

**“Practicing joy  
when the world is  
falling apart”**

**Rev. Tom Are Jr.**

# **WESTERN SPIRE**

## **JUNE 2025**

While I am away in Korea, I'd like to share an inspiring article with you. I edited some parts since the article is a bit too long. Anyway, I hope and pray you are well here in America, and I ask you to pray for me, as well.

### **Practicing joy when the world is falling apart**

**- Rev. Tom Are Jr. (Interim pastor of Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago)**

Had "the Presbyterian Outlook" invited me to write a few words about joy five or six years ago, I think I would have passed on the opportunity. I wouldn't have felt qualified. Ask anyone in my family, and they will testify I'm not the most joyful guy. Yet, had I agreed, the thought that I would turn to the Apostle Paul would have surprised me even more. I'm not really a "Paul guy." Paul has taught me much, and I am grateful for his words, but I doubt that I would want to meet him for lunch. He can be rather hard to take at times. He's arrogant and, in some ways, sees the world so differently than I do that I wonder what we might talk about if we found ourselves sharing a Caesar salad. But I have changed, at least a bit, in recent years.

Surprisingly, this old apostle fed my faith in ways I failed to realize I hungered for. I believe Paul's letter to the Philippians – penned from prison – is the most joyful writing in the New Testament. How can Paul be so full of joy even in prison? I wanted him to teach me. He indeed experienced the "dark night of the soul" yet somehow found his way to joy.

Joy is anything but commonplace these days. Anger is abundant. Loneliness, according to the surgeon general, is a health epidemic. And hopelessness is common. So much is wrong, and people of faith can do so little about it that speaking of joy can seem dismissive, even completely out of touch. Yet Paul says, "I will rejoice" (Philippians 1:18), "Rejoice in the Lord always" (4:4), and "I rejoice in the Lord greatly" (4:10). This joy is not some lighthearted prison party. Paul is speaking of joy, not happiness. They are similar but not exactly the same. Joy goes deeper than happiness. Happiness is tied to favorable circumstances in life, but joy, as Paul demonstrates, can rise above circumstances that are anything but favorable.

*Joy is rooted in the confidence that life's disappointments are not evidence that God has abandoned us.* Joy is the fruit that results from trusting that the spirit of Christ will work for our deliverance, as Paul says. Perhaps joy is the first taste of that deliverance. Happiness is something that finds us; it comes to us carried by the blessings of ordinary time. But joy is, at the same time, a gift as well as something that is pursued. Joy is grace but also a spiritual discipline, one that requires courage.

Karl Barth, who never struck me as a giddy theologian, defined joy as a “defiant nevertheless.” Joy is not the result of turning a blind eye to the brokenness of ourselves and our world; instead, joy is confidence in the power of love. We can embrace joy when we trust that the love that makes sense of life has called us by name.

So, in these few paragraphs, I’ll review some of what I think the Apostle Paul can teach us about joy when the world is falling apart.

### **Take the long view**

Early in his letter to the Philippians, Paul says, “I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (1:6). Paul commonly looks past the present day to focus his eye on the ultimate work of redemption that will be accomplished in Jesus Christ. But what does that distant tomorrow have to do with joy today? In short, *Paul urges us to take the long view and to let the present be rightsized. Convinced that God will be faithful, Paul trusts that we are defined not by our present circumstance, nor even our yesterdays, but rather by God’s tomorrow.* Living toward that promised day is joyful.

For Paul, the day of Jesus Christ is about becoming. It is the life that God intends for all of us, but a life we have yet to know in its fullness. *Here’s the key: if we keep our eyes open, from time to time, we will see that promised day in the present.* Paul understood that he was defined not by what the world was doing to him but rather by what Christ had done for him — so even in the face of challenge, Paul knew joy.

### **Do the good that is yours to do**

There is a second gift that Paul shares with us. The Philippians were concerned for Paul. They demonstrated their care and concern by sending a friend named Epaphroditus (4:18). The Philippians had concerns: “Paul, are you well? Are you being treated fairly? Do you have enough to eat? Is it cold? Are you lonely?”

In every church I have served, I have known saints who understood that a part of their ministry was to take care of the pastor. They would linger after a hard meeting just to check in. Epaphroditus is such a friend to Paul. For the Philippians to send him to Paul was their expression of concern for Paul. But they were concerned for more than Paul. They were also concerned for themselves, for they must have wondered: If this is how the world treats the Lord’s apostle, what will happen to us?

Paul speaks to the fear the Philippians feel. “I want you to know,” he writes, “that what has happened to me has actually resulted in the progress of the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to everyone else that my imprisonment is for Christ” (1:12-13). When they ask, “Paul, are you okay?” he responds, in essence, “Yes, because I have ministry I can do here! Yes, I am in prison, and there is not one thing about it that I like. But I can still serve Jesus Christ, and that is enough.”

Interestingly, Paul doesn't say that the guards believe in Jesus; they just know that Paul believes in Jesus. I am comforted by the humility and the challenge of that perspective. In the early years of my faith, I felt that my calling was to do what I could to make my neighbors Christian. To sow the seed, as the parable exhorts.

I don't believe that anymore. *I am not called to make my neighbors Christian; I am called to be Christian to my neighbors.* That means every day is an opportunity to live the faith I claim. Living faith in the ordinary choices of each day is a source of joy.

One elder in a church I served was named Margaret. She was remarkable, a woman of deep faith and a mover and shaker. Margaret was often in the middle when things were getting done in the community. She was a force. But over the 20 years I knew Margaret, her energy faded. Her mind was sharp, but not as sharp as it had been. She said the days of attending committee meetings late into the night were behind her.

One morning I found her leaning on her walker at the counter that displayed our prayer list for the church. She said, "Tom, I must have walked by this counter a million times and didn't even know we had a prayer list. I am so glad I discovered it."

"Why is that?" I asked.

"Well, these days I can't do much of anything else, but I can still pray. It's not a lot, but it is the good that is mine to do. I'm glad I can do it."

I think Paul would understand Margaret. When we say, "I have served the purposes of the Gospel," it is a good day, even a joyful one.

### **The (humble) mind of Christ**

At the heart of the Philippian letter is a plea to "be of the same mind" (2:2). It's hard enough to imagine thinking alike in the church, but then Paul raises the stakes and exhorts us, "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus" (2:5). If I understand the text, Paul is speaking not about our thoughts, but about our mindset or orientation. He describes this orientation in Philippians 2, asserting that the mind of Christ is a mind of humility (see 2:3, 7-8).

For the longest time, I had a flawed view of humility. My grandmother was convinced that being arrogant was the quickest way to damnation. Nobody likes a braggart, she would say. Don't draw attention to yourself. Don't get too big for your breeches, son. It's not about you. Watch yourself.

Ironically, we're supposed to achieve humility by thinking about ourselves all the time, even just to ensure we are not thinking too much of ourselves. But that can't be the mind of Christ. When Jesus chose to humble himself, taking on human form, he wasn't thinking, "Oh, don't pay attention to little of me. I'm just the savior of the world, but don't make a big deal about it." That might have made my grandmother happy, but it's not humility. Jesus chose to live in this world because he loved this world.

*Humility is the fruit born not by thinking of ourselves at all, but by thinking highly of others. When we see the good, the honorable, the beautiful in another, it humbles us. We do not achieve humility by thinking less of ourselves. Nothing in God wants us to think less of ourselves. Humility is the fruit born not by thinking of ourselves at all, but by thinking highly of others. When we see the good, the honorable, the beautiful in another, it humbles us. When we see worth in another, it rightsizes us. That's humility. Such humility is actually joyful because we find ourselves in the right place.*

These days, we are surrounded by voices that point out what is wrong with everyone else. We need no courage or insight to point out what is wrong; all of us are flawed. But to look for the good in others is holy work. When we look for the good in one another, we not only create a mindset of humility but also find a source of joy.

We are living in hard times. The planet is under duress, and the results of climate change make the news daily. Honesty is no longer expected from leaders. Poverty remains a crushing weight. As people of faith, we cannot turn a blind eye to how the world is. But neither can we relinquish our trust in the power of God's love to change it. The apostle held to this faith, giving him a joy he could not contain. So, he wrote it all down in this old letter.

So, even when things are falling apart, look for the good in others. Do the good that is yours to do and take the long view. Even if you are generally not the most joyful person, you may discover your heart is more joyous. I can't promise you will, but I can testify as one who is a bit more joyful than I have ever been: it is possible.

Peace of Christ,  
Rev. Hodong Hwang

# SPRING



Thank You Thank You Thank You,

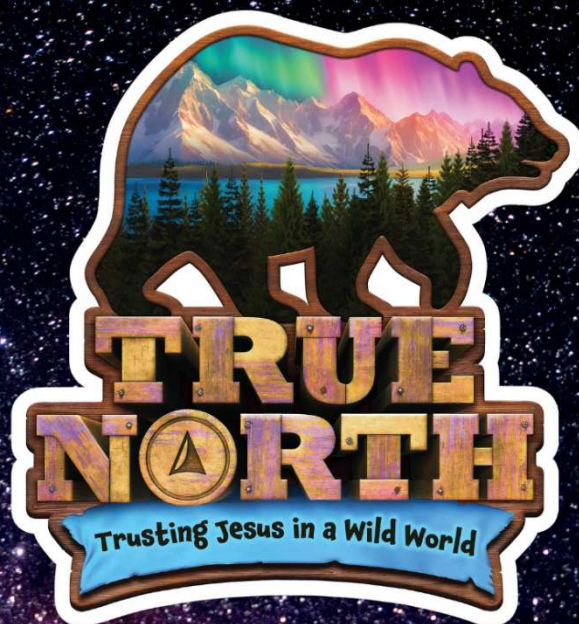
I would like to Thank each and every one of you who participated in this year's Spring Rummage Sale. You may think you didn't help very much or at all, but every person helped in some way: passing on information, working, donating, or saying a prayer. It all adds to the Fellowship and Success of WPC's Rummage Sales.

This is never a one-person job, and I Love how our congregation: family and friends, come together for our Rummage Sales every season.

Thank You All Again and Again~ Until Fall...

~ Jody on behalf of the Women's Association





# Vacation Bible School

**July 28-August 1 | 9AM-11:30AM**

**Ages 3 years old-6<sup>th</sup> grade**

**Free lunch provided every day**

**Sponsored by Western Presbyterian Church &  
Palmyra Reformed Church**

**[www.wpreschurch.org](http://www.wpreschurch.org) | 597-9171**

As the candle was lit, our focus was centered around the last Memory Bible verse in the “Strength in the Struggle” Bible study series. We started off by reading Lamentations 3:1-15 along with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. We read a section of one book and then read a section of the other book, back and forth. There was such a realization that these two books of the OT could speak of life’s relationship with God and have such different descriptions of conditions. Such different tones.



The Lord is my shepherd.... Starts the powerful passage of unconditional love that God has for mankind by constantly meeting their needs, even during their dark valley experiences. This scripture is a source of inspiration as a source of protection from enemies.

Psalm 23 was written by King David who grew up tending sheep as his father was also a Shepherd. In this Psalm, David expresses his great confidence and delight in the constant protection of a loving God.

How different Jeramiah’s mindset was as he saw the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, the catastrophe, the suffering and heartbreak. The faithful lament their calamities, and hope in God's mercies. The prophet relates the gloomier and discouraging part of his experience, and how he found support and relief. In the time of his trial the Lord had become terrible to him. It was an affliction that was misery itself; for sin makes the cup of affliction a bitter cup. The struggle between unbelief and faith is often very severe. But the weakest believer is wrong, if he thinks that his strength and hope have perished from the Lord.



One observation was in comparing the devastating struggles of the people of Jerusalem to the struggles of the people living in the war-torn Gaza currently. Will there be a grace of peace for them?

Even with devastation, despair, and depression, Lamentations switches its tone to offer hope, compassion and loyalty to the Lord. This becomes the focus of the memory verse.

Lamentations 3:22-24 “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion.” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him”.

There were two take-aways that we grabbed hope from. We, the ladies of the circle, liked that with every new morning mercies and love are renewed. We also dug into the concept of “the Lord is my portion”. Not a portion of a pie getting rationed away. Portion was a kind of hope wrapped around the inheritance passed down. It could be land, but more so, a source of security, fulfillment and eternal peace. Being in the family of God.

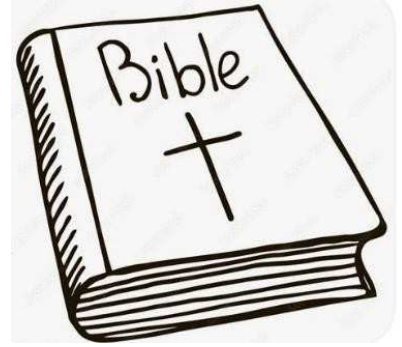


Great is our faithfulness, Great is thy faithfulness, Morning by morning new mercies I see.

All I have needed thy hand hast provided;  
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me.



At the conclusion of the program, we read the various verses that we covered in the Bible study “Strength in the Struggle” throughout the year. As we read each verse, we spoke of how it touched us and what we took away from the scripture. Though the intention of the study was to memorize all the scriptures and pull them on when times get rough, many of us did not memorize, but held them close while discussing them. As a body of women, we felt closer to the scriptures and each other in the journey.



#### **Psalm 34:4**

*“I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.”*

#### **Colossians 3:1-4**

*“If then you have been raised in Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”*

#### **2 Timothy 1:7**

*“For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”*

#### **Proverbs 3:5-6**

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”*

#### **Matthew 6:26**

*“Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?”*

#### **Peter 5:6-7**

*“Humble yourself, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.”*

#### **Philippians 4:6-7**

*“Do not be anxious 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.”*

#### **Lamentations 3:22-24**

*“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion.” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him”.*





# Picnic Time!

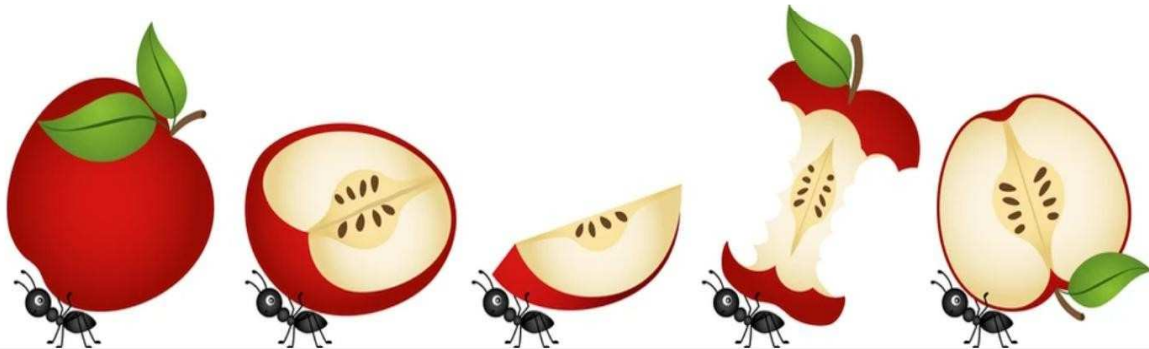
**Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> at NOON**

**At Aqueduct Park Pavilion**

## Bring:

- A dish to pass
- Your own table service
- Lawn chair for when we just sit around and chat

*Beverage will be provided*



**Come join our ladies circle gathering, all are welcome**



### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

June 7	Linda Pulcini
June 7	David Squier
June 7	Ray Marr
June 13	Linda Wunder
June 21	Bill Hassler
June 26	Evan Mitchell
June 28	Chris Mitchell
June 29	Nancy Talma



### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

June 12	Eric & Edie Chapman
June 21	Lloyd & Joan Durfey
June 22	Paul & Janet Manktelow
June 27	Dave & Jan Taylor

**If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please contact the office at 597-9171 so we can add it to our list next time!**

## **The team minutes received for June include:**

WPC Christian Education Team

Minutes May 13, 2025

Building Faith, Family, and Fellowship. WPC nurtures spiritual growth, joyful fellowship, meaningful community, and global involvement: worshiping and serving God with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

Present: Jody Pruitt, Emily Hunt, Cim McFarlane

In Spirit: Ellen Avery, Pastor Hodong

### **Upcoming Events:**

June 1- Spring Children's Service

July 28- August 1- VBS

### **Continuing and New Business**

**Sunday School News-** Cim reported that things are going well for Sunday School. We are wrapping up the school year and working hard on our youth service. This coming Sunday, Cim will ask only the musicians to attend Sunday School so that the time can be devoted to practicing the music for the service.

**Camp Whitman Board-** Cim reported that summer planning is going well, staffing is going well. The whole McFarlane family attended the Fundraising Dinner on May 10th. 30 people attended the event. Jacob and Nella were on a panel to speak about camp.

**Toddler Time-** Cim shared that Toddler Time finished for the school year. Toddler Time will begin again in September.

**VBS-** The True North- We are doing well with leaders and volunteers. Emily will reach out to worship and fellowship committees to ask to borrow Christmas trees to help create a forest.

**Nursery -** We drafted a proposal to hire a dedicated nursery care person. Emily will bring this to the June Session meeting for approval.

**High School Youth group-** Cim shared that the youth group is going very well. Cim is working on a way to thank the congregation for donations to our youth group, possibly a coffee hour or ice cream social. We are unsure if the youth group will continue through the summer.

**Fellowship Request-** Fellowship would like to host another Bible Trivia Night. We checked our calendars so we can help with the event and are looking for a Saturday night in October. Emily will reach out to Fellowship to let them know.

Committee Restructuring- Pastor Hodong asked Session at the May meeting to think of 2-3 ways to invite more people to our committees. Here is what we came up with...

1. VBS- we will take any help we can get from people volunteering for an hour once, to committing to volunteering the whole week. People can donate cereal for the cereal drive we are doing in conjunction with the Mission team.
2. School Supply Drive at the Back to Sunday School Breakfast in September. We will host our usual Back to Sunday School Breakfast in September. We will "charge" anyone who comes a school supply donation that we will then donate to local schools for children who can't afford to buy their own school supplies.

**Next meeting:** June 3, 2025 at 7:00 pm \*\*not the second Tuesday\*\*

Respectfully Submitted,  
Emily Hunt

## Deacons Team Meeting Minutes

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

**Present:** Randy Kennard, Nancy Talma, Muffie Beato, Patti Dlugosh & Hodong Hwang

**In Support:** Sandy McMenamin, Linda Pulcini, Sandy Betts & Sara Bush

### Meeting opening with lighting of the Christ Candle *This month's scripture and prayer*

#### Old Business:

1. Approval of last month's minutes *corrections?* Motion: Muffie B. Second: Patti D.
2. **Treasurer's Report:** Current balance & expense/donation Status– Sandy M. –

Mar-25	Deacons Checking Account
Initial balance	\$1,125.90
Additions	\$ 165.00
Deductions	\$ -
Ending balance	\$1,290.90

#### a. Balances

3. Sharing Correspondence: letters/emails/cards - card from A.G.
4. Next Communion – on Easter Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>
  - a. Prepared 61 and served 49 on March 9<sup>th</sup>
  - b. Verify that enough Pita, loaf and juice for this month? Prep for 100 + choir
  - c. Who can assist in set-up– Easter Sunday? – Sandy M. & Randy K.
5. Review of Prayer List and adjust accordingly of needs
6. Prayers for those in need and beyond
7. Visits/ Calls/ cards counts - visits with special meaningful moments of faith

### 2025

Month	Visits	Phone Calls	Cards sent and Email outreach	Communion Served	Communion Date
January	15	24	69	49	1/12/25
February	5	18	56	39	2/9/25
March	16	16	99	49	3/9/25
Year to Date	36	58	224	137	

8. EASTER LILY **DELIVERIES:** meet at church on Monday, April 21<sup>st</sup> at 10:30 am
9. Special Needs Mailings – about 24 cards are sent out monthly – list managed by Sandy B.
  - i. Discussion of outreach to specific individuals

Bible Verse: **1 Peter 5:6-7** *"Humble yourself, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that on the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."*

#### • New Business:

- Session Information: summary of day care efforts and discussions

Meeting closed with prayer

**Next meeting Tuesday 5/13/2025 @ 10:am NOTE – This is a date change!!**

Respectfully - Randy Kennard, Chairperson



## Mission and Social Concerns Minutes 5-08-2025

Present in person: Rena Haigh, Cassie Hughes, Sally Chase, Edie Chapman, Nancy Roets, Irene Fadden

Excused: Ruth Dantz

The meeting opened with the Lighting of the Christ Candle and opening prayer.

**Food Cupboard – May-** Sally and Cassie will purchase items.

Shelves will be used for Rummage Sale.

**Food Pantry –** Ruth will continue to pick up non-SNAP items.

**Lions Food Cupboard Donations –** Rena will get it scheduled.

**1,000 boxes of Cereal in Memory of Lois Daniels –** Lois's birthday – July 6, 1926

Celebrate the 1,000 boxes Lois gave. How close can we come to her total?

The Women's Association will use \$300 to buy cereal. At Session, we talked about making a video of the boxes purchased being set up like dominos. Pastor Hodong would like the video to put on Facebook.

CE will collect cereal during **VBS**.

**Stuffed Animals and Book –** Leanna – collected in April. Still have some small stuffed animals that had no book to go with them.

**Church World Service hygiene kits –** I have collected some money to go towards paying for the boxes this year  $\$5 \text{ party boxes} \times 168 = \$840$

- Hygiene Kits - Touchpoint Assembling kits **May 10, 10-12:30**
- 5 boxes with 24 kits – 120 kits
- 10 people from church assembled kits in 20 minutes. Kits were boxed and sent back to CWS.

### **Good Neighbor Fund**

Beginning Balance \$1,984.96

3 Individuals \$325 deposited

2 checks written \$1,200

2 Rent for 2 adults and 1 child

Ending Balance \$1,109.96

A check for \$1,250 will be requested for the Good Neighbor fund 2<sup>nd</sup> qtr.

**Weekend Wellness update –**

Beginning and Ending Balance \$2,050.00

No Deposits or checks written

# of bags delivered in April – 514 bags

# of bags delivered 2024-25 school year – 3,274 bags

A check for \$1,000 will be requested for the Food Pantry

**One Great Hour of Sharing –** collection was taken Easter Sunday, no total yet

At least \$373.46 – Val will let me know.

**Summer Lunch –** I'll send out Signup on June 1<sup>st</sup>.**Comfort Cases –**

for Foster Kids moving into a new home. – Sally's contact was very interested in the project. And we'll work with Wayne County Foster Care to decide on what items are needed for each child.

The items will be put in a bookbag, so children do not have to carry their belongings in a black garbage bag.

pjs, hygiene kit, blanket, book, and stuffed animal by size and age.

Anyone wanting to know more about the project as done in Maryland, it is at [comfortcases.org](http://comfortcases.org).

The meeting ended with the prayer of Micah 6:8.

Respectfully Submitted,

Irene Fadden

The stated meeting of the session of Western Presbyterian Church & Society, Palmyra, New York was called to order by the moderator, Reverend HoDong Hwang at 7:00 PM in Fellowship Hall. The meeting was opened with the lighting of The Christ Candle and prayer.

**8 Present:** Philip Opdycke, Courtney Marr, Alicia Lynch, Irene Fadden, Roxanne Dobson, Emily Hunt, Randy Kennard, Janet Manktelow

**0 Absent**

**0 Excused**

**A quorum was present.**

**Daycare Update:** Melissa Perry and Teri Miller came to talk to session about their Daycare proposal. They are planning on offering a full day of care for 6 week olds to 12 years. We asked them to write an article for the church newsletter to keep the congregation up to date on where they are at, being ready to open. They hope to open in September, but it is contingent on the state inspections and approval.

Devotions – Roxie share a devotion from 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5-7.

**Clerk's Report**

- Motion made by Roxanne Dobson seconded and carried to approve the minutes from the March session meeting.

E-mail vote:

- Motion made by Mission Ministry Team and carried to pay \$2540.00 in mission pledges to Presbytery, \$100.00 each for Synod and General Assembly Mission pledge, \$5133.87 for Per Capita.

**Financial Secretary's Report**

	<b><u>February 2025</u></b>			
	<b><u>Current</u></b>	<b><u>2025</u></b>	<b><u>2025</u></b>	<b><u>YTD% of</u></b>
	<b><u>Month</u></b>	<b><u>YTD</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>	<b><u>Budget</u></b>
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$12,896</b>	<b>\$45,450</b>	<b>\$183,035</b>	<b>24.83%</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$12,477</b>	<b>\$28,648</b>	<b>\$213,099</b>	<b>13.44%</b>
<b>Net Receipts/Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 419</b>	<b>\$16,802</b>	<b>\$(30,064)</b>	

- Motion made by Finance Ministry Team and carried to approve the financial Secretary's Report.

**Business of the Church**

**Daycare:**

- Motion made by Courtney Marr seconded and carried to approve holding Little Froggies Childcare LLC in our church building contingent on inspections and lease agreement.
- Motion made by Philip Opdycke seconded and carried to retain a lawyer at the cost of \$300 per

hour to prepare a lease agreement with Little Froggies Childcare LLC.  
The clerk of session was directed to provide Little Froggies Childcare LLC with a letter for the state expressing our intent to allow the childcare use of our building subject to a lease agreement approval between both parties.

**Copyright license:** Courtney and Irene did research on what we need for copyright when we stream our service on Facebook Live. We renewed our license with CCLI and will also purchase one with One License to be covered more thoroughly. We will start putting our license numbers on the screen before the service.

- Motion made by Worship Ministry Team and carried to purchase a copyright license with One License.

**Farmers Market:** Courtney has been talking with Knucklehead Farms of Marion about holding a farmers' market in our church yard on Sundays from 11:00 - 1:00.

- Motion made by Philip Opdycke seconded and carried to move forward with Knucklehead Farms holding a Farmers Market in our church yard on Sundays from 11:00 -1:00.

**Report of HoDongs trip to First PC in Lewiston, NY** – They were a small church that has been successfully working on growing their membership. They have a special team to invite outside people to come to their church events. There are several other touchpoints as well. We will discuss more about this later.

### **Ministry Team Reports**

**Worship ministry Team** – Jacob McFarlane will lead special music for Easter service.

**Fellowship Ministry Team** - May 4<sup>th</sup> will be the church picnic.

**Deacons Ministry Team** – They are reaching out to all our members over 90.

**Mission Ministry Team** – They will be putting together Hygiene Kits on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Finance Ministry Team** – Bill Bush has taken down all our finance info. from anything online.

**CE-** Easter Bunny Breakfast will be April 12.

**Property Ministry Team** –

- Motion made by the Property Ministry Team and carried to pay for work done in the northwest upstairs room which includes plumbing, flooring and new sinks with the money coming from Inside Edifice Fund.

Next meeting: May 6<sup>th</sup>

Devotions – Phil

- Motion made by Philip Opdycke seconded and carried to adjourn with prayer at 9:20 PM.

Janet Manktelow  
Clerk

## **Worship Meeting Minutes**

**April 8, 2025**

Present: Sue, Joan, Linda, Sharon, Hodong, and Courtney

Absent: Alicia and Carol

Palms and Flowers

All delivered Wednesday.

Thank you to Sue for contacting our florist and setting up delivery. Thank you to Carol for collecting the forms and money.

Palm Sunday-

Connect with Emily about the parade again.

Good Friday- We will have a Good Friday service with Zion and Farmington Friends. Will need readers.

Easter Sunday-

Decorations?

Easter Gifts-Joan purchased 12 gifts for the kids with a few extra.

National Day of Prayer- No service this year.

Courtney will buy a tree to have in the sanctuary. We will make tags that people can put their prayers on.

Pentecost- flowers

Language God loves you

Wear red

Geranium donations

Future events?

Friendship Day- Sunday August 3

Pet Remembrance Day

Special Services?

Cancer Prayer Service honoring those who are battling and those who are in remission.

Respectfully submitted by Courtney Marr



## Our Prayer Concerns (updated May 21, 2025)

### Grieving:

Family & Friends of Fran Storm (requested by the Deacons)

Family & Friends of Deb Merla (requested by Muffie Beato)

Family & Friends of Robert B. Fadden (requested by Peter Fadden)

Family & Friends of Beverly Koeberle (requested by the Deacons)

### Serving in the Armed Forces:

AJ Bliss, Josh Polle

### Please pray for those of our congregation with immediate concerns:

Ellen Avery, Joan Barnard, Bob Dardenne, Joan Durfey, Bill Hassler, Rev. Hodong & family, Tricia Owen, Patti Squier

### Congregation members needed continued prayers:

Irene Fadden, Pam Gnagy, Gary Hughes, Frank Lawrence, Cim McFarlane, Jody Pruitt, Wilma Redman, Nancy Roets, Harry/Laurie Schraffenberger, Jan Semans

### Congregation members in nursing homes or shut-in:

Rochelle Morse, Bev Mouton, David Squier

### Others for whom prayers have been requested:

Marcy Blowers, Sarah Carone, Katherine Dantz, Melissa Dantz, Ted & Nancy Elsenheimer, Glenn Groff, Don Hagen, Janet Haigh, Russell Harris, Jerry Locey, Iris McConnell, Luke Medina & family, Megan Melville, Jack Milliken, Steve Pakis, Sheryl Patton, Kate Pfaff, Tane Robinson, Jack Sweeney, Andy Umreiko

### May your prayers go out to:

All caregivers; All those affected by natural disasters; All those who have no one to pray for them; All victims of violence, hatred and hunger; Please pray for those that wish to remain anonymous

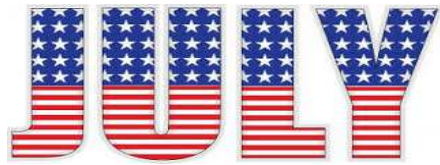
*Names will remain on the prayer list for 30 days unless renewal has been requested.*

Prayers of Intercession are offered each day by our Deacons. To request prayer for yourself or another, please contact Randy Kennard, chair of Deacons, Sandy McMenamin, or Kathy in the Church office.



## JUNE 2025

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
<b>1</b> <b>7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter</b> Last day of Sunday School 10 am youth led worship service	<b>2</b> <b>Pastor Hodong will be gone away until June 4th.</b>	<b>3</b> 10 am Deacons 1 pm Men's Group 3 pm Fellowship 7 pm Christian Ed. 7 pm Boy Scouts <b>Muscle Room</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 9:30 am Mission/ Social Concerns No bible study	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <b>Day of Pentecost</b> <b>Communion &amp; Cereal Sunday</b> 10 am worship service 5-7 pm Youth Group	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 3:15 pm Worship 7 pm Boy Scouts <b>Muscle Room</b>	<b>11</b> 7 pm FH Boy Scouts	<b>12</b> 11 am Bible Study	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <b>Trinity Sunday</b> <b>Father's Day</b> 10 am worship service 5-7 pm Youth Group	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> <b>SPIRE DEADLINE</b> 7 pm Boy Scouts <b>Muscle Room</b> <b>7 pm Session</b>	<b>18</b> Noon Circle Picnic Aqueduct Park 6:30 pm Property	<b>19</b> 11 am Bible Study	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10 am worship service 5-7 pm Youth Group	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 7 pm Boy Scouts <b>Muscle Room</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 11 am Bible Study	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <b>3rd Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10 am worship service <b>Potluck Luncheon</b> 5-7 pm Youth Group	<b>30</b>					



## JULY 2025

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
		1 10 am Deacons 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	2	3	4 Independence Day Office Closed	5
6 4th Sunday after Pentecost 10 am worship service 5-7 pm Youth Group	7	8 3:15 pm Worship 7 pm Christian Ed. 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	9 7 pm FH Boy Scouts	10	11	12
13 Communion & Cereal Sunday 10 am worship service 5-7 pm Youth Group	14	15 SPIRE DEADLINE 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	16 6:30 pm Property	17	18	19
20 6th Sunday after Pentecost 10 am worship service 5-7 pm Youth Group	21	22 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	23	24	25	26
27 7th Sunday after Pentecost 10 am worship service 5-7 pm Youth Group	28 9-11:30 am VBS	29 9-11:30 am VBS 7 pm Boy Scouts Muscle Room	30 9-11:30 am VBS	31 9-11:30 am VBS	August 1 9-11:30 am VBS	August 2