



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ORONOCO

A SMALL CHURCH WITH A BIG MISSION

February 2022

2022 Annual Meeting

Our congregational Annual Meeting is set for:

Sunday, February 6, 2022
10:00 a.m. during worship



In an effort to include as many of you as possible, this meeting will be conducted in a hybrid manner – both in person and virtually. We will once again be using Zoom for this to ensure that those joining us virtually are able to participate as fully as possible in the meeting. Because of this, we will *not* be streaming this service on our website and Facebook Live like we normally do. During the meeting, we will be electing, ordaining, and installing new leadership—ruling elders and deacons. We'll also be celebrating the Lord's Supper together—celebrating in community as we review the previous year in the life of this community.

On the morning of Feb. 6, Pastor Lisa will email out the necessary Zoom link for anyone planning to join us from home. If you would rather enter the meeting ID and passcode they are:

Zoom ID: 873 3893 1573

Passcode: church

Annual Reports are ready and available for pick up in the fellowship room. If you pick one up, please be sure to check your name off the list. Thank you!

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Lisa Johnson

Office Admin: Brianna Clement

Church Leadership

Ellen Warner, Treasurer
Mike Rand, Clerk of Session
Lance Sorensen, Ruling Elder
Ron Peterson-Rucker, Ruling Elder

Ellen Warner, Ruling Elder
Janice Ostrom, Ruling Elder
Todd Wickre, Ruling Elder
Gail Rucker, Deacon

Ellen Simon, Deacon
Joanne Schenck, Deacon
Karen Peterson-Rucker, Deacon
Cindy Luhman, Deacon



From the Pastor ...

It's February again ... which means it's I Love to Read month again! A couple times over the last few years, I've shared some of my favorite book recommendations with you. It's been a fun way to shake things up a little bit and has hopefully given you some fun new reading options. So once again, if you're looking for a good book, check out

***Ordinary Blessings: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Everyday Life* by Meta Herrick Carlson**

Meta Herrick Carlson is a local! She's the pastor at Bethlehem Lutheran Church's Minnetonka campus. She's also a mom to three young kids. This precious little book is full of all sorts of blessings for every part of your day: for everyday life, for loving yourself, for loving others, for living with each other, for authenticity, for hard things, for bodies, for work, for turning points, for important people, for nature, and for "B-list holidays" (basically anything that isn't a specific church holy day). All of her blessings are short and simultaneously poetic and practical. I received this book in a subscription box about a year ago, and I love it so much, I've already given two copies away to others. Trust me. It's *that* good!

***Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked* by Adam Alter**

This fascinating and somewhat disturbing book is about exactly what the title says: addictive technology. From the description on the back of the book: "In this revolutionary book, Adam Alter explains why so many of today's [technological] products are irresistible and why their extraordinary and something damaging magnetism is no accident." Alter does this in a way that is thorough but also practical in that he's not advocating that we abandon technology altogether. He makes it perfectly clear again and again that there are definitely times in our lives and our days when tablets, smartphones, laptops, etc. make things easier. But he's also candid about the effects that this technological boom has had and is having on our daily lives and, even more interestingly, on our brains. This text was one of the required books for my DMin, and it truly is a compelling read.

***Everything Sad is Untrue* by Daniel Nayeri**

This one is an autobiographical novel by a man who immigrated from Iran to America with his mother and older sister. It's told in the form of a report being given in front of Nayeri's middle school English class on "family history," so Nayeri does just that. He weaves the story of his family's old life back in Iran, their new life in Oklahoma, their immigration journey through refugee camps and the U.S. asylum process, and his family's stories in with the stories of his culture – the wonder and magic and poetry of Persian folklore. It's beautiful and funny. It's poignant and speaks some powerful truths about how immigrants are (or aren't) welcomed in America.

***Anatomy of a Revived Church: Seven Findings of How Congregations Avoided Death* by Thom S. Rainer**

Thom Rainer is the founder and CEO of Church Answers, a congregational consulting firm whose goal is to help congregations become the healthiest version of themselves that they can be. A number of years ago, Rainer wrote a book called *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive* in which he studied a number of churches that had already died and discerned 12 common themes. After publishing this book, as he was both promoting it and going about his consulting work, he continued to encounter people whose churches had closed who told him, "We wish you'd written a book to help us *before* we got to the 'closing' point." So Rainer decided to write about his experiences with congregations that, while they may have been on the brink of closure at one point, had come back from that brink and were now healthy, thriving congregations. It probably won't surprise you that this book was also one of my DMin required books. It's both pragmatic and hopeful.

***This Tender Land* by William Kent Krueger**

Another local author! William Kent Krueger lives in St. Paul, Minnesota, and all of his books take place in Minnesota. He is possibly most well known for his mystery series featuring Cork O'Connor (which are also fabulous books, if that's what you're looking for!). *This Tender Land*, however, is one of his stand-alone novels. Set in greater Minnesota in 1932, it's the story of three boys – two brothers and their friend – who run away from Lincoln School, a fictional version of one of the many Indian Boarding Schools that plagued both the U.S. and Canada at the time. The adventures and trials of these three boys, along with a young girl in their care, are both touching and heartbreaking. Truly, this is one of the best books I've read in a long time.

***The Guncle* by Steven Rowley**

One more fiction recommendation! *The Guncle* is a beautiful, hilarious, touching story of Patrick O'Hara – a famous-actor-turned-recluse who unexpectedly ends up providing a temporary home for his niece and nephew for a summer. They've lost their mother to cancer, and while their father spends 90 days in a residential rehab facility, Maisie and Grant spend their time with GUP – Gay Uncle Patrick. Through their time together, there is laughter and fun. There is learning galore, some appropriate and some ... questionable. And there is holding space for grief and healing, more than Patrick could have ever imagined or hoped for. This is truly a wonderful book that will make you cry but will also warm your heart.

If you're interested in reading any of these books, you can find most of them on my shelf. (You'll have to find *Everything Sad is Untrue*, *This Tender Land*, and *The Guncle* at the library.) Of the books I do have, I would love to loan them to you. Happy I Love to Read Month!

Pastor Lisa

Lenten series: "Your Story is God's Story"



As we continue to follow the Narrative Lectionary, this year our Lenten Scripture readings come from the gospel of John. Each of these readings (which you can find listed below) finds Jesus testifying about God's love, God's power, and God's work through his words and his actions.

By definition, testifying means bearing witness, giving evidence, or making a solemn declaration. In this case, bearing witness to or making a solemn declaration about one's faith journey, one's relationship with God. Or, as Rev. Dr. Anna Carter Florence, professor of preaching at Columbia Theological Seminary, puts it, testimony is "standing in the biblical text and in your own life and saying

what you see and believe about God." Your testimony is your own very personal account of where God's Story shines through and intertwines with your own story.

As we read these texts that walk us through some of Jesus' own moments of testimony during Lent, we're also going to take some time thinking about and working on our own testimonies. As we celebrate Ash Wednesday together, we're going to put together a sort of testimony prayer journal/workbook that you can use throughout Lent to truly begin to work through your own story of faith.

For the time being, the plans for our various Lenten services are still up in the air. We will have our Ash Wednesday service on **Wed., Mar. 2 at 7:00 p.m.** as well as our Good Friday service on **Fri., Apr. 15 at 7:30 p.m.** While I dearly wish that we could resume our soup and bread worship on Maundy Thursday, I don't feel like we can safely resume that with the current COVID case counts in Olmsted, Goodhue, and Dodge counties. If something changes drastically between now and then, we can reconsider. But for the time being, plan to celebrate Maundy Thursday (Thurs., Apr. 14) at home, and I will plan on putting together an at-home worship package for everyone.

1st Sunday in Lent – Mar. 6: John 11:1-44

Testimony is personal.

2nd Sunday in Lent – Mar. 13: John 13:1-17

Testimony is hospitable.

3rd Sunday in Lent – Mar. 20: John 18:12-27

Testimony is truth-telling.

4th Sunday in Lent – Mar. 27: John 18:28-40

Testimony is insistent.

5th Sunday in Lent – Apr. 3: John 19:1-16a

Testimony is unapologetic.

Palm Sunday – Apr. 10: John 12:12-27

Testimony is sincere.

Easter Sunday – Apr. 17: John 20:1-18

Testimony is invitational.

Next Session mtg.:

Wed., Feb. 2

6:30 p.m.

Please wear masks

Next Presbytery mtg.:

Fri., Feb. 18, 2022

via Zoom

Prayer Requests

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

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



Current Worship Requirements

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

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

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

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

And, of course, if you're not comfortable coming back to worship in person yet, we will continue to livestream our worship services on Sunday mornings directly on our website.



Scripture readings for February

- **Feb. 6:** John 4:46-54—*Annual Meeting*
- **Feb. 13:** John 6:35-59
- **Feb. 20:** John 7:37-52
- **Feb. 27:** John 9:1-41



Seeking Musicians



We are overjoyed to announce that we have hired two people who will be sharing the church musician position: Raquel “Rocky” Nisbit and Zara Boon.

That being said, we are still seeking 1-2 more musicians willing to play for worship on a rotations basis. That could mean playing the organ or the piano or even a guitar! Pay is \$85 per Sunday. Anyone interested can contact Pastor Lisa via email (pastorLisaJ@gmail.com) or on her cell phone (507-995-7310).



Food Shelf Highlight 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!

Star Word Prompts

FEBRUARY STAR WORD REFLECTION:

You’ve been sitting with your star word for a month. What struggles, challenges, and/or uncomfortable growing areas have you encountered through your star word?



February Birthdays & Anniversaries

- ♫ 2/2—Annie Johnson
- ♫ 2/12—Hayward Johnson
- ♫ 2/18—Ann Hawkins
- ♫ 2/20—Jacky Rueber



Unconventional Ways to Give

- Designate “Presbyterian Church of ORONOCO” as your Amazon Smile organization, and .5% of all your eligible Amazon purchases will come back to the church on a quarterly basis.
- Give online through our Presbyterian Foundation account using either the link on our website (www.oronocochurch.org at the bottom of the homepage) or this QR code (*at right*)



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.ptcaweb.org>

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Office: 800-728-7228
 Email: info@pcusa.org
 Website: <http://www.pcusa.org>



Winter Weather Procedures

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



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

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

Per Capita

- **What is it?** The Presbyterian Church is a connectional church. We worship, serve, and govern together. Per capita contributions fund the shared governing responsibilities for the whole church (Presbytery, Synod, General Assembly), no matter the size of an individual church.
- **How old is it?** It is mentioned in the Synod of Philadelphia minutes in 1738!
- **How much is it?** In 2021, \$36.50 per member. And as per the vote during the Nov. 11 presbytery mtg., the 2022 per capita will also be \$36.50.
- **Where does the money go?** 66% to our Presbytery; 17% to our Synod; 17% to the General Assembly (national office).
- **Why is it important?** Per capita monies support the work of the church globally to nationally to locally, including the technology grant we received earlier this year to worship remotely.
- **What is our church’s policy?** It is, and has been, the policy of the Presbyterian Church of Oronoco to pay our per capita every year, whether individual members have contributed their portion or not.
- **Have I paid this year?** If you are not sure, please contact Ellen Warner (ellenjwarner@gmail.com) to find out.
- **How do I pay?** You can write a check to the Presbyterian Church of Oronoco and simply write “per capita” on the memo line.



Keeping Up with the Smith-Mathers

First, the update: According to their last newsletter, Shelvis has finally been able to return to Oxford University in England to resume his doctoral work in peacebuilding strategies. Nancy and the kids – Jordan, Addie, Nicole, and Alice – remain here in the United States.

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. A few times a year, our treasurer would deposit whatever had accumulated from that offering in the bank, then send the total as a donation directly to the Smith-Mathers' Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) account.

Recently, however, PMA has decided to change the way they distribute their mission funds. Instead of individual people and/or congregations contributing directly to the accounts of specific mission co-workers, all contributions will go into a general fund and distributed to all mission co-workers from there. This change has been made in an attempt to make mission co-worker support more equitable, especially for those co-workers who may be serving in areas that are especially remote or even dangerous and therefore cannot easily relay updates or connect with supporting individuals/congregations.

Donations can still be made in honor of specific mission co-workers – Shelvis and Nancy, in our case. And of course, we can always pray for them and their family in all times and places. 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 in honor of the ministry of Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather." This will redirect you 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.



Narrative Lectionary - Feb., Yr. 4

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

Pharisees

disciples

Nicodemus

Human One

Galilee

healing

Sabbath

father

gospel

Spirit

blind

signs

Jesus

faith

life

bread

son

Cana

mud

Presbyterian Church of Oronoco

P.O. Box 118

Oronoco, MN 55960

507-367-4711



Basic Information

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

Facebook: Presbyterian Church of Oronoco

Instagram: @oronocochurch



Worship—10:00 a.m.
Communion—1st Sunday of the month
Confirmation—2nd & 4th Sundays

Rev. Lisa Johnson—contact information:

Cell: 507-995-7310

Email: PastorLisaJ@gmail.com

Blog: <http://pastorlisaj.com>