

## The little church with a BIG heart



## THE RADIANT

### Geneva Presbyterian Church

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(301) 424-4346 Office

[www.genevapotomac.org](http://www.genevapotomac.org)

Rev. Patrick McElwaine, Pastor

## Our return to in person worship, Sunday, May 23, 2021



Dear friends,

The cicadas are humming and the days are getting longer, which can mean only one thing: summer is almost here! As the seasons change and summer approaches, so too we see other changes around us. In the last issue of the Radiant, I wrote that Session had formed a “Reopening Team” to research and recommend guidelines for our returning to in person worship. This issue, I am excited that we have now resumed in person worship. It is good to be together in person with those who desire to or are able to be in the sanctuary.

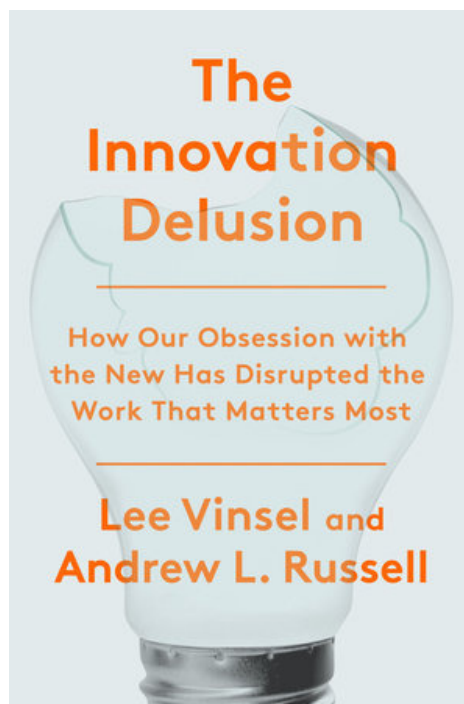
The change of resuming in person worship is deeper than the question of how to safely gather in the same physical space, however. It’s a question of our identity as a church family. The composition of our community and how we are the Body of Christ together.

With this move, we have become a community that gathers online and in person. We have become a church family of people from around the corner and around the country. This is a new day of ministry for us at Geneva Presbyterian and the Holy Spirit is leading us to share the Gospel in new ways. We are the little church with the big heart, and now technology is enabling us to be even more welcoming and inclusive than ever before.

Speaking of change: federal, state, and local guidelines for COVID safety are also changing quickly these days. For now, we are sticking with the in person worship guidelines approved by Session, including social distancing and wearing masks. Session will continue to review, revise as needed, and communicate with the congregation any changes to these policies.

As you consider your summer reading selections, here are two suggestions of my own for you to consider:

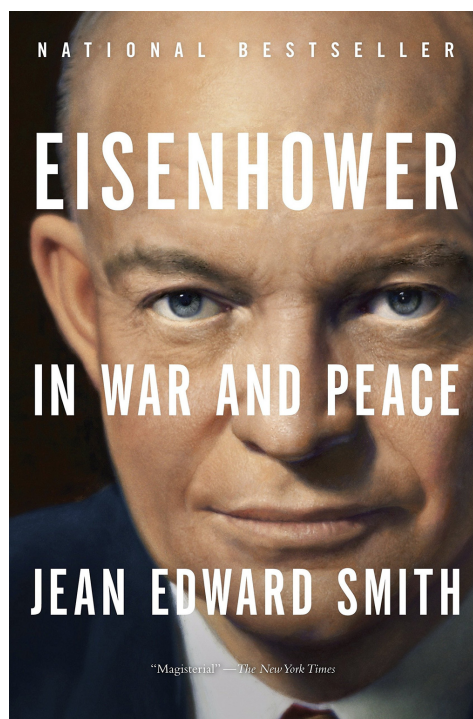
“The Innovation Delusion” by Lee Vinsel and Andrew L. Russell. This engaging read was one I didn’t want to put down. Vinsel and Russell turn our society’s consuming focus with innovation and “disruptive change” back on itself by asking what gets neglected when we are obsessed with newness for newness’ own sake? Maintenance, moderation, and stewardship of what already exists is not nearly as celebrated as the cutting edge, the latest, and the greatest. But what are the consequences, personally and societally, of ignoring maintenance?



“Eisenhower in War and Peace” by Jean Edward Smith. Well, OK, this suggestion is more for a style of book than this particular title: the long-form biography. Why not dedicate yourself to an extended look at history through the life and times of one notable person?

“Eisenhower” is a 750 page book I’ve been working my way through -- there’s something to be said for sticking with a book and completing a read of this magnitude. Perhaps there’s something or someone you’d like to learn more about this season?

May the God who rested on the seventh day bless you with rest, refreshment, and sabbath and may our Good Shepherd continue to watch over and guide the whole Geneva family.



Yours in Christ,

*Pastor Patrick*

Pastor Patrick McElwaine

My dear Geneva family,

The summer heat is upon us and there's a faint, buzzing hum in the air. That's right, the cicadas. Where I live, I don't hear any, possibly because so many buildings have been built on campus in the last 17 years- we believe they may have been dug up. When I came down to church recently, I stepped out of the car and heard this faint hum. At first I didn't know what to think, it sounded like "whirly tubes" which are hollow plastic tubes that one holds in their hands and then spins in a circle. Youtube them, they're pretty cool and lots of fun. They're often used to make the sound of wind in musicals, film music, and elementary music classes. Then I came to the conclusion that it must be the cicadas.

May 23, Pentecost Sunday, we came back to church with a small live congregation and online congregants. I'm not sure I can describe in words the feelings that I had when I saw faces out in the sanctuary. It was truly a blessing. You may have noticed a couple of familiar faces in the choir loft as well as some new ones. Rolf Winch and Amber Wood came and sang our soprano and tenor parts of the music while two new singers Jessica Bennet, alto, and Jessica Estepa, soprano 2, came and sang their respective parts. I hope you were tapping your toes to Keith Hampton's Praise His Holy Name. It's one of my most treasured pieces of music and, as stated in the About the Music section in the bulletin, is one of the most popular gospel choral pieces that has been published in the last 25 years.

In the coming months, you'll notice me utilizing more of the organ during service. Since I came to Geneva, it has been a goal of mine to practice and learn more about the organ, but I never seemed to have time or prioritize it in my schedule. That's now changing. I'm super thrilled to announce that I will have access to an organ near my school on which I can practice! I'm very excited to add this to my skills as a musician and bring it to Geneva. You will also be introduced to another musician this summer.

Patrick Merrill will be filling in for some services this summer. I'll be making a few trips with my family and going to several music conferences this summer. Patrick and I attended Peabody Conservatory at the same time. He has received his Bachelor's of Music in piano performance and Master's of Music in harpsichord, and is a Doctoral of Music Arts candidate at Peabody Conservatory. He is an incredibly talented musician and I feel comfortable leaving the service in his hands. In addition to Mr. Merrill, a cantor will lead the songs each Sunday. You will recognize these voices and faces: Derrick Truby, Amber Wood, Cara Schaefer, Jessica Bennett, Rolf Winch, and Jessica Estepa. In the last few months, these singers have been a part of our service. I'm so grateful to have many wonderful artists coming together to share their talents with us.

I hope that many of you have seen the invitation in the weekly email and bulletin to the Massanetta Springs Bible and Church Music Conference 2021. It would be wonderful to have a few members from our church who might be able to go sing, ring, dive deeper into faith, and worship with us from July 25-31. I'm looking forward to going back, seeing familiar faces, and meeting new ones! One of my tasks this summer is to learn about COVID safety protocols other directors have found successful during the pandemic. In August, my primary focus will be the return of our sanctuary and handbell choirs. It is my hope that we can safely return to work on music and start providing regular music in the Fall.

I hope you all have a delightful and safe summer.

Ever yours,



Ben Shaver



Geneva Day School successfully concluded this unusual school year on May 28. All staff looked forward to a well-deserved break for fun, family, and frivolities, plus rest, relaxation, and reading (my favorite 3 R's!).

During the past year, Geneva was quite successful in providing live classes for 13 students and two staff in all 8 pods for 133 students. The school closed only 1 day altogether, though several staff tested positive, and a few classes had family members with the virus or were close contacts. We are ever so grateful that our families and staff were cooperative and careful in following guidelines, to which we can give them credit for a good year. 92% of the staff and many adult families are now fully vaccinated.

After a one-week break after school is out, the Geneva Summer Program, under the leadership of Ms. Daisy Lizama, will begin on June 7. This year will include nine weeks of camp with themes to include: camping, Hawaii and a luau, the rainforest, stars and stripes, princesses and pirates, the circus, space cadets, the great outdoors, and farm animals. Special activities will take place each week to highlight themes, which young children always enjoy. This year will include: creek walks, Polynesian entertainment, nature shows, wagon parade, Captain Jack & Mr. Anson, circus events, and Squeals on Wheels. Only two paid staff, many of whom are school staff, will be working in group pods which will not co-mingle with others and not include any volunteers. Geneva will still be operating under COVID-19 guidelines, which it will continue to honor. This program was fully enrolled in May. The Summer Program will conclude on August 6. The school then is involved with a period of

painting, maintenance, and preparation for the new school year.

We hope by September that we may realize more normal working conditions, but, at this time, we intend to continue wearing masks and practicing social distancing. As of mid-May, 142 students are enrolled, though we expect a few more enrolled students by September. Administrative staff return on August 16, Teaching staff return on August 23, Kindergarten begins on August 26, and the entire school returns on September 8 for the official first day of school. We fully expect the new year to be somewhat challenging, but Geneva staff time and time again have risen to the occasion, surmounted every obstacle, and will be ready once more for amazing and developmentally appropriate programs for their new students.

Whatever the Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care, and the county Health Department require for the new school year, Geneva will fully comply. The health and safety of staff and students, and their families, remains highly important.

Your Day School Friends wish you a Happy Summer with continued safety and good health!  
Warm regards,



Suzanne Funk  
Director





The Executive Committee oversees Geneva's finances, and our physical property (including the Manse). The committee has been busy during this unusual year.

The two big chillers that cool the sanctuary were replaced this February, which made our first in-person worship much more comfortable last Sunday. We also had a couple of dead trees removed to keep our property safe for everyone who uses it. The other new addition to our building is several security cameras. The church was able to "piggy back" on Geneva Day School's installation of a security camera system, so that the new sound equipment is "on camera", as well as all the front doors of the church. We will be adding two more cameras, splitting the cost with the Day School, to cover a "blind" spot on the property.

There are two other projects that the Executive Committee and the AV-Sound groups are working on. The first is up grading the sound booth area so that it works well with the new needs of the AV team, and the other is replacing the wooden structure behind the facade on the right side of the church.

One of the important tasks of the Executive Committee is to develop the budget for the current year, with input from the chairs of all of the church committees. Generally we have a good idea of what is likely to happen from year to year, but this past year was definitely an exception!

I feel very lucky to have a group of people on the committee with such deep institutional knowledge to help guide me as the new chair of the Executive Committee. Everyone works towards what is best for the church as we work through the different challenges that arise. If you have any questions or ideas for improving our building and grounds, please let me know.

*Elaine Winch*

Elaine Winch  
Executive Committee chair



### **Deacons and Fellowship Activities**

Deacons are the "servants" or "caregivers" of the congregation. People have all kinds of needs - they are recovering from surgery, grieving, lonely, ill, or otherwise in a time where they welcome the ministry of care from our congregation. In a very real way, Deacons are the hands and heart of the Church in our ministry of caring.

With our services resuming in-person, the Deacons are busy with arranging ushers and greeters, so we can follow COVID practices. We make sure the Sanctuary is set up and ready for Sunday services. We are also hosting 4th Sunday Ice Cream Days outside after our service. If you are interested in helping on a Sunday, please contact Rhonda Ricci, who coordinates our ushers, etc. All hands are welcome.

### **Deacons Fund**

Deacon Funds are used to support individuals or families in financial crisis in terms of monetary donations, purchasing food, helping pay medical or household bills. 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 his fund compared to normal. Therefore, I am asking for your generosity to make a tax-deductible donation to the Geneva Deacon 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.

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, MD20854 (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.

The Deacon Family Groups have recently changed to include our newest Deacons and 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](mailto:Rmoloz@hotmail.com)

Deacon: **Bobbie Maxwell**

Bobbie.K.72@verizon.net

Members: Nancy Morse

Maureen Ferguson  
Mark & Holly Allen  
Terry & Debbie Dunne  
Sara & Jim Torrence  
Ken & Nan Sprinkle  
Nancy Rawson  
Tom Maxwell

Deacon: **Rhonda Ricci**

rhondaricci56@gmail.com

Members: Terry Shima

Paul & Barbara Prosswimmer  
Marie Smith  
Elaine Brasted  
Rosalie Ruff  
John & Patsy Wright  
Robert Ricci  
Ken & Letitia Denaburg  
Emmanuel Mbi  
Tom & Sara Sadler  
Shirley Chow  
Diane Whitaker  
Carol Jesema  
Ginny Wilson

Deacon: **Renee Moloznik**

Rmoloz@hotmail.com

Members: PJ & Brent Davis

Sheena Galliani  
Juliet & Scott Heimberg  
Elaine & Rolf Winch  
Patrick & Allyson McElwaine  
Robin & Jack Kough  
Amanda White  
Tim Sullivan  
Suzanne Funk  
Sandra Kichefski  
Melissa Cutler  
Bill & Beth Sherman  
Julie & Jake Moloznik  
Cindy & Jim Kaufman  
Carole Haller

Deacon: **Allyson McElwaine**

asmcelwain@gmail.com

Members: Mike Sydoriak

Kyla & Vince Lupo  
Alice & Rollin Franks  
Ben Shaver  
Robyn & Jeff Alexander  
Samantha & Andrew Sloan  
Nelidia Smith  
Sumit Sumati  
Kelvin Turner



Deacons: **Rosie Perthel**

rperthel@hotmail.com

**Ludivine Kom Liapoe**

ludivinekomliapoe16@gmail.com

Members: Helene Chimba

Francisco & Lucy Fuentes

Flore, Nadine & Liz Kom Liapoe

Heinz Nagel

Bill & Ema Oen

Veronique Weinstein

Carl Perthel

Jane Campbell & Pepe Marin

Larry Blim

Deacon: **Jestina Ricci**

jestinaeroberts@gmail.com

Members: Janelle & Eric Thibau

Scott Brown

Amy He

Katie & Jim Harris

Betty Halls

Daniel Ricci

Sheri Sankey

Linda & Ed Devine

Judy & Jim Stiles

Contact any Deacon or Pastor Patrick for further information or to join our team.

Renee Moloznik

rmoloz@hotmail.com

Ludivine Kom Liapoe

ludivinekomliapoe16@gmail.com

Bobbie Maxwell

bobbie.k.72@verizon.net

Allyson McElwaine

asmcelwaine@gmail.com

Rosie Perthel

rperthel@hotmail.com

Jestina Ricci

jestinaeroberts@gmail.com

Rhonda Ricci

rhondaricci56@gmail.com



Renee Moloznik



Geneva Fellowship is so happy to be back! Although our activities will look a bit different and will be limited, we do have a few ideas and a few planned activities.

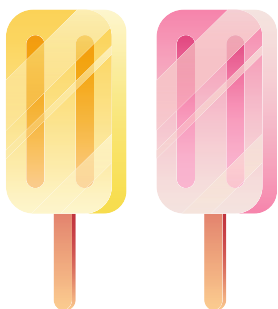
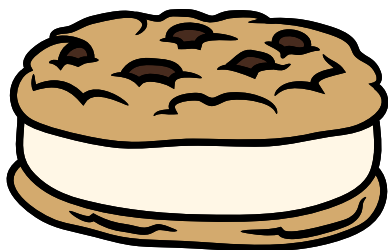
Ice cream Sundays have returned. We will enjoy ice cream in front of the church immediately after worship on the 4th Sunday of the month. That means June 27, July 25, and August 22. For the time being we will be serving prepackaged ice cream like ice cream sandwiches, popcicles or small ice cream cups.

Watch the Geneva bulletin for other fellowship activities during the summer.

Welcome back Geneva!



Rhonda Ricci



Dear Geneva Family and Friends,

I am thrilled to introduce myself to you as the new Elder for Communications and Outreach. In this position of service to our congregation, I'm excited to collaborate with each of you for ways to connect with our community. In the next few weeks, be on the lookout for our new signs along the front of the church advertising our monthly playdates for neurodivergent children and their families. In the months to come, also expect to see exciting new developments in terms of social media.

If you have any ideas regarding ways we can reach new people in our community, please feel free to reach out to me. I'm looking forward to growing our Geneva community with all of you.

Sincerely,



Daniel Ricci  
dannyr Ricci@gmail.com

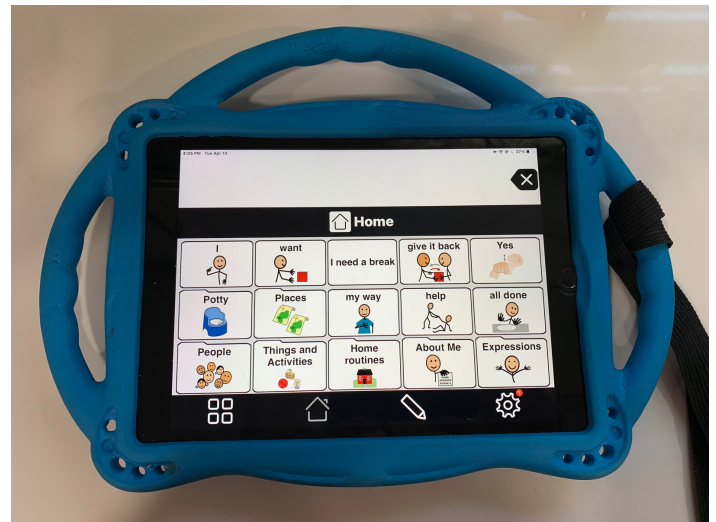
The Geneva Disability Ministry Team is happy to share a few pieces of great news!

Our neurodiverse play dates are going wonderfully and have been very well attended thus far. At our last play date, Mr. Anson - who you may know from his role at the day school - was able to be our special guest and the kiddos had a blast! Mr. Anson is a local celebrity around these parts from his tenure at Cabin John's 'My Gym' and has a huge fan base. Needless to say, the kids were thrilled to see him and we are happy that he will be joining us at future neurodiverse play dates! If you know anyone who may want to have fun and meet new friends at a future playground play date, please extend the invitation. Play dates are the first Saturday of each month beginning at 11AM to 1PM at the Geneva Day School playground. Next play date coming on Saturday, June 5th.

On behalf of the committee, I am also over the moon to announce that our congregation has raised \$7,000 that will be used to purchase AAC devices and software for Ivymount students who very much need, but currently do not have access to AAC devices at home. This is a huge accomplishment and we should be very proud of the ways in which our congregation has shown their support to the non-speaking and minimally verbal community.

There are big plans on the horizon for the Disability Ministry Team and we are so excited to have hit the ground running with these play dates, and have had the opportunity to raise funds for students in need of augmentative and alternative communication devices. If you have any questions or would like to join us at our next meeting - we welcome you!

Reach out to Jane Campbell or Allyson McElwaine any time!



*Jane Campbell*

Jane Campbell,  
Mission Elder and Co-Chair of the Disability  
Ministry Team

*Allyson McElwaine*

Allyson McElwaine,  
Co-Chair of the Disability Ministry Team

As I mentioned in our Annual Congregational meeting a few months ago, 2020 was a challenging year, for lots of reasons. From a financial perspective, the budget we prepared in November and December of 2019 was produced pre-Covid, and many things changed during the following year. Our Executive Committee went through the same exercise in November and December of 2020 to prepare this year's budget, and again we weren't sure what might happen in 2021. Sometimes, creating a budget is more art than science!

As I write this, we are 1/3 of the way through our fiscal year. That's usually enough time to see some trends developing, and I am pleased to report that we are slightly ahead of budget. Although our income is at about 31% of budget, our expenses are only at 29%. Online giving (via mobile phone and our new website) is rapidly becoming a popular option for contributing to Geneva, and it's easy to set up – you can give on a one-time basis, or you can set up a regularly recurring donation.

I want to thank everyone who is part of the process – our Executive Committee works hard to produce a budget every year, and then reviews monthly our 3 financial statements – the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Dedicated Accounts, and the Statement of Activities. After the Executive Committee has reviewed the statements, they are sent to Session for further review and approval. It's a lot of work, but at the end we have a good understanding of how we are doing, and where our money goes.

I encourage anyone to reach out with any questions, comments or requests for explanation. My goal is to make our finances open and transparent, and I welcome your thoughts and questions!



Rolf Winch, Treasurer



Dear Geneva Friends & Family,

I am so thrilled to be facilitating the upcoming Geneva Book Club series. Beginning on Friday, June 4th at 7 PM, we will begin reading *Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories From the Twenty-First Century* by Alice Wong. It is a collection of essays written by authors with disabilities on a wide array of topics. As I considered what book to share with you all, I thought to myself, "What better way to continue the important work of the Geneva Disability Ministry than to continue the conversation about disability?"

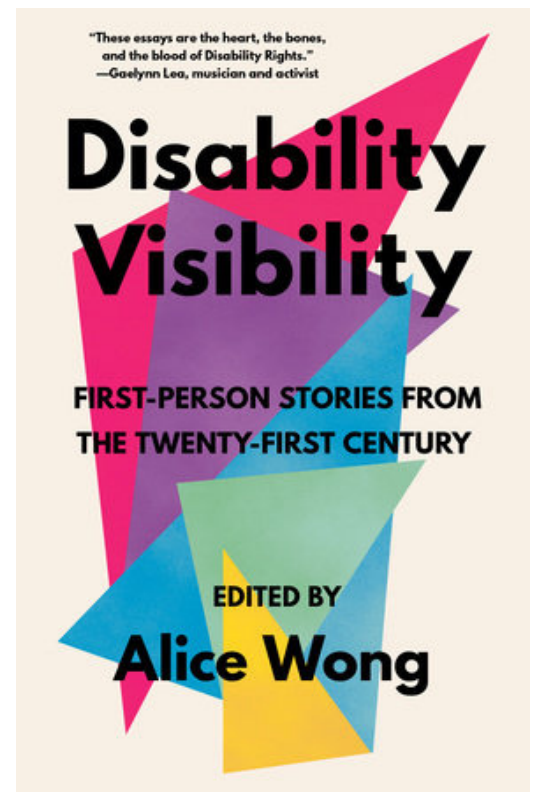
Alice Wong, a disability rights activist living with spinal muscular atrophy, describes her anthology as the following, "Disability Visibility isn't a book that represents every aspect of the community (which is impossible). Nor is it a basic Disability 101. My intention with this anthology is to invite people in with the understanding that this is a small curated sample of disabled brilliance from the 21st century." To me, that is the beauty of disability. None of us are the same but we are each living lives that are, to quote Alice Wong once again, "political, powerful, resistant, and magical."

We will cover *Disability Visibility* in four parts beginning June 4th. At our first meeting, we will cover the introduction and Part One: Being, so come prepared with your insights and questions! I hope that you'll join us in learning and growing together in this experience.

Warmly,



Jessie Ricci



Pentecost weekend (May 23rd 2021) was a transformative weekend for Geneva in many impactful ways. It marked the official end of our time away from our sanctuary as we re-opened our doors. We found ourselves once again connected, physically, by attending worship for the first time in over 14 months.

Those 434 days felt at times dark and alone, we felt separated and distant. But out of it, we were able to broaden our congregation's reach via Zoom. Connecting virtually with members and regular attendees from all over the country was one of the many eye-opening and unique benefits of the lock down era. Over the time of the COVID19 pandemic, Geneva's Worship Leaders, the AV Team, Geneva's Session and Executive members worked tirelessly to bring a new vision of what worship at Geneva would look like when we return to in person services.

Geneva proudly opened its doors at Pentecost with an emphasis on our technology advances. Being able to not just stream our worship service via Zoom to congregants near and far, but to have a hybrid, interactive and meaningful worship for everyone no matter how one attends. The in-person and the Zoom attendees would have their subtle differences, but from our efforts, have the same content, meaning and power. That has been successfully accomplished.

Whether it is in person or online, our congregation is stronger together now than ever before. We thank you. We thank all who hand a hand in making it a reality for Geneva. We especially thank Owen Allen and his family for the generous gift that provided our ability to be forward thinking and bring our service into the future.

These efforts from a tech stand point as well as re-opening the church have been at the forefront and ahead of the curve in many respects. The Little Church with the Big Heart has proven to be nimble and responsive to the changes in the world, to the new normal.

A BIG Geneva Thank you to the following people who played such a pivotal role in bringing this together: **Pastor Patrick McElwaine, Tom Sadler, Ken Sprinkle, Ken Denaburg, Sheri Sankey, Jessie Lipford-Ricci, Ben Shaver, Kyla Lupo, Janelle Thibau, Elaine Winch, Melissa Cutler, the National Capital Presbytery, Maitland Lawson (installation) Glass River Media's Jeff Carpenter (IT Consultant)** as well as our Re-Opening Committee and Ushers: **Bobbi and Tom Maxwell, Amanda White, Rhonda and Bob Ricci, Renee Moloznik and Mike Sydoriak.**

We have more changes upcoming! We have a second phase to modify and enhance the sound booth itself to better incorporate our new tech capabilities into one area while re-organizing and modernizing for efficiency and functionality. We're excited to see what this will look like over the coming months when it is all done! Looking forward, we will continue on with hybrid worship service as our doors are wide open for all who wish to worship and celebrate God in person as well as those around the country virtually via Zoom.

For the first time in a year, we have to plan and adjust to something we really haven't had a chance to think about during COVID: VACATIONS! Pastor Patrick McElwaine and Music Director, Ben Shaver will be taking a few Sundays off over the summer. We will be joined by Guest Pastor Sara Sadler at least once this summer and filling in for Ben, Guest Musician, Patrick Merrill will be leading us musically for several Sundays over the summer months. Very exciting to have two Patricks at the helm, no chance we will get them confused. No chance at all! We wish everyone a happy, safe, summertime ahead and can't wait to see so many familiar faces inside our doors.



Tom Sadler



## June 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		<b>01</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>
				7:00pm - GDS Board	7:00pm - Book Club	11am -1pm Disability Ministry Team Playground Playdate
<b>06</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
10:30am - Worship			7:00pm - Bible Study		7:00pm - Book Club	
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
10:30am - Worship			7:00pm - Bible Study		7:00pm - Book Club	
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
10:30am - Worship	7:00pm - Executive Committee	7:30pm - Deacon Meeting	7:00pm - Bible Study		7:00pm - Book Club	
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>			
10:30am - Worship  12:00pm Ice Cream Social	7:00pm - Session		7:00pm - Bible Study			

## July 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				01	02	03
						11am -1pm Disability Ministry Team Playground Playdate
04	05	06	07	08	09	10
10:30am - Worship						
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
10:30am - Worship						
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
10:30am - Worship	7:00pm - Executive Committee					
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
10:30am - Worship  12:00pm Ice Cream Social	7:00pm - Session					

## August 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
01	02	03	04	05	06	07
				7:00pm - GDS Board Meeting		11am -1pm Disability Ministry Team Playground Playdate
08	09	10	11	12	13	14
10:30am - Worship						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
10:30am - Worship						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
10:30am - Worship	7:00pm - Executive Committee	7:30pm - Deacons				
29	30	31				
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