

The little church with a BIG heart



Dear friends,

After a wonderful summer, fall is arriving and the change in season is accompanied by a change in rhythms of life. Geneva Presbyterian continues to be “on the move” as a dynamic family of faith living into God’s call to discipleship for our day and age. This includes honoring the roots of our life together at Geneva while also reaching toward the future where the Holy Spirit is leading us.

On that note, I am excited that Geneva has begun a search for our next Christian Education staff member! This position will be officially titled the “Director of Next Generation Ministries” to emphasize their focus on forward looking ministries in our church family. This will include ministries with young people, families, technology (like social media), and “next generation” things we might not even know about yet! We are certain that the Holy Spirit will be guiding us to connect with the right person through a process of prayerful discernment and interviewing.

With the changing of the seasons, I will be resuming Wednesday Night Bible Study on September 15 @ 7:00pm -- same time, same place (Zoom), even the same link that we’ve used previously. We will continue diving deep into rotating selections of scripture and connecting it with our daily lives. If you’re looking to connect with a “small group” at Geneva, want to have a weekly spiritual

practice, or you desire to engage with scripture in a fun setting, this is the place for you -- and there’s no better time to give the group a try than now!

Starting Sunday, September 12, we will enter into a four week sermon series called “Being Presbyterian 201”. We’ve talked previously about many core “101” tenets of being Presbyterian (God’s sovereignty, God’s grace and salvation in Jesus Christ, God’s providential action in the world, scripture as God’s inspired Word). Now, we’ll take things a bit further as we consider topics such as why Presbyterians love committees so much (there actually is an explanation!), the idea of “mutual forbearance” and its impact on our faith, and what it means that the Presbyterian Church (USA) is a “connectional church.”

As part of that sermon series, I’ll talk a bit about something called the “Per Capita Apportionment”, also known simply as “Per Capita.” Per Capita is a specific dollar amount that each Presbyterian is asked to give each year to support the costs of ministry for the Presbyterian Church (USA) as a whole, most notably of our local denominational body, National Capital Presbytery. The Per Capita amount for 2021 is \$42.67 per person on the church roster, which means that Geneva

THE RADIANT

Geneva Presbyterian Church

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www.genevapotomac.org

Rev. Patrick McElwaine, Pastor

Presbyterian Church pays the denomination \$42.67 per person in our church community. It is a helpful expression of our “faithful togetherness” for each of us to donate this amount to Geneva per person in the household to help meet our church’s obligation as a member of the Presbyterian Church (USA). If you are interested in paying “your Per Capita” now, please be in touch with the church office or make a donation designated “Per Capita”

This summer I purchased my first Weber Kettle grill and began learning about grilling and smoking meat. In true “Patrick fashion,” this also meant that I watched a lot of YouTube videos and read some books on the subject. If you’re desperately interested, let me know and I’ll recommend a few “BBQ Books” :-)) but here’s a few other book recommendations I’ll offer that might be more, shall we say, “on topic”?

The theme of last year’s stewardship drive, “Everyone Together”, is on my heart today. God is doing amazing things in and through Geneva Presbyterian Church with us united as one Body in Christ. With “Everyone Together” we’re continuing to grow and thrive: in ministry, in service, in faith. Thanks be to God and thank you for your dedication and love.

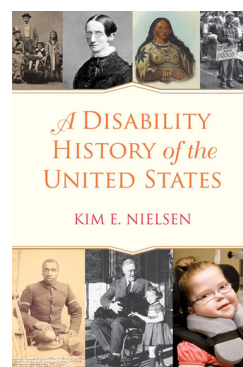
Yours in Christ,

Pastor Patrick

Pastor Patrick

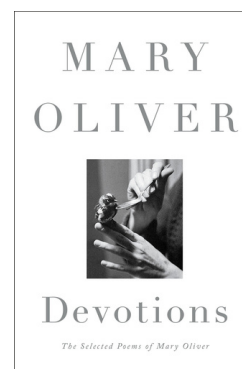
A Disability History of the United States by Kim E. Nielsen

The back cover of this book says it all: “Covering the entirety of US history from pre-1492 to the present, A Disability History of the United States is the first book to place the experiences of people with disabilities at the center of the American narrative.” I found this book enlightening, thought provoking, and appropriately challenging, especially as our congregation seeks to center the experiences of people with disabilities as part of our Christian life of discipleship.



Devotions: The Selected Poems of Mary Oliver by Mary Oliver

Mary Oliver is an enduring name in American poetry, but this book is my first exposure to her work. I was captivated from the first stanza of the first poem of the collection, “I Wake Close To The Morning” from 2015: “Why do people keep asking to see / God’s identity papers / when the darkness opening into morning / is more than enough?” This is a 442 page anthology covering a lifetime of work - in other words, a book to be savored through time rather than read all at once.



Happy Fall everyone!

This summer we had some beautiful weather and then some... sweltering weather. I'm very pleased we're moving to cooler, pumpkin spice driven, sweater weather.

In July I was able to attend the Massanetta Church Music Conference wherein I worked with the choral conductor and arranger David Schwoebel and the handbell extraordinaire Ed Thoompkins. Short story time: When I was growing up in Ashland, VA, David was the music director for Derbyshire Baptist Church. They would put on the most incredible Christmas concerts. I'm talking, orchestra, bells, choir, visuals, it was amazing! In the late 90s early 00s, I bought their Christmas album. I played the album so much that it wound up becoming scratched and would skip in different parts of different songs. I absolutely adored that album. It was one of my first loves in recorded choral music. I got to tell David that this summer and he was flattered, but also said "I'm just a guy in a pair of shorts like you." He was such a kind, sincere person and I'm so pleased I was able to work with him. I picked up some new repertoire for both our choir and handbells! Not only was the week musically uplifting, but it rejuvenated my spirit and faith. It is hard to not feel the presence of God in such a beautiful setting and having worship every night just elevates that closeness.

In my absence, my friend and colleague Patrick Merrill was able to step in as music director for the summer. I hope you enjoyed his excellent keyboard skills and video editing abilities. He and I met on zoom a few weeks ago so that he could show me a thing or two about video editing. In the last few Sundays of August you may have noticed a change in the hymn videos. I'm working on refining my video editing skills so that you can better sing along to the hymns from home.

Towards the end of August I made announcements that we're looking for a few new singers and ringers. If you're interested, we meet on Saturdays. Geneva Sanctuary choir meets 11:00-1:00 and our Handbell choir meets 1:00-3:00. I also provide snacks to sweeten the deal. So if you're interested, let me know and I'll send you the rehearsal schedule so you can come and try it out.

The choir joins us for worship starting September 12. Each Sunday we will have some form of special music. This may include descants and alternate choral harmonies for our hymns, choral anthems, handbell pieces, adding handbell flourishes to our hymns and chiming of the hour, communion music, and guest instrumentalists! There's a lot to look forward to. We also have the good fortune to have four paid singers again: Amber Wood (Soprano I), Katie Bogdan (Soprano II), Jessica Bennett (Alto), and Derrick Truby (Tenor/Baritone.) This will allow us to do a wider variety of repertoire and include smaller ensemble/solo works for worship. I'm still looking for some basses, so if you are a bass and would like to come and give our group a foundation to sing upon, join us!

I'm so pleased to be back with you and am looking forward to making some beautiful music this season.

Ever yours,



Ben Shaver



Geneva Day School completed a successful 2020-2021 school year of live classes with very little interruption to regular operation during the pandemic period. Last year, no students tested positive for COVID-19, and no staff were positive since early December. With the variants arriving in the area, however, we are concerned about the impact to the school. The Summer Program was also a huge success with 9 weeks of various recreational themes which were reflected in activities, story books, snacks, games, and special programs. Some of the favorites were creek walks, the circus show, a foam party, and farm animal visits.

In preparation for the new year, all classrooms, bathrooms, and halls were painted, floors were washed and buffed, furniture and rubber mats were hand cleaned, and other necessary maintenance was provided. Teaching teams were busy moving things back into place and arranging classrooms to accommodate a few more students in each.

Staff and students returned to Geneva with negative PCR tests, as well. Updated COVID-19 Operation Guidelines were distributed to families and staff prior to school starting, all of which signed a Wellness Pledge to respect them.

During the staff's return weeks in August, they participated in various training on First Aid, AED, and CPR, Handbook and Guidelines Review, Child Abuse and Neglect, and Executive Functioning. Meetings were also held to refine practices for the new year.



Several staff are planning to continue college education by completing their Bachelor's degrees in Social Work or Education, with another beginning a Master's in Educational Leadership. We are proud of their efforts to keep abreast of the profession and further their skills.

Geneva is engaged in a Best of Bethesda Campaign as sponsored by the Bethesda Magazine for Best Pre-school and Best Summer Day camp, which are listed on page 7. We appreciate everyone's vote!



Warm regards from your Day School Friends for a safe and healthy fall!

Suzanne Funk
Director



The Executive Committee has been very busy working on neighbor issues, space usage, supporting the Sound Booth renovation team, and acting as the personnel committee.

The Sound Booth team has done an amazing job managing the process of expanding our sound booth, and finding a contractor to complete it. Thank you to the Sound Booth team - Tom Sadler, Ken Denaburg, Ken Sprinkle, Janelle Thibau, Patrick McElwaine, and everyone else who participated in the project!

A special thanks to Jim Harris for his continued help with neighbor issues that have come up this year. As a result of these issues, the Executive Committee authorized a boundary survey to clearly establish our property lines. A survey was done in 1992, but the exact location of markers from that survey were not easily found. Due to continued neighbor issues, we will be installing a split rail fence on several of the property lines, which will join existing neighbor's fences.

The conversations regarding the new AV equipment and space usage led to a conversation about the churches renting space from Geneva. It was decided (after much discussion) to end our relationship with Iglesia de Dios. We plan to continue renting space to Mi Fiel Pastor and to Men in Recovery. However, due to the concerns of the Delta variant, we will not allow our tenants back until after September. The Day School students are not eligible for Covid 19 vaccinations, and we do not want to put them at risk until we know more about this variant.

There are several projects that the Executive Committee is working on, including replacing the wooden frame work behind the brick front of the right side of the church. With so many people doing work on their houses, getting quotes is the current hold up. We are also getting quotes for some maintenance work on the Manse to keep it safe from rodent intrusions.

The Executive Committee has also been working with Pastor Patrick to develop the job description for the Director of Next Generation Ministries, as well as having a committee member participate in the performance review meetings for Ben Shaver and Melissa Cutler.

If you have any questions or ideas for improving our building or grounds, please let me know. I am very pleased to work with such a dedicated group of people.



Elaine Winch
Executive Committee chair



On February 1, 2021, I took over the esteemed position of Clerk of Session from Mark Allen. I knew that I had big shoes to fill. My knowledge of what the Clerk of Session did was encapsulated in the following statement. “The Clerk of Session is the person who takes the minutes for the Session meetings.”

Over the past 6 months, I have found that the Clerk of Session does a whole lot more than just take the notes of the Session meetings. In my digging into the Clerk of Session files, I found an Introduction to the Manual for Clerks of Session that the Stated Clerk of the National Presbytery, Dick McFail, wrote. In that Introduction he wrote: In the words of Frank Beattie in Companion to the Constitution, “The clerk is the nearest officer in a Presbyterian church to the ‘lay leader’ or ‘chairperson of the congregation’ in other denominations.” This is because of the close working relationship between the Clerk and the Pastor/Moderator. Together with the Pastor/Moderator, the Clerk shapes the agenda for the Session meetings, and consults about its work. My first thought was what had I gotten myself into. Then I realized that I was following an amazing line of Geneva Clerks of Session: Mark Allen, Larry Blim, Alan Price, Audrey Pike, Nancy Judkins, Connie Strain, and Susan Frey. I hope I have not missed anyone. I am honored to be Geneva’s current Clerk of Session.

In reading the Manual for Clerk of Session of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), I find that there are twenty (20) responsibilities of the Clerk of Session. The first one being “Keep a full and accurate record of the proceedings of the session.” The second one being “Keep the roll of session membership and attendance.” NO, NO, I’m not going to go through all 20 responsibilities in this report. What I plan on doing is to highlight the rest of responsibilities in future reports sprinkled in with a few historical facts about Geneva Presbyterian Church.



Sheri Sankey
Clerk of Session



Our Continuing Education Classes are scheduled to resume in September. Be on the lookout for the exact date.

Bible Study on ZOOM returns on Wednesday, September 15 at 7:00PM, led by Pastor Patrick.

The Geneva Book Club will also return this fall, The start date is Friday, September, 24th at 7:00PM. The book we will be reading is Disability and the Church: A Vision for Diversity and Inclusion by Lamar Hardwick.

CE Efforts for coming months will focus on the hiring of a Christian Education Director (Position Title: Director of Next Generation Ministries) whose mission goal will be to develop, build, sustain, and resource vibrant ministries with an emphasis on youth, families, Christian Education, social media, and applying technology to cultivate discipleship and strengthen our Gospel witness in the community.

Executive Committee has been tasked with the hiring process with Session voting on the final selection.



Carl Perthel
Christian Education

**NEXT+GENERATION
MINISTRIES**

In 2021 the Geneva Mission Committee launched the Disability Ministry Team. We hold monthly playground gatherings that are an integral part of joining our church community with the surrounding neighborhoods. The Disability Ministry Team also influenced the Geneva Book Club in choosing their book Disability Visibility which led to Pastor Patrick's sermon series on the same book. It was a wonderful insight of how we can connect and be inclusive with our neurodiverse community.

In August we began distributing \$10 Safeway gift cards to members to hand out to anyone on the street in need and asking for help. COVID-19 has been hard for many and our mission is to help whoever we can, wherever we can! We will continue this mission activity into the fall. If you would like gift cards to hand out to anyone asking for help, or would like to donate to this mission, please reach out to Jane Campbell.



Jane Campbell
Mission



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. Please feel free to contact any of the Deacons if you need help or prayers or know of someone needing help or support. The Deacons' names, email addresses and phone numbers are listed at the end.

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. 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 the supplies needed for our seasonal craft activities.

Recently, the Deacons Fund donated to the Go Fund Me campaign for Pepe Marin and Jane Campbell - Pepe VS Cancer in the name of Geneva Presbyterian Church. If you would like to support their Go Fund Me account, it can be found at :
https://www.gofundme.com/f/pepe-vs-cancer?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link_all&utm_campaign=m_pd+share-sheet

Our Deacon Fund has been used a great deal during this pandemic and is getting low. Since we have not been in the Sanctuary much recently, 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.

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.

Opportunities for Helping Others

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. If you are interested in helping on a Sunday, please contact Rhonda Ricci, Rhondaricci56@gmail.com, who coordinates our ushers, etc. All hands are welcome.

Set-up help for Pastor Patrick's Installation is needed on Sunday, September 26. If you are interested, please contact Rhonda Ricci at Rhondaricci56@gmail.com.

Musicians are welcomed for our Firepit Sing-Along on Saturday, October 23. If you are interested, please contact Jestina Ricci at jestinaroberts@gmail.com. Also set up help is needed.

Decorated trunks and candy are needed for our Trunk N Treat event on October 31. If you are interested, please contact Allyson McElwaine.

Volunteers are needed to help set up the crafts booths and also assist with the crafts on October 31. Contact Renee Moloznik at rmoloz@hotmail.com for more information.

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 Family Deacon 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

Deacon: **Bobbie Maxwell**

Bobbie.K.72@verizon.net

Members:

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

Deacon: **Rhonda Ricci**

rhondaricci56@gmail.com

Members:

- Shima, Terry
- Prosswimmer, Paul & Barbara
- Smith, Marie
- Brasted, Elaine
- Ruff, Rosalie
- Wright, John & Patsy
- Ricci, Bob
- Denaburg, Ken & Letitia
- Mbi, Emmanuel
- Sadler, Tom & Sara
- Chow, Shirley
- Whitaker, Diane
- Jelsema, Carol
- Wilson, Ginny

Deacon: **Renee Moloznik**

Rmoloz@hotmail.com

Members:

- Davis, PJ & Brent
- Winch, Rolf & Elaine
- Kough, Jack & Robin
- Galliani, Sheena
- Heimburg Juliet & Scott
- White, Amanda
- Sullivan, Tim
- Funk, Suzanne
- Kichefski, Sandra
- Cutler, Melissa
- Sherman, Beth & Bill
- Moloznik, Jake & Julie
- Kaufman, Cindy & Jim
- Haller, Carole

Deacon: **Allyson McElwaine**

asmcelwaine@gmail.com

Members:

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

Deacons: **Rosie Perthel**

rperthel@hotmail.com

Ludivine Kom Liapoe

ludivinekomliapoe16@gmail.com

Members:

- Chimba, Helene
- Kom Liapoe, Flore & Nadine & Liz
- Nagel, Heinz
- Fuenes, Francisco & Lucy
- Oen, Bill & Ema
- Perthel, Carl
- Campbell, Jane & Pepe Marin
- Blim, Larry

Deacon: **Jestina Ricci**

jestinaeroberts@gmail.com

Members:

- Thibau, Janelle & Eric
- Brown, Scott
- He, Amy
- Harris, Jim & Katie
- Halls, Betty
- Ricci, Daniel
- Sankey, Sheri
- Stiles, Judy & Jim
- Devine, Linda & Ed

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

Renee Moloznik

rmoloz@hotmail.com

301-467-8680

Ludivine Kom Liapoe

ludivinekomliapoe16@gmail.com

Bobbie Maxwell

bobbie.k.72@verizon.net

301-251-1326

Allyson McElwaine

asmcelwaine@gmail.com

804-833-9805

Rosie Perthel

rperthel@hotmail.com

240-316-2286

Jestina Ricci

jestinaeroberts@gmail.com

202-468-1914

Rhonda Ricci

rhondaricci56@gmail.com

240-506-4162



Renee Moloznik



- What:** Pastor Patrick's Installation Celebration
When: Sunday, September 26 at 4:00 PM
Where: Geneva Presbyterian Church Sanctuary
Who: Geneva Community and your family and friends
Needed: Individuals to help make individual fruit and veggie cups.
Contact: Rhonda Ricci, rhondaricci56@gmail.com, if you can help with set-up, serving or clean up.
- What:** Firepit Sing-Along with S'mores!
When: Saturday, October 23 at 5:30 PM
Where: Outside near the Kindergarten Cottage
Who: Geneva Community and your family and friends
Bring: Chairs, blankets, singing voices
Needed: Guitar or ukulele players or other fun instruments (kazoos??)
Contact: Rosie Perthel, rperthel@hotmail, if you have a portable firepit that can be used.
Jestina Ricci, jestinaroberts@gmail.com, if you are able to share your musical talents.
- What:** Trunk N Treat and Fall Crafts
When: Sunday, October 31 2:00 – 4:00 PM
Where: Along the Geneva Day School entrance
Who: Geneva and Geneva Day School Community and friends
Bring: Your decorated car trunk with candy for our Trick or Treaters
A fun costume and desire to make awesome fall decorations
Contact: Allyson McElwaine, asmcelwaine@gmail.com, if you will have a decorated trunk.
Renee Moloznik, rmoloz@hotmail.com, if you are interested in helping with the fall crafts.

Please join us for these fun Fellowship activities. Invite your friends!



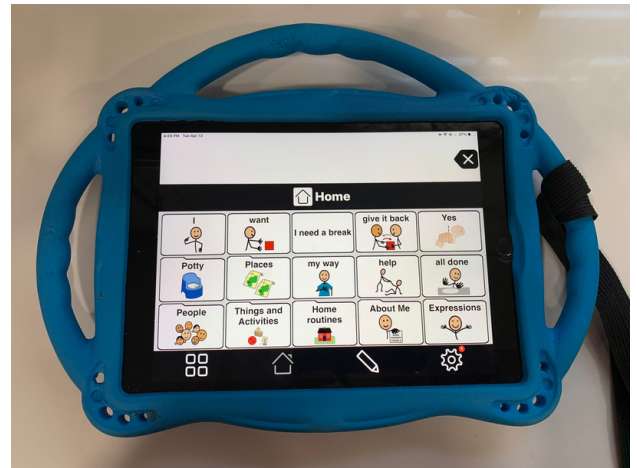
The Geneva Disability Ministry Team is happy to share a few pieces of great news! Our neurodiverse play dates are going wonderfully and continue to be very well attended. At our last play date in August, we had six families and their kiddos all gathered and having a great time on the playground. We are sowing and watering the seeds of inclusivity and it is bearing beautiful fruit! 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 from 11AM to 1PM at the Geneva Day School playground. The next play date is coming on Saturday, September 4th and then again on Saturday, October 2nd.

On behalf of the committee, I am happy to let you know that our team is working on creating a sensory friendly child space at the church - where kiddos of all different abilities can be active and have fun in a safe space. Details forthcoming - it will be exciting!

There are big plans on the horizon for the Disability Ministry Team in October! We are looking forward to starting an education series featuring films that will shine a spotlight on people with disabilities.

In addition, we are doing our research and implementing plans on how to be more accessible to individuals with different auditory and hearing needs. Plans include: large and small print manuscripts of Pastor Patrick's sermons available in the narthex and a loop system in the sanctuary to aid parishioners who use hearing aids or cochlear implants.

If you have thoughts and ideas on projects (big and small) that we can undertake in order to make Geneva Presbyterian the most welcoming and accessible place possible - please contact us. We would love to know your ideas and visions for the future. We welcome you to 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 write this, we have just reviewed and approved financial statements as of July 31, 2021. That puts us at a little over half the way through our fiscal year. So, how are we doing?

Well, the good news is that offering and pledged giving is actually a little ahead of budget – thank you, Geneva members and friends! In addition, we are also slightly ahead of budget projections – helped by the fact that our expenses (as of 7/31) are just under 44% (instead of the projected 58%). However . . .

There's been serious discussion about finding and hiring a "Director of Next Generation Ministries". We've had a line item in our budget for this position the past few years, but we have not (yet) hired this new person. As a result, our proposed deficit budgets have been better than projected – we haven't spent the money allocated for that position. I believe that this will soon change.

When Patrick answered the call to become our minister, we promised him that a CE / Youth minister would be hired. If we are to grow as a church, we will need to attract younger families to become members. To do this, we will need a program in place for youth. That's part of what the new position would entail. If we build it, they will come . . .

As we continue to get through this Covid situation and get back to "normal", we will most likely continue to operate under a deficit budget. That means we will continue to spend more than what we take in as income. Although we have the financial resources to do this, the goal is to grow our church with members who will contribute, financially and otherwise, so that we can operate with a balanced budget.

That will happen, but it will take time. In the meantime, we will continue to move forward, one step at a time. We have a wonderful new minister (okay, not so new anymore, but still wonderful!); an amazing new sound system; the sanctuary will once again be open for in-person services; we will have a new staff person to recruit and provide family programs – it's an exciting time for our church, and I am looking forward to our future!

Rolf Winch

Rolf Winch, Treasurer



Thank you so much to everyone who joined us for the Book Club on Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century. I've really missed our Friday discussions and the incredible insight we gained from the narratives of people with disabilities. I am so thrilled to announce that we will be restarting the Geneva Book Club on Friday, September 24th at 7:00 PM. We will be reading *Disability and the Church: A Vision for Diversity and Inclusion* by Lamar Hardwick.

Disability and the Church is a true gem. Now that we know more stories and perspectives from people with disabilities, what does the Bible actually say about disability? How has God amplified the voices of the disabled throughout history? Who is missing a seat at the table today? I can't wait to see where this text leads us in envisioning an even stronger Disability Ministry.

We will begin the Book Club starting on Friday, September 24th and have a total of four sessions, wrapping up on Friday, October 15th. Here is a link to purchase it.

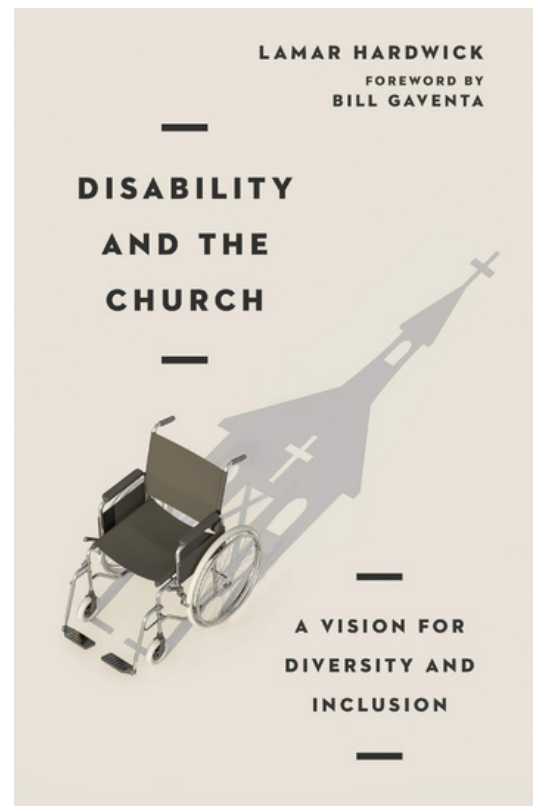
<https://www.amazon.com/Disability-Church-Vision-Diversity-Inclusion/dp/0830841601>

At our first meeting, we will discuss the foreword, introduction, and chapters one and two, so come prepared with your insights and questions! Even if you missed our last Book Club, I invite you to join us this time around. I can't wait to learn and grow even more with each of you.

Warmly,



Jessie Ricci



The Geneva Audio and Video Team has worked tirelessly this summer to finish out the last phase of the booth renovation project and is happy to announce and exclaim that it's work is complete! As you can see the sound booth renovation has enlarged, opened up and fully finished the space with a modern appeal while allowing for three of our AV techs to sit together in dedicated space to do our weekly production work! We couldn't be more excited and proud. Special thanks to Ken Denaburg who spearheaded and retained the services of Fabian of Jara Home Improvements. They completed fantastic work which was much higher quality than we had even hoped it would be.

Soon the AV Team on behalf of Geneva will dedicate the AV booth to the memory of Owen Allen whose generous gift made this all possible. We cannot wait to honor him, his family and legacy.

While the Sanctuary has been closed for this renovation, we have been worshipping via Zoom, just like old times. As our Music Director Ben Shaver has at times been away for vacation and well deserved time off, we have been blessed with guest musician Patrick Merrill and his lovely wife and soprano singer Grace Shrinivasan. If you didn't get to hear their performances of worship hymns, you certainly missed out! Have no fear you can always view previous worship services on our church website!

As summer winds down, Ben has returned and so has the Geneva Choir! We cannot wait to hear what they have in store for us going into the Fall and the season of Advent.

Pastor Patrick has led a wonderful sermon series on the book Disability Visibility, a collection of stories edited by Alice Wong. The series centered the voices and experiences of people with disabilities in ways that deepened our faith and emphasized the dignity of all God's children. Our goal at Geneva is to love God by loving our siblings in Christ ever more deeply, and this sermon series celebrated our newest calling to ministries welcoming, celebrating, discipling alongside people with disabilities.

Tom Sadler

Tom Sadler



Peace and Global Witness Special Offering to be collected on October 3, 2021

On World Communion Sunday, October 3, 2021, we celebrate that Christ's peace extends throughout all creation. We celebrate that we are all together at the communion table, in God's house. We celebrate that we are offered what we need to continue the work of building the household of God, with active peacemakers here at home and around the world. Extending the peace of Christ is part of an active, engaged faith—a witness to what it means for us to be the Church, together.

Through the participation in the Peace and Global Witness Offering, Geneva is extending Christ's peace throughout our community and our world. We begin at the communion table, with our siblings in every time and place, and we celebrate the peace we find there and commit to building a more just and peaceful world. We celebrate the truth found in 2nd Thessalonians, "Peace at all times in all ways."

25% of our offering will stay with Geneva for use in local missions. 25% goes to PCUSA for use by mid councils to unite congregations to support peacemaking in their regions. 50% goes to PCUSA Mission to support the work for peace and reconciliation being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

Look for bulletin inserts about the Peace Offering beginning on Sunday, September 12th, also our return to in person worship. There will be special offering envelopes in the pews.





PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

A Light in the Clearing

When the prophet Elijah, deep in the throes of an existential crisis, fled to Mount Horeb in search of God, he was met instead with the sound of sheer silence.

Natalie Pisarcik knows just how he felt.

"There was a time in my life where I was on the bottom," Natalie testified during Sunday worship in her home congregation, First Presbyterian Church of Boonton, New Jersey. "I cannot even describe how hard and difficult that time was. Only those who have been there know how it feels."

Natalie's story recollected a significant turning point in her life. "On that fateful day, I went for a walk in a wooded area where I kept repeating over and over in my wounded brain how I would end the pain. As I walked, I came across a field, which oddly seemed to call to me. As I walked into the field, a beam of warm sunlight hit my face. It was at this exact moment that I realized I had made a terrible mistake. It was like God was saying to me, 'What are you doing? You have a reason to live.' I was so overcome."

Natalie found herself compelled to address the growing mental health crisis not only by sharing her story with her church, but also by getting her congregation more involved. The church's board of deacons was persuaded to take immediate action to address the suicide crisis.

Because deacons in the Presbyterian tradition are called to a ministry of "compassion, witness, and service," the board voted to designate the church's share of the Peace & Global Witness Offering to support the New Jersey Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, an organization in which Natalie had participated for years.

Natalie's personally moving experience resonates anew during the pandemic, and underlines the importance of this work. "Sadly, and tragically, our community has lost more people to suicide in 2020 than it has to COVID-19," said Natalie.

Through the Peace & Global Witness Offering, congregations are encouraged and equipped to find and address the anxiety and discord that is prevalent throughout world. The offering supports ministries that work for reconciliation and facilitate healing. Half of the Peace & Global Witness Offering goes to the national church to address these issues around the world, 25% is retained by congregations for local peace and reconciliation work, and 25% goes to mid councils for similar ministries on the regional level.

Natalie has a message to share with us all during these unsettled times. She reminds us to "listen and look for the light, and remember that you have a purpose, too. God is with you."

Let us pray:

Loving God, when we walk in the valley of the shadow, remind us that we are only steps from your light. Draw nearer to life, by the arms of our shared ministry, all who feel hopeless, lost, or deserted into your loving embrace, into the warmth of your sight. Amen.

2021



SEPTEMBER



2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 11:00 Neurodiverse Playground Playdate 11:00 Geneva Choir 1:00 Handbell
5 10:30 Worship 3:00 GS Troop - playground	6 LABOR Day OFFICE CLOSED	7	8	9	10	11 11:00 Geneva Choir 1:00 Handbell
12 Disability Inclusion Sunday 10:30 Worship 3:00 GS Troop - playground	13	14	15 7:00 Bible Study	16	17	18 11:00 Geneva Choir 1:00 Handbell
19 10:30 Worship 3:00 GS Troop - playground	20 7:30 Executive Committee	21 7:30 Deacon Meeting	22 7:00 Bible Study	23	24 7:00 Book Club	25 11:00 Geneva Choir 1:00 Handbell
26 10:30 Worship 12:00 Ice Cream Social 3:00 GS Troop - playground 4:00 Pastor Patrick's Installation Celebration	27 7:00 Session	28	29 7:00 Bible Study	30		

2021



2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			7:00 Bible Study		1 7:00 Book Club	2 11:00 Neurodiverse Playground Playdate 11:00 Geneva Choir 1:00 Handbell
3  10:30 Worship 3:00 GS Troop - playground	4	5	6 7:00 Bible Study	7	8 7:00 Book Club	9 11:00 Geneva Choir 1:00 Handbell
10 10:30 Worship 3:00 GS Troop - playground	11  Columbus Day	12	13 7:00 Bible Study	14	15 7:00 Book Club	16 11:00 Geneva Choir 1:00 Handbell
17 10:30 Worship 3:00 GS Troop - playground	18 7:30 Executive Committee	19 7:30 Deacon Meeting	20 7:00 Bible Study	21	22 7:00 Book Club	23 11:00 Geneva Choir 1:00 Handbell 5:30 Outdoor Firepit Sing-Along
24 10:30 Worship 3:00 GS Troop - playground	25 7:00 Session	26	27 7:00 Bible Study	28 8:00 Disability Ministry Meeting	29 7:00 Book Club	30 11:00 Geneva Choir 1:00 Handbell
31 10:30 Worship 2:00 Trunk N Treat 3:00 GS Troop - playground						