

WHY I LOVE GPC

Despite calling myself Christian, I admit that I have trouble understanding Jesus' death and resurrection. It is not only the scientist in me that has trouble with the biological aspects of someone dying and then coming back to life, but also the theological aspect of salvation. Did Jesus really have to die and come back to life in order for me to have eternal life? I hope not. I would never want anyone to be put to death in order to save me. Am I supposed to be thankful for that? I do think humans need to know that there is someone that would sacrifice everything for them, and to know there is someone that loves them that much. But do I really need to believe in the resurrection for God to save me?

I believe that everyone on earth is a child of God. God wants all his children to have eternal life. But God continues to allow children of his to be born into non-Christian faiths, knowing that they will never become Christian and therefore will never be saved. Why would he do that to his own kids? What happens to those people? Is it possible that if you live a spiritual life and never know Jesus that you will also have eternal life, or do Christians corner the market? Or will non-Christians be spared because it is really our failing that they are not Christian? God expects us to teach everyone about Jesus, but if we are not successful in our lifetime, will we never make it to heaven? So why does God create people knowing they will never go to heaven? As you can see I have a lot of questions about my faith and religion.

This is why I love GPC. Our church gives me opportunities to explore these questions through acts. I can serve the congregation as an Elder, Deacon, or Trustee. I can serve those less fortunate at numerous mission projects. I can teach the next generation what it means to love my neighbor. I can sing to God without judgement of my vocal skills. I can learn from my brothers and sisters. The time spent with my GPC family provides me with opportunities to live the Golden Rule and I think that is all anyone on this earth needs to be saved. The work I do at GPC gives me that warm, fuzzy feeling inside - my own internal heaven and I am content with that. I will let the afterlife take care of itself.

Peace,
Carrie Dykes

Consider the Mustard Seed

As a new church and school year begins this fall, please consider making a contribution to the Mustard Seed Fund. This Scholarship Program, the brainchild of now deceased, Frank Roberts, a long-time GPC member, is entering its sixteenth year of existence. Each spring, an active GPC high school senior is awarded the annual \$1,500 Scholarship toward higher education for a period of four years. If you would like to make a contribution to this Fund, make your check/cash donation to the Mustard Seed Fund. The Fund might also be named as a part of a Will. Should you have any questions, contact Barb Chapman at 426-1375.

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

Am I the only one who gets a little cranky when stores move me from one season to the next before I am ready? The last day of school is not the time to put out school supplies for fall. Christmas decorations do not need to explode all over the aisle before Halloween. And who in Rochester, NY needs sandals and shorts in January? Well...unless you are from GPC and getting your suitcase ready for a mission trip to Jamaica!

Nature has a gentler approach. The leaves gradually exhale their green and bits of yellow, orange and red creep across the landscape. We place the remainder of the blueberry crop in our freezers and enthusiastically bite into the crisp flesh of an apple. Smiling at the first fragile snowflakes dusting the ground, we push away all thoughts of how much of it there will be to shovel later on. We hang on to hope the day will come again when the crocus will push past the stubborn snow banks and signify spring.

The church also shapes our rhythm and expressions of faith around seasons of the year. We engage in the spiritual practice of waiting in Advent for the light of God's light to shine in our lives. We continue to celebrate that presence at Christmas and Epiphany. During Lent we intentionally focus on our connection to God and celebrate its fullness in Easter. These seasons that guide how we live our faith together are focused on the seasons of Jesus' life and ministry. When seasons of change visit church life in other ways, there are some who may feel like Christmas decorations are out before Halloween. There are some who revel in the first fruits of the season's abundance. And there are others who are sustained by the words from Ecclesiastes 3:1 "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." I feel profoundly grateful that we are a congregation that trusts that the Holy Spirit is at work through all the changes going on right now!

Over the summer the congregation received updates (by letter and through congregational "talk back" sessions) regarding the changes and new seasons we are entering at GPC. We have a new model for pastoral leadership. With Laurelton Presbyterian Church and Katie, we are exploring sharing one person to serve as a part-time Associate Pastor and solo pastor. This fall the GPC session will prayerfully work through the details of a new model to help our community of faith engage deeper in leadership roles serving as ruling elders, deacons, trustees, and other expressions of ministry.

During the month of September, in the midst of these changing seasons at GPC, we will center worship to give thanks to God for the seasons of creation. Each week we'll have a different focus. Keep reading in this issue of the Harbinger for opportunities to engage in faith formation beyond Sunday morning!

Peace,
Melissa

LIVING SEASONS OF CREATION IN EVERYDAY FAITH PRACTICES

Consider supporting personal and family faith formation beyond Sunday morning! These are the scripture passages and themes for each week of worship during September. “The week” begins on Monday and ends with our celebration of the theme in worship on Sunday. Take time each day to read one or more of the texts in your individual or family devotional time. Adapt one or more of the practices into your faith life.

Week One: Planet Earth (Starting August 31st)

Genesis 1:1-25

John 1:1-14

Week Two: Humanity Sunday (Starting September 7th)

Genesis 1:26-28

Psalms 8

Week Three: Sky Sunday (Starting September 14th)

Jeremiah 4:23-28

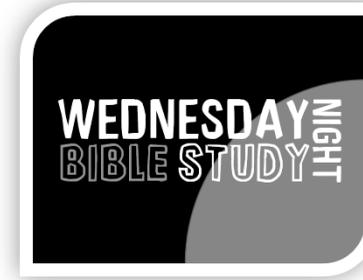
Psalms 19:1-6

September 27th Mountain Sunday (Starting September 21st)

Isaiah 65:17-25

Psalms 48:1-11

- Each day talk about the parts of God’s creation you are thankful for and say a brief prayer: “Creator God, we sometimes forget that you have created us and all that we need to survive. We benefit daily from creation. May we be mindful of the way you are present with us in it. Amen.”
- Create a small worship or prayer space in your home. A small table, kitchen table, or counter space will do! Use a piece of fabric the color of the sky. Add a candle or other symbol of faith. Each week add something that represents the theme for the week. It might be a picture or actual item from creation. If you spend a lot of time at your computer make your screen wallpaper an image that represents each theme.
- Take a nature walk in a nearby park each week. Focus on one element of nature from the theme of the week. Use your sense to smell, touch, listen, and look more intently at what you have chosen. Bring a journal with you. Write about your experience or sketch a drawing.
- Plan a “clean up” time with friends from church or family. Walk around your neighborhood or be adventurous and pick a different one! Wear some gloves, grab a trash bag, and help care for God’s creation.



Every Wednesday evening 6:30-7:30pm in the Jr. High Lounge a community gathers to nurture one another through spiritual formation, prayer, and Biblical exploration. Whether you have been reading the Bible your whole life or this is your first time, you are welcome! You don’t have to but if you would like to read ahead for that week, here is a look at what the scripture text will be. A great website to find the scripture texts in different versions: www.biblegateway.com

During September we will reflect on the following texts:

Wednesday, September 9th Genesis 1:1-28

Wednesday, September 16th Jeremiah 4:23-28

Wednesday, September 23rd Isaiah 65:17-25

Wednesday, September 30th Genesis 2:18-24

HOSPITAL CALLS



The Pastors and members of the Board of Deacons make hospital visits when notified of a hospitalization. Please contact the church office (247-5292) if you know of such a need. Note that because of privacy concerns, hospitals do not contact pastors nor share information with the church unless instructed to do so. You should call the church office to request a visit.



HOME COMMUNION

Teaching and Ruling Elders, Deacons, and other caregivers participate in the celebration of home Communion. During these visits to homebound GPC members, those serving the Sacrament of Communion take time to visit with the care-receiver, especially inquiring about their needs and how the caregiver may pray for them and their loved ones. To request home Communion, please contact the office by phone (247-5292) or email office@gatespres.org

MEN 2 MEN

Men 2 Men will have a pizza breakfast September 27 at 8:00 am in Room 3. We are studying some lesser known biblical heroes. Bezaleel, the chief architect of the mobile tabernacle while in the wilderness, will be the hero of September. Suggested donation for the breakfast is \$5.00. Signup sheet is on the Kiosk.

A NOTE FROM KATIE:

September 1st marks the first day of my new position. I'll be serving half-time here at GPC, and half-time as Laurelton Presbyterian's solo pastor. I'll be in the office at GPC on Tuesdays and Fridays, so feel free to come by and chat! I'll be in worship on September 20th, and here for every youth group meeting. If you've got any questions about my new hours here, just let me know!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Membership and Hospitality Committee is asking for volunteers to help out with the parking lot valet services this coming winter. Generally volunteers are only asked to help out 2 or 3 Sundays through the winter months. This is a valuable service provided for our Church family. Please make a note in the hospitality register or contact Eric Vail 889-5491 (email vailagency@yahoo.com) or contact the Church office (247-5292) if you can help. Thank you.

LUNCH BUNCH

The Lunch Bunch ladies are waiting for you. It's time to dust off your knitting needles, crochet hooks, needles and threads, etc. to help prepare items that we can sell at the October and November fundraising events. We will resume our Tuesday meetings in the Fellowship Hall beginning September 8th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Bring a bag lunch, we will supply hot beverages. We're always looking for new people and new ideas.



CONGREGATIONAL POTLUCK

September 27, 2015

Following Worship

Bring your own table service (should include a bowl) and a dish to pass. Water and Coffee will be provided.

Come celebrate the mission and ministry of GPC!



THANK YOU to all the talented musicians who graced us with their music this Summer! It's always a joy to share in worship your musical talents!

DEACONS' PAGE

Thoughts and prayers to:

JoAnn Vander in the transitional unit at Unity Hospital
Dick Henderson in the transitional unit at Unity Hospital
Bill Walence dealing with health issues
Don Bernhart at St. Ann's in rehab
Murray Belknap recovering after hospital stay



Congratulations to:

Scott and Jennifer Christensen on the birth of their son, **Joshua Stephen** on August 5th. Proud grandparents are **Sally and Steve Christensen**.

Our Sympathy to:

Family of John McMahon who passed away on July 26th.
James DiSessa and family on the recent death of his wife, **Kathleen**.

As Don continues his journey at St. Ann's and then one day at home to learn how to live life as a double amputee, we both want to thank you for your words of encouragement through cards, calls, and visits, and your continuing prayers for strength. Your support means a great deal to us and truly does help us through this difficult time. Thank you! Louise Bernhart

REMINDER TO DEACONS

The next Deacons' meeting is Monday, September 21 at 7:00 p.m.

THE PRAYER SHAWL GROUP will meet on Tuesday, September 8th at 2:00 p.m. in Room 16.

TABITHA CIRCLE will meet on September 9th at 1:00 p.m. in the Adult Lounge.

REBECCA CIRCLE will meet on Tuesday, September 8th at 10:30 a.m. in the Adult Lounge. Bring a lunch. Beverages and dessert will be provided.

PARENTS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS:

Please be sure to let the church office know your college student's address. We like to send them the Harbinger each month!

OCTOBER HARBINGER articles are due in the office by noon on Wednesday, September 16th.

YOUNG CHILDREN

We hope everyone had a very relaxing and enjoyable summer. Fall brings us our Kickoff for Sunday School on Sunday, September 13th! We are looking forward to another year of learning and growing in God's grace!

**SAVE THE DATE: NOVEMBER 21ST
THE 38TH ANNUAL CHURCH MOUSE BAZAAR**

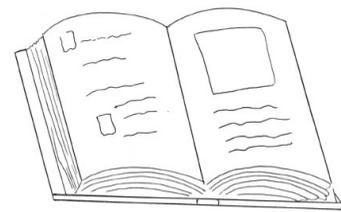
ANNUAL WOMEN'S CANDLELIGHT DINNER

HOLD THE DATE!!! – Tuesday, December 8th

This year we are going back to the Whittier Party House for our annual Women's Candlelight dinner beginning at 6pm.

There will be special music entertainment to be confirmed shortly. We will be collecting personal items for ABW again this year.

Tickets will be sold in early November. Any questions??? Call Barb Snaith at 247-9066



THIS IS THE STORY OF OUR CHURCH... ... and you can help write the next chapter!

It's an exciting time in the life of our church! Following Session's approval to change our GPC board structure, we are recruiting Elders and Trustees for the 2016 class. (Given the changes, the Deacon roster is already complete). The term limits for service will be two years instead of three with the option to renew. In preparation for 2016, please prayerfully consider an opportunity to serve as a Trustee or Elder. If you are interested in serving, please contact the church office or let one of the Nominating Committee members know of your interest (Kris Ohman, Frona Rossman, John Schramel, Gary Dykes, Mary Hadley).

HAM DINNER – Coming in October

Watch for more info in Sunday bulletins and October Harbinger
If you have any questions, please contact the Ham Dinner Chairpeople:
Beth Molina (426-7957) or Al Waugh, (247-4709).

PLEASE NOTE: September's Mega Meeting will be held the second Tuesday, Sept. 8 instead of the first Tuesday. This second Tuesday is for September only.

EXPLORING SACRED SPACE with The Spiritual Journey Team

Is it an awe-inspiring cathedral, a beautiful mosque, and/or our own unique sanctuary at GPC? Is it witnessing God via peaceful, spiritual, or inspirational feelings through nature, and/or a hike, yoga, meditation, prayer, a labyrinth, music, writing, and exercise? Or is Sacred Space a community of caring individuals such as GPC who collectively are united by God's love, hope, wisdom, and joy? Is Sacred Space unique, limitless, and abundant as is God's Love? Come see for yourself. Join us as we continue to journey forward with our Fall Sacred Space Journey.

1. **Saturday, September 26th, 10:00 a.m.**
First Unitarian Church **Labyrinth Walk**, church gardens.



2. **Tuesday, September 29, 7:00-8:15/30 PM, YOGA.** (Beginners & all levels welcome.) Experience how Yoga can help open us to Sacred Spaces with Jobena Robinson, Yoga Instructor from LA Fitness. GPC Sanctuary.

3. **Monday, October 5, 7:00-8:15/30 PM. Tapping/EFT Technique.**
Explore and practice with Tom Porpiglia how the Tapping Technique can help us connect inward to relax, and reflect upon our Sacred Spaces. GPC Adult Lounge.

Those who registered and paid for this past June's well-attended Legs of the awe-inspiring Frank Lloyd Wright Sacred Spaces Documentary and/or Home Tour, need only to register for this fall's line-up. (A one-time \$5 fee per person, or \$10 Maximum per family, covers one or all of the Legs included in this Journey.)

Further information will be made available ASAP. Registration/tickets will be offered after Worship on Sundays, beginning in September after Labor Day. Please contact any of the available Spiritual Journey Team members for further questions once the complete fall details are confirmed and announced. Cheryl Fehnel, Co-Chair, Andrea Unson, Barb Snaith, and Paulette Morgan.

YOUTH, CHECK YOUR MAIL - We'll be sending out the youth calendar for the year soon. Stick it to your fridge, save the dates, and get ready for a fun year!

YOUTH CALENDAR

- Sept. 6 - 10:00 – Worship
Sept. 8 - 7:00 – Youth Committee Meeting
SEPTEMBER 13 – KICK-OFF EVERYTHING SUNDAY
- 9:30 – Youth Choir (first rehearsal)
- 10:00 – Worship
- 11:15 – Jr. and Sr. High Church School
- 6:00 – Youth Group Kick-off Picnic
Sept. 20 - Katie in worship
- 9:30 – Youth Choir
- 10:00 – Worship
- 11:15 – Jr. High and Sr. High Church School
Sept. 27 - 9:30 – Youth Choir
- 10:00 - Worship (No Fusion Sunday)
- 11:15 – Pot Luck Lunch
- 6:00 - Jr. and Sr. High Youth Group

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!!!! Wheel-A-Thon 2015

OCT 4 - 12:30 – 7:00

IT'S FUN AND IT'S FOR MISSION!!!!

YOUTH! It's time to get ready for Wheel-A-Thon 2015, riding 20 miles to support youth mission work projects! Ask folks to pledge you (minimum pledge amount to ride is \$10.00). Tell them what you're doing and why. Bring your bike and helmet to Henpeck Park on October 4 at 12:30. Ride for 20 miles on the Erie Canal, with snack breaks along the way. We'll have supper at Perinton Park and return to GPC at 7:00. Great day, great work, great friends, great food, and lots of stops along the way!



YOUTH GROUP KICK-OFF PARTY September 13th

6:00 – 8:00 – GPC 6th-12th graders. Bring a picnic blanket and get ready for supper, games, and fun! Check your snail mail for more info.

SEPTEMBER 27TH - Youth Group Game Night - 6:00-8:00

Senior Highs will be playing games and catching up after the summer. Junior Highs will be also playing games around the church. Come join us!

JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SUNDAY SCHOOL

Junior Highs 7th and 8th graders: Bring your faith questions and opinions to explore together with the infamous Todd Pimm. This amazing experience will happen in the Junior High Lounge after worship every Sunday (11:15) except Fusion Sundays.

Senior Highs 9th-12th graders: Our curriculum continues with a year exploring current hot-button issues. Come learn about issues in our society, share your opinions, and discuss how our faith changes the way we live. Best part – there's not homework! The curriculum is part of a four year program called the "Compass" where we explore World Religions, Old Testament, New Testament and Current Issues Through a Faith Lens. With Mary Hadley and Carrie Dykes, after church (11:15) every Sunday (except Fusion Sundays) in the Senior High Lounge.

SINGING OUR FAITH: INVITATION TO JOIN CHURCH CHOIRS

ADULT CHOIR

Dear fellow GPCer,

We would like to invite you to join us at the first Adult Choir rehearsal of the new program year which will occur on Sunday, September 13th at 8:30 a.m. in the Adult Lounge. The Adult Choir is led by Roy Smith.

Our first Sunday service back will be September 14th. If any new friends are interested in joining us for the fall, they will be showered with compliments and affirmation! Our times together are filled with fellowship, fun, some challenges, and lots of joy. We have found singing to be a great form of faith expression and worship, and invite you to join us. If you would like to see music in advance, copies will be made available and left in the Adult Lounge.



YOUTH CHOIR

All current Youth Choir members and anyone interested in joining should meet in the Adult Lounge at 9:30 AM on Sunday, September 13th for an informal breakfast and Meet & Greet. Come one and come all for donuts, juice, and fun!

BELL CHOIR NEWS . . . AN INVITATION!!!

Sunday, September 13th at 1:30pm there will be a combination Welcome Back Bell Choir meeting and informational gathering for those returning to ring as well as anyone who has been interested and wants more information. Have you not yet found your place in the church and are searching for the chance to connect with other members? Are you a youth in seventh grade or above, or an adult of ANY age? If you love music but have not found a group to participate in, please come see what Bell Choir is about. This year we will meet for a few early Sunday afternoons before playing. In an effort to not interfere with interest in Bible study and make travel easier for those that live a little farther from the church, we are trying a different time. We hope you will join us!! We would love to see you!

- Christine Cook

JR. CHOIR TO START SOON 🎵 🎵 🎵

Join with other 1st- 6th graders in building a group that
Comes together to have fun and learn more about God's love
Offers a chance to get to know one another even better
Makes friends, even with those a little younger or a little older
Makes an effort to listen to and encourage each other
Uses music to praise God, and as a form of prayer
Notices ways to be helpful in working together
Invests time, energy and enthusiasm in preparing for worship
Trys to treat each other kindly, making a place just for
You
Yes, we would love to have YOU as a part of our group! We meet most Sundays from 11:15 – 12:15, and once a month make a wonderful, heartfelt contribution to morning worship at Gates Presbyterian. Keep in mind the following Sundays:
Sunday, September 6th - a sneak preview for new members or those considering joining our choir. Come to Room 4 for a few minutes after morning worship to meet Mrs. White, try on a robe, and have a snack. (Yes, the snacks are for returning members, too- drop by and say hi!).
Sunday, September 13th- first rehearsal. We will meet in Room 4 from 11:15 – 12:15.
Come join the fun!

PUBLIC WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER

Date	Lay Reader	Front Door Greeter	Usher Team	Deacon Team
Sept. 6	Gordon Chapman	Kris Ohman	3	4
Sept. 13	Todd Pimm	Bridget Wohlers	4	5
Sept. 20	Andrea Unson	Sheri MacFarlane	5	6
Sept. 27	Laura Keiling	Laura Nolan	6	1

Communion Team B:

Left:	1. Tami Pignone	Right:	1. Cathy Goodykoontz
	2. Jocelyn Pimm		2. Heather Pimm
	3. J.C. Rouchon		3. Velta Rouchon
	4. Rodney Knowles		4. Bonnie Beckett



MISSION NEWS:

Gates Presbyterian Folks: Help youth, support mission, enjoy fall, and have fun while doing it! The Wheel-a-thon is for EVERYONE!!

The youth would love to have you join them on the very manageable 20 mile bike ride on the beautiful Erie Canal path. All ages are invited though children under 12 must have an adult ride with them. Many stops along the way and snacks! Minimum pledge requirement is \$10.00 BUT...you can help other ways by making a pledge (youth will be collecting pledges starting mid September), staffing a rest stop and/or supplying drink and/or snack for the rest stops. This fundraiser supports youth summer mission projects. It helps to keep the cost per person manageable for families.

THANK YOU for all your support in providing new underwear for Cameron Street and all the food you brought in for SWEM. You are AWESOME!!!!

GUATEMALA PARTNERS will be selling “Around Town” coupon books this year. The cost is \$20.00. Please contact any member of the Guatemala Partners or Tom Ward.

Cameron Community Ministry Volunteer Opportunity September 27th 2015 4:00-6:00pm

Laurelton Presbyterian Church prepares and serves a meal at Cameron Community Ministries and has invited GPC to partner with them in this mission opportunity. We are looking for 5-6 people. If you are interested or want to know more, please contact Katie (katie@gatespres.org) or call 247-5292) before September 20th.

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY – October 4th

Celebrating World Communion Sunday has taken on a new relevancy and depth of meaning in a world where globalization often has undermined peace and justice – and in a time when fear divides the people of God’s earth. On this day we celebrate our oneness in Christ, the Prince of Peace, in the midst of the world we are called to serve – a world ever more in need of peacemaking.

Mission Focus: Peacemaking Offering – Create a World of Peace

The Peacemaking Offering is one of the four Presbyterian Church (USA) denominational offerings. Twenty-five percent of the offering received is used for local ministries of peacemaking within the church and its community. Twenty-five percent is used by presbyteries and synods, and 50% is used by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. A Peacemaking Envelope will be included in your October Harbinger and in the October 4th bulletin.