

## **Geneva Presbyterian Church**

11931 Seven Locks Road, Potomac, MD 20854  
(301) 424-4346 Office  
www.genevapotomac.org  
Rev. Patrick McElwaine, Pastor

Dear friends,

My how time is moving quickly! It feels like we were just celebrating Christmas, and now we will soon be moving into the season of Lent. How can that be? Our neighbors across the street still have Christmas lights up! And yet, here I am, writing my Radiant article and looking at Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17) on the calendar a few short weeks from now.



Like Advent, Lent is a season of the church year when we focus on preparation. But our Lenten preparations are quite different than the watchful waiting of Advent. Lent is a liturgical season of self-reflection, repentance, and re-dedication of ourselves to Christ. This is how we prepare for the glory of Easter: by earnestly taking stock of our need for Jesus' salvation, by examining our lives, and by committing ourselves to letting go of or taking on that which is most needed for our personal faith development.

A common image associated with Lent is the act of "giving something up" for the season. I personally appreciate the flip side: the act of "taking something new on" for Lent instead. Something beneficial, growth-oriented, or of service in the world. Either way, this practice is meant to be difficult, perhaps even a thorn in our side for daily living. Something that requires sacrifice. Something that drives us to prayerful reflection every time we are faced with what we have "given up" or "taken on".

Every time a person would drink caffeine, they take that time instead to give thanks for how God's Holy Spirit sustains us each day. Instead of another 30 minutes of screen time, choosing instead to read a daily devotional. Instead of eating a certain food, pausing to pray for neighbors who don't have enough food in the first place.

**To help with our Lenten preparations, our fabulous Deacons will again be delivering specially made "goodie baskets" in time for Ash Wednesday.** These baskets will of course include some treats :-)) and they will also include devotional materials and resources our community can use as we prepare for the glory of Easter morning.

**Other Lenten options I hope you'll take advantage of are** "drive through" ashes at the physical church building on Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17 from 1:00-2:00pm), a virtual Ash Wednesday service at 7:00pm, and our annual ecumenical Lenten study with neighboring local churches -- this year for the first time also virtually!

I am reminded in this moment that not everyone who calls Geneva Presbyterian home these days lives near or even in the same state as our physical church building. What a wonderful thing to celebrate! One positive outcome of this past year's challenges is our opportunity to connect with siblings in Christ through electronic ministries. Even as we are in many ways kept physically distant by Covid, we are at the same time using digital tools to grow closer with new neighbors and expanding our church community around the nation.

In that spirit, **I am excited to announce that Geneva Presbyterian Church has recently completed our new church website.** The address is the same, so be sure to check it out at <http://genevapotomac.org/>. Responding to the changing needs of our time, our new church website is a welcoming "front porch" for visitors, seekers, and the world at large. This site is our first introduction to communicate who we are, whose we are, and what we're all about as a community of faith. I hope you'll devote the time to explore the site for yourself and share it with others -- word of mouth has always been the best way to share the Gospel! I hope you'll also be sure to thank our dedicated Website Team who has diligently seen this project through from vision to reality these past months: Rolf Winch, Jane Campbell, Sheri Sankey, and Rosie Perthel.

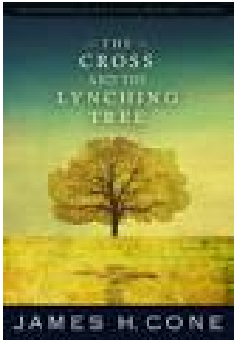
**To go with our new website, you may have noticed on recent church bulletins that we also have a new church logo!** Later in this issue we'll share more about the new logo and how it communicates our message of Christ's love to the world as The Little Church with the Big Heart -- be sure to check that out, too!

For this issue I have two book recommendations to share:



**"autism and alleluias" by Kathleen Deyer Bolduc**

Written by a fellow Presbyterian and parent of a severely autistic son, this book was an especially meaningful read for me personally. Bolduc shares short and rich stories of life through the years with her son, Joel, with an eye toward experiencing the holy through their triumphs and trials. As Geneva begins exploring what it might look like to partner with people with disabilities in mission, I commend this short and profound book to you.



### **“The Cross and the Lynching Tree” by James H. Cone**

Though this might be new language for us to consider, there's no two ways about it: Jesus Christ's death on the cross was a lynching spurred on by an angry mob and executed by the Roman Empire as an act of terror to scare his followers into submission. In this groundbreaking book, Cone outlines the awful history of lynching in America, examines how black spirituality undergirds the fight for justice, and connects the cross of Jesus Christ with the lynching tree. As we are preparing this Lent, Cone's book is a difficult read but an important

read.

Children of God: continue staying safe, continue being the tie that binds our church family together, and continue sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in these trying times -- all three are vital.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Patrick

### **Update from Our Music Director!**

Well, my friends, we made it to 2021! In 2020 we faced many challenges and, I think, grew as a church community, found strength in friends and loved ones, and were reminded to not take any day for granted. I know for myself I longed to hug my family once again. It makes me think back to that old saying I heard growing up "God doesn't give us anything we can't handle." While I feel like I was facing dark months, I prayed on it and God showed me the way. I can't put into words how important my Geneva family meant to me in those months.

As we were faced with going digital, we were forced to put concerts, handbell and choir rehearsals, and congregational music making on hold. But while we were adjusting, many of us learned some new skills: recording arts, video editing, how to utilize technology to its fullest. I'm thrilled that, in the future, we will be able to return and hold services from our sanctuary again. How I've missed gazing at the stained glass, the touch of the ivory keys on the organ, the sound of voices echoing through its hall. I look forward to the day when we can all worship together in one place. I say this because church is where God is and God is with us- everywhere we go.

May God continue to bless you and yours.

In Christ,

Your faithful Music Director, Ben

## Geneva Day School Update

Geneva Day School returned from Winter Break safe and well, and ready to start the New Year of 2021. Just the week before, on December 28, all staff and students were PCR tested to be certain that all returned negative; and all were negative! We are grateful to our families and staff for continuing to take precautions and try to remain safe.



Yes, Geneva has navigated some COVID-19 "situations," but had very few class closures since our program opened last summer. We realize, however, that we may continue to have more cases, and feel comfortable working with the Health Department, our Licensing Specialist, staff, and families to address each unique situation.

Because of the pandemic, classes continue to operate in their own space or "pod" to minimize exposure to others. Though student numbers are reduced, we are always thrilled each day to observe so many happy and enthusiastic children arriving at school. Many, literally, jump out of their cars and run into their classroom or the hallway. They really delight us and bring smiles to all of our faces. Geneva is really very lucky!

Appreciation, of course, goes to the many excellent staff who make what they do look so easy in spite of these unusual times. They continue to be supportive of all the extra measures they must undertake every day to keep their class safe, and, of course, provide many fun activities, too. One positive aspect of this virus is that we have good data to demonstrate that our cases of colds, ear infections, strep throats, and other common childhood diseases are way down. We are not quite ready, however, to commit to wearing masks and social distancing going forward forever! Ha!

The school is just learning how staff may sign up to begin the COVID-19 vaccines. As I write this report, very few have appointments (through PG county or the University of MD), with the rest of us waiting until more appointments are available for Tier 1B educators. Montgomery County has a limited number of vaccines available each week, so we imagine it will take some time before most staff can complete the treatments. Staff will be staggered in terms of release time, so classes may continue operating, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> shot will be scheduled on Fridays to allow weekends for recovery.

In the meantime, plans for February and March continue to include regular, seasonal, and holiday activities. Valentines' Days will be celebrated in classes on February 11 and 12, with the Lunar New Year of the OX to be celebrated on February 18 and 19, and St. Patrick's Day with Leprechaun visits on March 17. The school's Spring Break will be from March 29 – April 5. Geneva is processing registration for current families for next fall, and we continue to take new applications for new families at any time. We are finalizing plans for another amazing and enriching Summer Program featuring various weekly themes, and with Ms. Daisy Lizama serving again as Director. We are planning on continuing restrictive practices due to the virus, but are

ready to add more students should guidelines be relaxed by summer and the fall.

Warm wishes are extended to all of our Geneva Church Friends from your Day School Friends and students, with hopes and prayers for a wonderful New Year of good health and peace!

**Suzanne Funk**, Director

## Deacon and Fellowship Activities

The Lent Season begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17 and the Deacons and Fellowship Committee will be assembling and delivering Lenten Goody Bags to our Geneva Family and Friends. The Goody Bags will include:

- Suggestions for 40 days of prayer, giving, fasting
- Craft activities for kids and adults
- Holy Week activities
- Weekly Giving Envelopes
- Special treats and goodies!

Look for your Lenten Goody Bag to be delivered around February 13 – 16.

## Deacons Fund

Deacon Funds are used to support individual or families in financial crisis in terms of monetary donations, purchasing food, helping pay medical or household bills. **This past year, \$5,300 has been given to Geneva members in need of support.** The funds are also used for the items in the goody bags that have been delivered to our members, blessing bags for our homeless neighbors, gift cards to students during final exams, hosting memorial services, hosting Lenten dinners, sending cards and gift baskets to members needing support, and also the supplies needed for our seasonal craft activities.

Our Deacon Fund has been used a great deal during this pandemic and is getting extremely low. Since we have not been in the Sanctuary the past year, there have been limited donations to this fund compared to normal. Therefore, I am asking for your generosity to make a tax-deductible donation to the Geneva Deacons Fund, so our Deacons can continue to support our Geneva family. Your gift in any amount will be greatly appreciated to help our church make a brighter future for our members.

**As of January 24, \$1,700 has been collected to replenish our fund.**

If you are able to help this mission, please go to [Online Giving with the GivePlus app](#) to donate, or mail your check to Geneva Presbyterian Church, 11931 Seven Locks Rd. Potomac, MD 20854 (designate your check for Deacon Fund). Thank you in advance for your help and support.

## **Deacon Family Groups**

Every Geneva member and friend are included on a Deacon Family Group. Your Family Deacon works with Pastor Patrick to celebrate your joys and support you in times of concern or need. During this time of COVID, the Deacons have been hosting Family Group Zoom meetings to help support communication and fellowship. We have found that it is easier to have 2 or more Family Groups join together for our Zoom meetings. Your Family Deacon should be contacting you in the next weeks to set up a meeting. We hope that you will be able to join us. If you or anyone you know, needs help in joining in the meeting, please contact your Deacon or Renee Moloznik, Deacon Moderator ( Rmoloz@hotmail.com)

The Family Deacon Groups are listed below. **If you do not see your name and want to be a part of a Deacon Family group, please contact Renee Moloznik at Rmoloz@hotmail.com**

Renee Moloznik

**Deacon: Bobbie Maxwell**

Bobbie.K.72@verizon.net

Nancy Morse

Maureen Ferguson

Mark & Holly Allen

Terry & Debbie Dunne

Sara & Jim Torrence

Ken & Nan Sprinkle

Andrea Austin

Nancy Rawson

Tom Maxwell

**Deacon: Rhonda Ricci**

rhondaricci56@gmail.com

Betty Halls

Terry Shima

Paul & Barbara Prosswimmer

Carole Haller

Marie Smith

Elaine Brasted

Rosalie Ruff

John & Patsy Wright

Robert Ricci

Daniel & Jestina Ricci

Ken & Letitia Denaburg

Lisa & Craig Miller

Emmanuel Mbi

Tom & Sara Sadler

Shirley Chow

**Deacon: Renee Moloznik**

Rmoloz@hotmail.com

PJ & Brent Davis

Sheena Galliani

Juliet & Scott Heimberg

Alice & Rollin Franks

Elaine & Rolf Winch

Robyn & Jeff Alexander

Robin & Jack Kough

Amanda White

Ben Shaver

Tim Sullivan

Suzanne Funk

Sandra Kichefski

Melissa Cutler

Bill & Beth Sherman

Samantha & Andrew Sloan

Eleanor Liu

Pete & Ruth Nunn

Erland & Ellie Heginbotham

Cindy & Jim Kaufman

**Deacons:** **Rosie Perthel** rperthel@hotmail.com  
**Ludivine Kom Liapoe** ludivinekomliapoe16@gmail.com

Helene Chimba	Francisco & Lucy Fuentes
Flore Kom Liapoe	George & Margo Hunt
Bill & Ema Oen	Heinz Nagel
Veronique Weinstein	Carl Perthel
Toshiko Ota	

**Deacon:** **Sheri Sankey** sheriasankey@gmail.com

Jane Campbell & Pepe Marin  
May Lin Cheong  
Margaret Teng  
Janelle & Eric Thibau  
Scott Brown  
Amy He  
Linda & Ed Devine  
Judy & Jim Stiles  
Katie & Jim Harris  
Nelidia G. Smith  
Betty Lee  
Kyla & Vince Lupo

## Ash Wednesday

### **Drive Through Ashes for Ash Wednesday: 2/17 from 1:00-2:00pm**

Pastor Patrick will be at the front church doors to administer ashes for Ash Wednesday. You are invited to "drive through" for ashes: stay in your car, roll your window down, and Patrick will apply ashes using COVID-safe measures. He'll be double masked and wearing a face shield -- **please wear your mask, too.**



### **Ash Wednesday Worship: 2/17 @ 7:00pm**

Geneva will meet for Ash Wednesday in the usual Virtual Church Zoom space we use for Sunday morning worship (info included below). It will be a meaningful service to help us begin Lent. If you'd like to receive ashes, please come to "Drive Through Ashes" earlier in the day.

Church Link For Ash Wednesday:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/668560374?pwd=SW9XbVViN0sxQ0Noa2lVRExkanNXdz09>

Meeting ID: 668 560 374

Passcode: 240543

## **Giving Tree Update**

In case you were wondering, here is an accounting of this year's Giving Tree collection. This year we collected \$692.50 from 11 donors. Last year we had 12 donors who gave a combined total of \$450. We surpassed last year's totals by a significant amount...almost \$250! Thank you to all of our very generous Geneva donors. We collected money for refugee food baskets, chickens, water catchment systems, piglets and money to educate children. These gifts will make an important difference in the lives of the recipients. Thank you Geneva!

Rhonda Ricci

## **Mission Report**

Watch the Annual Report for a blow by blow recap of Mission Committee's 2020. A foretaste:

2020 was a quest for the field the Spirit is calling us toward. When did it feel particularly wonderful to give? What are some elements that went into it?

One cause we gave to in 2020 was a response to the deadly explosion in Beirut. Sometimes we resonate with a need on the other side of the world. Yet there was a very local element — Lebanese Taverna (a local restaurant, now Lebtav) mounted a relief campaign, and we contributed.

In November we hit on something that may bring together all the elements we've quested for. On January 18 a group of 9 met to begin discussion of a Disability Mission. Some of the elements brought together: a thorny need; a way to start very close to home; experience, knowledge, and other resources to add; a potential to broaden our reach; an extension of what we already do in the field of education.

All are invited to participate.

Jane Campbell

## **A Thank You Letter to Geneva from Janelle and Isabelle Thibau**

Our Geneva family and friends supported us throughout our ordeal with Covid-19, sending prayers and notes and calls and love and encouragement that was deeply felt. We cannot thank you enough for your thoughtfulness, your spiritual strength that sustained us, and your warm and heartfelt words of support. In the hospital, Janelle was comforted by the prayers sent her way. At home, Isabelle, who was also recovering from Covid-19, was carried forward on the



shoulders of the congregation, helping her to keep up her spirits while she communicated with healthcare staff about her mother's condition.

We are back home and on the road to full recovery, but we will never forget how Geneva held us in its heart and asked for our recovery. Thank you, dear friends. How blessed we feel to be part of this loving family.

Sincerely,  
Janelle and Isabelle Thibau

### **New Church Logo!**

In addition to a new church website, Geneva Presbyterian Church has a new logo to match! We worked with WorshipTimes, our website design company, to design a logo that tells the story of The Little Church with the Big Heart.

Central is our eye catching and beloved circular stained glass window above the choir loft in the sanctuary. The stained glass then flows out organically in a dynamic and engaging swirl of color. This "stained glass pathway" connects our church with the world: it is both a path welcoming the world into our community and a path leading us out in service.



The butterfly is an ancient Christian symbol of resurrection; it also communicates our commitment to earth care and our relationship with Geneva Day School, whose logo also features a monarch butterfly.

Rooted in Christ, creative, connected, forward-looking, and welcoming -- a picture really is worth a thousand words!

# At the Edge of The Promised Land

CHURCHES OF SEVEN LOCKS ROAD ECUMENICAL LENTEN SERIES  
WEDNESDAYS IN LENT, BY ZOOM AT 7:00 P.M.

As the Israelites prepared to leave Egypt and enter the Promised Land, Moses asked them to remember what they had learned in the wilderness and all that God had done for them. At this time in our lives, when we move through a global pandemic, we are asked to do the same.

Join us for prayer, presentation, and discussion as we reflect on where we've been, what we've learned, and the hope that lies ahead.

## Topics for Reflection, Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

- February 24 Remembering how God has led us: On the Edge of the Promised Land
- March 3 Leaving Egypt: What we leave behind
- March 10 Are we there yet? God's presence as we prepare for the Promised Land
- March 17 Moving ahead: Finding our hope in a time of transition
- March 24 Entering the Promised Land: An evening of fellowship, worship, and praise

# Feb 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b>
10:30am - <b>Worship</b>			7:00pm - <b>Bible Study</b>	7:00pm - <b>GDS Board</b>	7:00pm - <b>Book Club</b>	
<b>07</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
10:30am - <b>Worship</b>			7:00pm - <b>Bible Study</b>		7:00pm - <b>Book Club</b>	
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
10:30am - <b>Worship</b>	7:00pm - <b>Executive Committee</b>		1:00-2:00pm – <b>Drive Through Ashes</b>  7:00pm - <b>Ash Wednesday Worship Service</b>		7:00pm - <b>Book Club</b>	
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
10:30am - <b>Worship</b>	7:00pm - <b>Session</b>		7:00pm - <b>Bible Study</b>			
<b>28</b>						
10:30am - <b>Worship</b>						

# MAR 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	<b>01</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b>
			7:00pm - <b>Bible Study</b>	7:00pm - <b>GDS Board</b>	7:00pm - <b>Book Club</b>	
<b>07</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
10:30am - <b>Worship</b>			7:00pm - <b>Bible Study</b>		7:00pm - <b>Book Club</b>	
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
10:30am - <b>Worship</b>  <b>Daylight Savings Begins</b>			7:00pm - <b>Bible Study</b>		7:00pm - <b>Book Club</b>	
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
10:30am - <b>Worship</b>	7:00pm - <b>Executive Committee</b>		7:00pm - <b>Bible Study</b>		7:00pm - <b>Book Club</b>	
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			
10:30am - <b>Palm Sunday Worship</b>  11:45am - <b>Annual Congregational Meeting</b>	7:00pm - <b>Session</b>		7:00pm - <b>Bible Study</b>			

The  
**HEAVENS**  
declare the  
glory of God;  
the **Skies**  
proclaim the work  
of his **HANDS**

Psalm 19:1



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