



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ORONOCO

A SMALL CHURCH WITH A BIG MISSION

June 2021

Re-Gathering for Worship

As I'm sure you know by now, the Session has decided that we will be returning to in-person worship on **Sunday, June 6th!** I know that many of you are excited to be re-gathering for worship., and I am so looking forward to *not* being the only one in the building on Sunday mornings anymore!!

Of course, things won't be quite the same as they used to be. You got the details about the changes in the congregational letter that went out, but the main requirements for coming back to worship in the building are:

- Wear your mask in the building in the CDC- recommended way (covering your nose and mouth)
- Sanitize your hands upon coming into the building
- Maintain social distancing in the building, both in 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. 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.



Pastor: Rev. Lisa Johnson

Church Staff

Secretary: Brianna Clement

Organist: Katha Johnson

Church Leadership

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

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



From the Pastor ...

I encourage you to live as people worthy of the call you received from God. Conduct yourselves with all humility, gentleness, and patience. Accept each other with love, and make an effort to preserve the unity of the Spirit with the peace that ties you together. You are one body and one spirit, just as God also called you to one hope.

~ Ephesians 4:1-4

You know what I'm going to do for just a minute here?

I'm gonna brag on you all.

I'm gonna brag about you all.

Here's the thing: we all know that it's been a hard year. I mean, like, a **really** hard year. For a lot of reasons. For pandemic reasons. For social justice reasons. For political reasons. For personal loss reasons. For stress and frustration reasons.

It.
Has been.
A.
Hard.
Year.

And sometimes, the hard times in life bring out the less-than-desirable parts of ourselves. I can't tell you how many stories I've heard from other pastors about arguments and in-fighting that has arisen in their churches, especially (but not only) during this time of pandemic and social distancing. I can't tell you how many stories I've heard from other pastors about how some of their members have turned a harshly critical eye on them (on the pastors themselves) for choices made during this pandemic, blaming them for things that are often wholly out of the pastor's own control. Sometimes, in the fight to preserve What Has Always Been, we forget about what it means to Be The Church.

But you all ...

You treasured and blessed members, friends, even occasional attenders of the Presbyterian Church of Oronoco ...

You are the Church.

I often tell people that my church is a unicorn church. You are compassionate – to members and friends, to your pastor (*thank you!!*), to anyone who walks through our doors. You are welcoming. I'm pretty sure we could co-opt the Olive Garden's slogan: "When you're here, you're family." (Well ... we could if we didn't have to worry about trademark issues.) You are connectional. Even throughout this time of social distancing and this extended physical absence from one another, you've remained connected to one another – through phone calls, through emails, through cards, and of course, through prayers.

There is no in-fighting here. There is no drama here. There are no power struggles here. There is no

passing the buck when it comes to something that needs to be done. Everyone in this congregation pulls together to provide for, help out, and love on everyone else. Yes, our Session meetings often go long ... but only because we're having such a good time talking with one another and laughing together. We have a tendency to get a little sidetracked ... but I honestly don't remember that last time I had to mediate a contentious topic during a session meeting. (Has there ever been one??)

I know that no church is perfect. Only God is perfect. And there are always going to be things that we can work on.

However, if we take Paul's criterion from Ephesians to heart, I'd say we're doing a pretty good job.

- "Conduct yourselves with all humility, gentleness, and patience" → *Check*.
- "Accept each other with love" → *Check*.
- "Make an effort to preserve the unity of the Spirit" → *Check*.

So today, church, I give thanks for all that you do and all that you are.
Everyday, church, I give thanks for all that you do and all that you are.

You embody the love and grace of God in Jesus Christ to me in ways you don't even see. You embody the love and grace of God in Jesus Christ for one another in ways that would probably surprise you. And you embody the love and grace of God in Jesus Christ for this expanded geographical area that makes up our community because you take the love, the compassion, the welcome, and the hope of the gospel out with you into the world.

So thank you all.
And well done.

Pastor Lisa

Scripture readings for June

Sunday, June 6– Special re-gathering service

Sunday, June 13– Genesis 38

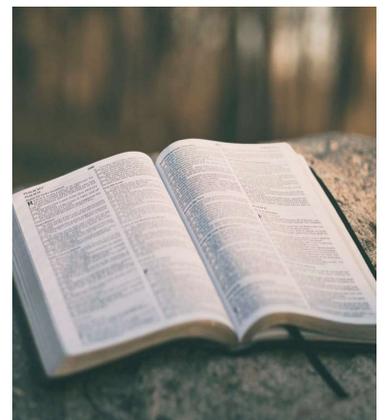
Women of the Bible #2– Tamar

Sunday, June 20– Exodus 1:15-21

Woman of the Bible #3– Shiphrah & Puah

Sunday, June 27– Joshua 2:1-22

Woman of the Bible 34– Rahab



Keeping Up with the Smith-Mathers



We've been helping to support Shelvis and Nancy and their family for a few years now. We've been collecting our 2nd Sunday Spare Change offering and lifting them up in prayer. We need to lift them up even more in prayer right now, friends. The COVID-19 pandemic has rocked their world as well. In their most recent update letter, they shared that Nancy is pregnant again (another girl: Alice) but there is a problem with the baby's heart that will require surgical intervention when she is a year old. In addition to this concern, ahead of the U.S. borders closing this past March, they decided to leave Great Britain and come home to be with family in the U.S. As they have attempted to find some semblance of being settled, they have moved their entire family a number of times this year already: 4 different homes in the last 6 months, according to their letter. Like many overseas missions organizations, the PC(USA) has extended their travel ban for mission personnel to June 30, 2021, so they know they aren't headed back to Africa anytime soon. And because of choices and restrictions put in place by Oxford University, Shelvis is unable to continue his doctoral program at this time and has had to take a temporary leave of absence.

It is a lot, friends. In this time of uncertainty and upheaval, Shelvis and Nancy and their family clearly still need our prayers, and they still need our support. I know that we're not gathering our spare change offering as we continue to meet virtually, but 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.

Next Session meeting.:

Wednesday, June 2

6:30 p.m.

(In-Person– Please bring your mask)

Next Presbytery mtg.:

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 Syrophenician woman
- August 22: Mary Magdalene
- August 29: Lydia
- September 6: Phoebe and the women of Rome



Hagar - Tamar - Shiphrah & Puah - Rahab - Bathsheba - Huldah - Vashti -
Syrophenician 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.

Virtual Worship Going Forward

Once we return to in-person worship on June 6, we are going to continue streaming our worship services for anyone who doesn't feel comfortable coming back into the building. However, it will look different going forward. Instead of streaming on Facebook Live and using Zoom for the whole service, the majority of worship will be streamed live on our website using 2 different cameras set up in the sanctuary. The live stream will be right on the front page of our website.



The challenge with all the planning for this has come with prayer time. I want to maintain the powerful, meaningful time of sharing our lives and prayers together that we've always enjoyed in the past. At the same time, I'm very cognizant of the privacy aspect and trying not to broadcast everyone's personal information out onto the internet. And I don't want to exclude anyone who wants to keep worshiping from home from our prayer time. So in an attempt to roll all that into something manageable and meaningful, we're going to have a short prayer time at the beginning of worship for sharing our prayer requests with one another. This prayer time will **not** be streamed live like the rest of the service but will be Zoom-ed for anyone at home. The Zoom ID and password will be the same every Sunday:

Prayer time Zoom ID: **843 2641 9713**

Prayer time Zoom password: **prayer**

Virtual Worship Going Forward



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:

- June 27: 5:30-8:00 p.m.
- July 25: 5:30-8:00 p.m.
- August 29: 5:30-8:00 p.m.
- September 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.

If you or anyone you know would like to donate any of the items listed above or would like to make a monetary donation, 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 United Methodist Church Baby Closet."



Pine Island Baby Closet

Pine Island Area Home Services

There's no denying that this past year has been difficult for a *lot* of people in a *lot* of different ways, so I just want to remind you all of the different services offered by Pine Island Area Home Services:

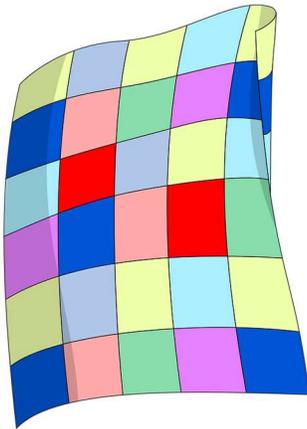
- **Volunteer services:** assistance with grocery shopping and errands; delivery of Meals-on-Wheels; exercise classes; friendly visits and phone calls; shopping trips and social outings; transportation; and yard work, chores, light housekeeping, and handyman services
- **Office services:** service coordination; home visits; information and referrals; reassurance checks; assistance with paperwork; educational classes; collaboration with other services
- **Nursing services:** blood pressure clinics; foot care clinics; hearing clinics; flu shot clinics

If you or anyone you know is in need of any of these free of charge services, please contact PIAHS:

109 3rd St. SW
P.O. Box 566
Pine Island, MN 55963
507-356-2999

www.pineislandareahomeservices.org
piahs@bevcomm.net

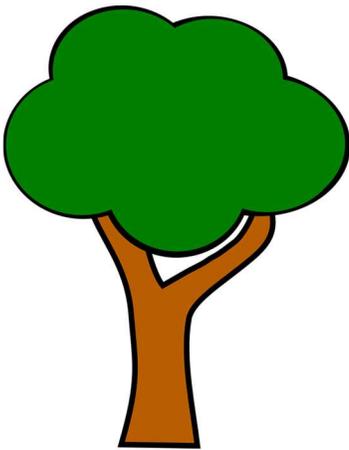
PIAHS is also always looking for people willing to be generous with either their volunteer time or their financial giving. You can contact them further if you're interested in helping out in any way.



Dorothy Day House Needs

The Dorothy Day House has some perpetual needs that we can fill anytime. Those items can be placed in the large Dorothy Day box in the fellowship room and are:

- Warm weather clothes (new or gently used)
- Adult clothing (new or gently used) – sweatshirts, sweatpants, etc.
- Adult socks
- Blankets (new or gently used)
- Tins of coffee



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!

Kaedyn's Graduation Party

Kaedyn Peterson-Rucker is graduating, and Ron and Karen want to invite everyone to his graduation party!

Date: Sun., June 6

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Place: Peterson-Ruckers' house
11930 110th Ave. NW
Pine Island



Pastor Out of Office

Pastor Lisa will be out of the office June 22-25. I will have my cell phone but will be out of state. I will also not be checking email or the church Facebook page/messages during this time. Thank you for your understanding.



Synod School 2021

This year's theme is "Called Out!" From the Synod School catalogue: "Just as God called Lazarus out of the tomb, God calls us out of our slumber, out of our sleep, out of our complacency, out of our grief, out of our past, out of our comfort, out of our quarantines and more." This theme is based on Paul's words from Ephesians: "*Sleeper, awake. Rise from the dead. And Christ will shine on you.*" (Eph 5:14, NRSV) Convocation speaker Rev. Dr. Jill Duffield, the editor of *Presbyterian Outlook*, and worship leaders will be Revs. Greg and Heidi Bolt (morning worship) and Rev. Samuel Son (evening worship). You could take classes in everything from pickleball to bird watching, from mindful stitching to connections with other religions, from leadership in tumultuous times to a class on the TV comedy classic *All in the Family*, from a study on the book of Lamentations to a course on hospitality based on Henri Nouwen's book *Reaching Out*. There are 62 different classes to choose from in all! Some of the classes will be in person, others will be online only, and other will be a hybrid- in person but also streamed for anyone who would prefer to attend virtually.

Registration for classes (either online or in-person) as well as in-person housing is open now!

For more information, visit the Synod School website:

<https://www.lakesandprairies.org/SynodSchool>. If you're curious about Synod School, please talk to Pastor Lisa.

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, Joyce Rucker, Carol Tiede, and Linda Sorensen** in prayer.



June Star Word Prompt

Now that we're halfway through, revisit the initial thoughts, impressions, and prayers you first had with your star word. How have they changed? How have you grown?



150th Anniversary

Friends, last year our beloved Presbyterian Church of Oronoco turned **150 yrs. old!!** (That's pretty amazing!) But because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to celebrate in person. The Session **does** plan on celebrating 150+1 this year in July, though the plans and particulars for this celebration are still in the works. Keep your eyes and ears open for more news, and if you have any ideas for ways to celebrate, please don't hesitate to share them with Pastor Lisa or any of our Session members.



June Birthdays & Anniversaries

- ♥ 6/3 Ellen Warner
- ♥ 6/6 Mike Rand
- ♥ 6/6 Rachel Rand
- ♥ 6/7 Dianne Pinney
- ♥ 6/9 Kay Erdahl
- ♥ 6/17 Todd & Melissa Wickre
- ♥ 6/22 Cindy Tiedeman
- ♥ 6/25 Peter & Lisa Johnson



Women of the Bible

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

- | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------|
| Syrophoenician | Mary Magdalene | Noah's Wife | Bathsheba |
| Elizabeth | Shiphrah | Lot's Wife | Rachael |
| Deborah | Phoebe | Hannah | Huldah |
| Martha | Vashti | Hagar | Sarah |
| Lydia | Woman | Rahab | Naomi |
| Tamar | Puah | Ruth | Eve |

Staying in Touch

Presbyterian Church of Oronoco

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

Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area

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Fax: 651-357-1141

Email: office@ptcaweb.org

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

Presbyterian Church (USA)

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