



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ORONOCO

A SMALL CHURCH WITH A BIG MISSION

August 2021

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:

- **If you are fully COVID-19 vaccinated**, masks during worship are now optional
- Sanitize your hands upon coming into the building
- Maintain social distancing in the building, both the sanctuary and the fellowship area



We will not be having refreshments during fellowship time after worship, and while Katha will be blessing us with her beautiful musical gifts, we will not be singing along with her for a while. Communion will look different. Offering will look different. Prayer requests and community prayer time will look different (*see further details in "Virtual Worship Going Forward"*). *But these elements will still be a part of our worship.*

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.

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 ...

Are you familiar with the idea of fan fiction?

fan fic-tion (fæn 'fɪkʃən) *noun* 1. fiction written by a fan of, and featuring characters from, a particular TV series, movie, etc.; If you write *fan fiction* (or *fanfic* for short) you should be aware of both your legal rights and the rights of the author you are deriving your work from.

Fan fiction is popular among superfans of a wide variety of genres, though it's particularly prevalent in the areas of science fiction, fantasy, anime/manga, and soap operas. There are message boards, Facebook groups, Reddit threads, and all sorts of other places online where superfans can post their own fan fiction and read others' fan fiction as well.

There are few things out there more creative than fan fiction. In essence, people take characters and basic plot lines from their favorite stories and let their imaginations run wild. Some feel like an extension of the original story. Some feel like a crazy-wild off-shoot. In all honesty, some just make you scratch your head and say, "What?"

But the beauty of fan fiction – from the exciting to the eccentric – is that it's written by people who love the original story so much that they feel the need to continue it. They've been so marked by the original story that they feel they need to leave their own mark on the grand arc of that story.

Great ...

So what does this have to do with faith?

Okay, stick with me here. A few weeks ago, I was having a conversation with some colleagues on Facebook about the labels that we use for the first part of the Christian Bible and the second part of the Christian Bible. I know that we all grew up calling the first part the "Old Testament" and the second part the "New Testament." And while those monikers are certainly still used in the majority of churches across Christianity, I'm starting to wonder if we should start thinking about them differently.

Let me put it this way:

If I were to park two cars in the parking lot and say to you, "The car on the left is my old car. The car on the right is my new car," what would you think about the car on the left? Would you think that it's less useful? Less important? A little worn out and out of date? Clearly if I bought a new car, there was something about the old car that was lacking. Recently, Rev. Dr. Matthew Schlimm, one of my seminary professors, wrote an article for *Christian Century* that touched on this point in regards to the way we talk about the two parts of the Christian Scriptures. He wrote,

"It would be great if Christians could stop using the term 'Old Testament.' It's not the term Jesus used; he spoke instead about the scriptures or about the law, the prophets, and the Psalms. 'Old Testament' is too often interpreted as meaning that the first 39 books of our Bibles are outdated and of little use. I hate that. I only use the term because Christians aren't always familiar

with alternatives like 'First Testament' or 'Hebrew Bible.'"

To be honest, I hadn't thought about this idea much before, but it intrigued me which is why I initiated that Facebook conversation with my colleagues. I asked what terminology people were using for the "New Testament" if they were using something other than "Old Testament." For what it's worth, even those who used "Hebrew Bible" or "First Testament" continued to use "New Testament." However, one of my favorite responses was from someone who said that, in an episode of the Netflix show "Orange is the New Black," they once referred to the New Testament as "fan fiction."

And that stuck with me.

It stuck with me partly because it's funny, and I think too often we forget that our faith can be light and funny and playful. But it also stuck with me because I really loved the idea of that: that the words and actions and faith of the New Testament are an extension of the words and actions and faith of the First Testament – that those who were most familiar and devoted to the First Testament were so changed by it that they wanted to continue the story. After all, those who write fan fiction don't do so to replace the stories that they love but to help them live on.

And Jesus *did* say during his Sermon on the Mount (among other places):

"Don't even begin to think that I have come to do away with the Law and the Prophets. I haven't come to do away with them but to fulfill them. I say to you very seriously that as long as heaven and earth exist, neither the smallest letter nor even the smallest stroke of a pen will be erased from the Law until everything there becomes a reality." ~ Matthew 5:17-18

Jesus came to be an embodied extension of the promises found in the First Testament. He didn't come to replace the words and actions and faith of the First Testament but to love those words and actions and faith enough to help them live on.

This is a change I'm trying to make in the way I express my own faith, so when you hear me referring to the Hebrew Bible or the First Testament in a sermon in the future, you'll know why. And if this is a conversation you'd like to have further, I'd love to chat.

Pastor Gira

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 August



Sunday, August 1 – Guest Preacher, Rev. Carol Shaffer

Sunday, August 8– Mark 7:24-30

Women of the Bible #-8– The Syrophoenician woman

Sunday, August 15– Guest Preacher, Rev. Tammy Rider

Sunday, August 22– Luke 8:1-3; John 20:11-18

Women of the Bible #-9– Mary Magdalene

Sunday, August 29– Acts 16:11-15

Women of the Bible #-10– Lydia

Next Session meeting:

Wednesday, August 4
6:30 p.m.
(In-Person)

Next Presbytery meeting:

September 10 & 11, 2021
(via Zoom)

Summer Sermon Series

This summer, we're going to embark on a fun and fierce journey with the women of Scripture. I have a feeling there are more women in Scripture than most of us are even aware of, and while I may be a little biased in this opinion (since I'm the one that put this series together), I think the more obscure the women, the more interesting their stories. So as we spend our Sundays this summer jumping from one fabulously feminine Bible story to the next, we'll be journeying with some women I'm guessing (hoping!) you've never heard of before. Some will be stories you know. Some will be stories you *think* you know. *Some will be stories that are new. All have something to teach you about God and faith, mission and covenant, grit and grace.*

- May 30: Hagar
- June 6: *special service*
- June 13: Tamar
- June 20: Shiphrah and Puah
- June 27: Rahab
- July 4: Bathsheba

- July 11: Huldah
- July 18: Vashti
- August 8: the Syrophoenician woman
- August 22: Mary Magdalene
- August 29: Lydia
- September 6: Phoebe and the women of Rome



Hagar - Tamar - Shiphrah & Puah - Rahab - Bathsheba - Huldah - Vashti -
Syrophoenician woman - Mary Magdalene - Lydia - Phoebe

Women of the Bible series

Presbyterian Church of Oronoco

COVID– Safe Communion Practice

At least throughout the summer, our monthly communion procedure will be a little different. Instead of the deacons passing the plates with the bread and juice/wine from person to person, we'll have a table set up on your way into the sanctuary. On communion Sundays, you'll be invited to pick up a pre-packaged and sealed juice cup and a small package of crackers. When it comes time for communion, you'll be asked to open the crackers (as the bread) and the juice and partake where you are. There will be a couple garbage cans around the sanctuary that will give you a place to discard the packaging on your way out after worship.



Toward the end of the summer, the deacons will reevaluate where things are at with CDC recommendations, state requirements, etc. to determine what we'll do in the fall.

National Night Out

Oronoco is once again hosting a National Night Out party on Tuesday, August 3. This year, the NNO party will be held at the Oronoco Fire Hall, *not at the Oronoco City Park as in previous years. National Night Out was started as a way to heighten awareness about safety and crime prevention and to enhance community relations. Once again, we will have a table at National Night Out. We will be giving out small bags with candy and a church flier for anyone interested.*



Pastor Out of Office

Pastor Lisa will be out of the office July 25-August 1. This includes two Sundays – July 25 and August 1. I will also be out of the office on vacation August 9-15 which will include Sunday, August 15. I will have my cell phone but will be out of state for the first portion. During the second portion, I'll be in an area where cell phone reception is spotty, so I won't be checking email or the church Facebook page/messages during either time. I'll catch up when I get back.



Mowing Sign-Up

The sign-up sheet for sharing in the lawn mowing duties is up on the bulletin board. If you can help, please sign up for the week you intend to mow. The church mower is in the shed. Talk to Ron Peterson-Rucker or Pastor Lisa if you need the shed key.



Amazon Smile



Good news! A while back, the Session discussed setting up an Amazon Smile account for the church. The first time I tried it, it was before Kim went through the incredible amount of work he did to re-establish our 501(c)3 status. I was recently reminded of this endeavor (thanks, Mom!), so I thought I'd try again. And it worked!

So how does Amazon Smile work? For your designated organization, Amazon donates 0.5% of eligible Amazon purchases to that organization. And now, you can officially designate the church as your organization! There are two ways that you can do this:

- 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.



All Around the Campfire

It's that time again! For the past few years, we've gathered on the church lawn for an evening campfire on the 4th Sunday of June, July, August, and September (weather permitting). Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we weren't able to gather last year. This year, the session has decided that we **will** gather around the campfire again ... but with a few changes. If you would like to bring food and beverages for you/your household, you are welcome to do that. We will **not** be providing any food this year. Also, please do your best to space yourselves out appropriately around the firepit. Here are the dates for 2021:

- August 22: 5:30-8:00 p.m.
** Note that this date is different than previous published. I had the wrong Aug. Sunday. Our campfire is on the 4th **Sunday**, which, this August, is not the last Sunday.**
- Sept. 26: 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Pine Island Baby Closet

The Pine Island United Methodist Church has started a baby closet – a place for anyone needing help with the necessities for children ages 0-15 months. They are prepared to provide a wide range of baby items: diapers, formula, baby clothes (sizes: preemie to 24 months), outdoor clothing, blankets, bottles, pacifiers, sippy cups, baby thermometers, baby wipes, and baby-safe laundry soap.

If you or anyone you know is in need of any of these items *and lives within a 15 mile radius of Pine Island*, you can call 507-356-4553. Those seeking help will need to fill out an assistance request form. Items can be picked up in the front entry of the Pine Island UMC: 200 N. Main St. (just across the street from Kwik Trip). Clients are invited to visit the Baby Closet once a month.

Currently, the Pine Island Baby Closet is only taking consumable donations: diapers, formula, wipes, and baby-safe laundry soap along with monetary donations. If you or anyone you know would like to donate any of these items, you can contact the Pine Island UMC at the phone number listed above or via email: piumc@bevcomm.net. You can also find the Baby Closet and some needs/wish lists on Facebook: "Pine Island, MN



Pine Island Baby Closet

August Star Word Prompt

Who have you shared your star word with? What have you shared? Have they given you any outside insight into how you interact with your star word?



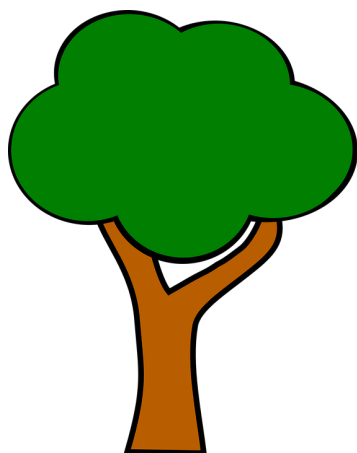
Online Giving

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.





Stewardship Giving Tree

I know we haven't talked about it in a while, but ...

Our Giving Tree envelopes are still available, even from afar. You don't even need an envelope! If you'd like to contribute to one of the designations on the Giving Tree, you can send your check to the church with a note either in the "Memo" line or on a Post-It note or something indicating for Kim or Ellen what it's for. As a reminder, here are envelopes and amounts. (Some are half the monthly amount.):

- Snow removal: \$70/time
- City of Oronoco water: \$22/month
- The Upper Room: \$16/bi-monthly
- Bevcomm (phone/internet): \$45/month (half)
- Neuro Hospitality House: \$45/night
- Minnesota Energy Gas: \$71/month (half)
- Insurance: \$109/month (half)
- People's Energy Co-Op Electricity: \$119/month



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!



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, Eunice Markham, Helen Craft, Janice Ostrom, Joyce Rucker, Carol Tiede, and Linda Sorensen** in prayer.

August Birthdays & Anniversaries



- ♥ 8/2 Sandy Bowers
- ♥ 8/3 Katha Johnson
- ♥ 8/7 Annette Glabe
- ♥ 8/7 Mackenzie Luhman
- ♥ 8/12 Ardith Ottman
- ♥ 8/13 Nancy Tiedeman
- ♥ 8/15 David & Vivien Midthun
- ♥ 8/17 Todd & Melissa Wickre
- ♥ 8/20 Brenda Longman
- ♥ 8/20 Joanne Schenck
- ♥ 8/27 Rachel Stanton
- ♥ 8/28 Joy Bertsinger

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>



Names of God

W T I B B J W B E U N G I H J R A S W J C F A Z H
 L N S U H F E M Z W U A J I C M L F Z P F S L U N
 C Y P L P X U P U R N X L B N B M F E R M L S N X
 E M T V B A D E C Y U R B G B R I L M I V O Y J I
 Q M N M E B F A R R I H E X Y E G N M H S R F H J
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 G F H F N V K L F X E E R O F I G R O K O D H V L
 A T I L G W S C C R M R S F W F I C I D R T O J G
 I S C V I F X I R A I P L U Y E T A A P D L L U A
 W H H F S G R B P D J E C Y S E I O M B W P Y L I
 V Z E E U C H D O O Y S N U K C E N D F R X S Z Z
 Y T F I P I L T X N K O K D L E H T V A O P P X G
 U H W K T H K C G A T N T D Z L A R X P C C I R B
 S T Q G J G E P Y I T R M L L S Z T I R K Z R E I
 Z Y W O E B N R B A U D F R Z H X H V S N V I E Q
 U P A S H U R C D W W N E J N A O Y V C T D T F W
 F T I X O I B Q L O G O S C V D F G C S A P M Z Q
 A X A D V O C A T E X F U M Y D K H O L Y O N E E
 R T N B A J U W Z Z P R E S I A M O T H E R Z G E
 G I Q Z H L X O V R R G O M Z I S I A J U J U J G
 B L E E C G T L Z O C E C Y A H W E H Q A E Q C D

Jesus Christ	Bread of Life	Holy Spirit	El Shaddai
Almighty	Shepherd	Beginning	Jehovah
Emmanuel	Holy One	Friend	Mother
The Word	Adonai	Father	Light
Alpha	Omega	Rock	Savior
Abba	Lord	Advocate	Yahweh
Logos	Son	End	I Am