Delays" lists as well

Please be sure we have your accurate contact information in case of a weather-related closing. We want to be sure everyone remains safe during this frigid season.

November Birthdays & Anniversaries

- ♥ 11/7/ Anthony Vallejo
- ♥ 11/10 Helen Craft
- ♥ 11/11 Lance & Linda Sorensen
- ♥ 11/18 Kamyn Peterson-Rucker
- ♥ 11/20 Karen Lohmann
- ♥ 11/21 Harlow Wickre
- ♥ 11/24 Margie Lowrie
- ♥ 11/24 Carol Tiede
- ♥ 11/25 Cindy & Brian Luhman



Staying in Touch

Presbyterian Church of Oronoco

Office: 507-367-4711

Email: oronocopc@bevcomm.net

Website: <http://www.oronocochurch.org>

Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area

Office: 651-357-1150

Fax: 651-357-1141

Email: office@ptcaweb.org

Website: <http://www.presbyterytwincities.org>

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Office: 800-728-7228

Email: info@pcusa.org

Website: <http://www.pcusa.org>



Lectionary Readings - Nov., Yr. 4

VWDMBZXAMOZHMCFPJZUQCKBSM
 CADTGJWRNWWAYQECJEYQNBMPU
 FTDJLJEKFRRJZIGUHLQUBQYFS
 WEOPCHZHJSEBHZAAQQPEOPLEW
 MRUNRVNOZYZNFXSUBOUVFQZUQ
 NSEIBOSJMQIWCAHQWZXMSKUKI
 FQGBLDPDMQCZSUYRNRHNOQHPR
 JP SDBGJHKSUPTWTOXVHAOYZSD
 ZFLSBAEYEQKSHPKLGKFXDTCGQ
 DDPIYTBYSTBRJARLUOZRJB L TD
 VFLLIIJYZCOYEFWDVRAJLLCRX
 NGAELCPHLQOYRDKOANQJWZLIZ
 TQYNKQWUBOUKEJGWZUFMKOSQH
 HXACINXEWONDMUVNBDAJMDZYR
 OCC EMSYHDXUISSWINDUOJORW
 PNLTVYAUZEYAATI EGI FBFMVCK
 EPXICVEIKLVTHIVFZNDLNTVZI
 QODHGMN LARNDICADQTT CWSCE F
 CHKWNHVJWHBKNEIAAWJT TNE LD
 MAUAIBTMSBRUTUQXBRNXAZXIF
 BKZLFHFIREOAMOSXHV KZYGIJF
 VDGKFPRNNQIGJQPZLHINSWLAN
 PWRQUHNEARTHQUAKEKDLEKEHE
 LTUEQWXBOQSVMQWELFARESSFN
 MBZQKNCBIHPBRNYYFFPAFRSFH

earthquake

roll down

Jeremiah

darkness

welfare

silence

Babylon

prophet

justice

Elijah

people

exiles

Isaiah

waters

light

fire

Amos

walk

wind

hope