

This Easter, Step Across the Threshold of Hope

"Hope is the very dynamic of history. Hope is the engine of change.
Hope is the energy of transformation. Hope is the door from one reality to another."
- Jim Wallis, Sojourners Magazine

Maundy Thursday Service, March 24th, 6:00 PM

*Easter Sunrise Service and Breakfast at South Byron United
Methodist, March 27th, 7:00 AM*

*Easter Sunday Celebration, 9:45 AM at the Byron Presbyterian
Church, followed by an Easter Egg Hunt for children.*

INSIDE: PEOPLE, NEWS, EVENTS

Announcing!

1st Presbyterian
Church of Byron

Web Page

www.byronfpc.org

Check it out today!

Byron Youth Group
Wednesdays
2:45-5:45 PM

Help with homework,
games, and fun
activities,
for 5th grade and up!

To sign up, please
call 548-2800.

Church Information

Sunday Worship & Sunday School: 9:45 AM
Church Office: 548-2800 [byronfpc@localnet.com]
Church Web Page: www.byronfpc.org – NEW!
Church Office: 585-548-2800
Pastor: *James Renfrew* [pastor@byronfpc.org]
Clerk of Session: *James Lundmark*
Treasurer: *Robin Glazier*
Music Director: *Elizabeth Weber*
Youth Ministry: *Valerie Liles*
[youthministry@byronfpc.org]
Secretary: *Janet Pike* [office@localnet.com]
Board of Trustees: *Ron Glazier*
Sexton: *Luan Riner*

Peaceful Prayers

As Christians we always pray for peace ... peace in our families, in our schools, in our church and between nations. At this writing there are some very positive signs concerning the suspension of hostilities between Israel and Palestine. This is made possible by risk-taking, trust-building, and lots of prayer. Will the peace hold? We are hopeful enough to believe peace is always possible, but smart enough to know that we may be disappointed by setbacks. Even so, we still pray for peace because in all of our prayers our hope is stronger than our fear.

We're ready to pray with you, for your family, for our community, for whole world. Just let us know, and we'll all be praying with you. If something is happening in your life that would benefit from prayer, our folks are ready! You can initiate the Prayer Chain by calling the church office (548-2800).

www.byronfpc.org

We are very pleased to announce a new web page for the Byron Presbyterian Church. For those with an internet connection, all you have to do is enter "www.byronfpc.org" and our church home page will appear. *Jim Moore* has designed the web page for us, using his considerable professional computer skills.

As it continues to develop, the web page will include the latest news about church events and

activities, photos, sermons, and historical items. There are e-mail links to the Pastor, Church Secretary and Youth Ministry Coordinator. There is also a place where anyone visiting the web page can leave comments.

Marriage Update

As reported last month, on Saturday, March 12th, Robin Dunnington and I will be getting married in Silver Spring, Maryland. Robin's belongings have been successfully moved to Byron (thanks to all the volunteers who helped unload the truck!), she is close to selling her home, and now we are busy working on the details of the wedding.

I also reported, last month, that our house is now the new home for Robin's two cats. Many of you have asked about the progress being made by Roberto's dog and the two cats in peacefully sharing their common space. While too early to declare the realization of a fully non-aggression treaty, there are some positive signs of tolerance and mutual respect - so we expect the situation to continue to improve! - *Rev. Jim Renfrew*

Preaching Themes for March and April

MAR 6	John 9:1-41	"Mud"
MAR 13	John 11:1-45	"Lazarus"
MAR 20	Matthew 21:1-11	"Uproar"
MAR 27	Matthew 28:1-10	"Impossible, Inevitable"
APR 3	I Peter 1:3-9	"A Living Hope"
APR 10	I Peter 1:18-23	"Fixed"
APR 17	I Peter 2:19-25	"Brought Back"
APR 24	I Peter 2:2-10	"Living Stones"

From the Pastor

*"I know you are looking for Jesus, who was nailed to the cross.
He has not here, he has been raised, just as he said."*

[Matthew 28:5]

Dear Friends,

On Easter morning, the women took a big risk when they visited the tomb because soldiers were posted nearby. The women came not without fear, but they came out of love and faith. They

were faithful to Jesus in all his life, and in his death.

They looked across the threshold of the tomb and became bearers of a hope, the most important news in the history of the world. They become for us the primary example of what we too are called to be - bearers of hope. The word HOPE is often used in ways that ignore the reality. When someone comes to me hungry, or very sick, I often have to stop myself from speaking about hope too quickly. It is the word that we often use to avoid reality, a word that floats above the truth of the human condition without ever changing it. Hope should be the word that we use to confront and change reality.

As evangelical writer Jim Wallis has noted in the pages of Sojourners magazine, "*Hope is the very dynamic of history. Hope is the engine of change. Hope is the energy of transformation. Hope is the door from one reality to another.*"

History is full of examples of things that seemed impossible when we looked ahead, but easily understood from hindsight after they'd happened. Things like abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, defeat of fascism, or civil rights. What looked before as though it could never happen is now taken for granted.

In hindsight we can see how everything fell into place and that it was quite natural, quite reasonable that it would happen. It was a matter of time. It was inevitable, at least it seems that way in hindsight. **INEVITABLE IN HINDSIGHT AND IMPOSSIBLE IN FORESIGHT.**

Between impossibility and possibility, there is a door - the door of hope. And the possibility of transformation lies through that door. The news from the women at the tomb was the greatest hope that the world has ever known. This is how personal transformation takes place. We can't imagine ourselves different than we are today or healed of that which binds and afflicts us. We can't imagine ourselves forgiven. We can't imagine our own salvation. But when we walk through that door of hope, and we look back at where we have been and where we are now, we see that the evidence of God's healing and peace was there all the long.

The resurrection is the door of hope, and Jesus showed us that the resurrection comes by way of a cross. History depends on those who are willing to walk through the door, those who live and act and even die in hope for the sake of the future they know by faith is there.

On Easter morning we stand at the threshold yet again. We know of those who have been given the news of the resurrection before us, as they walked in faith through the doors of hope. Now it is our turn.

In Easter Hope!

James Renfrew, Pastor

Easter Season Activities

Palm Sunday *Sunday, Mar. 20, 9:45 am*

Maundy Thursday - *March 24, 6:00 pm;*
potluck meal in the Dining Room, with
communion for the whole family.

Easter Sunrise - *Sunday, March 27,*
7:00 am, at South Byron United
Methodist Church, Rev. Renfrew
preaching.

Easter Celebration - *Sunday, March 27,*
9:45 AM, followed by an Easter Egg
Hunt for children. (We are looking for
volunteers to supply candy for the eggs!)

One Great Hour of Sharing

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering will take place on Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. Across our nation and throughout the world, your contributions to this collection are put to great effort to assist those in need.

The One Great Hour of Sharing goes beyond our denomination. It is actually and ecumenical

effort - many Christian denominations work together cooperatively to create the resources that promote the offering. Each denomination involved gives some of the gifts it receives for shared ministry through Church World Service. Each denomination decides how the gifts its members give will be used. There are three areas supported by Presbyterian efforts: Self-Development of People, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and Presbyterian Hunger Program. Check out the website www.pcusa.org/oghs to observe your gifts at work.

The theme this year's offering is "*When was it that we saw you...a stranger?*", based on a passage in Matthew 25, "*When you did it to the least of these, you did it to me.*" Remember the Bible story? Even those who knew their teacher best did not recognize the risen Christ: Mary mistook Jesus for the gardener, and Cleopas and his companion walked as far as Emmaus with him, astonished that this stranger hadn't heard about the events in Jerusalem. Only after inviting him to share their shelter and food did they know him in the breaking and sharing of the bread. If even Jesus' disciples had a hard time recognizing, how are we to know him? We can know him by remembering that the risen Christ is the embodiment of love. To know him, we have to abandon our recognition of the outer shell and external characteristics, seeing him instead with the eyes of the heart and soul, opening ourselves to love one another, and respond to others needs.

Appropriately, as we seek the risen Christ during this journey through Lent, we also receive the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. Take this opportunity to recognize Jesus in a stranger's eyes - reach out to those individuals and communities that benefit from your gifts. Let them know they are not alone. We all have seen the great needs of others featured in the news articles over the past few months. In sharing our gifts with those whose conditions set them apart, we can encounter the living Christ. Last year, we received \$586 for the One Great Hour of Sharing - it would be wonderful this year to see a 25% increase to \$730. [*Pam Kenward, Mission Committee*]

We Get Letters

Just a note of thanks for your visits and caring remembrance you showed to Julia MacVea for the visits, the Thanksgiving Day Dinner and the decorating of her room for Christmas by the Sunday School children. She enjoyed it all very much. I appreciated the Planter Basket you sent and I took it to the Nursing Home so residents and staff could enjoy it. Julia's life was long, 95 years, but she had a hard struggle at the end, but God blessed her and she is now in the special Room he prepared for her in Heaven above.

Yours in Christ, Laura J. Eggers (Julia's cousin)

Speaking on behalf of the Sunday School children and those adults that were able to take a couple of hours on a Sunday afternoon in early December to add a little joy to Julia's life, as well as Jan VanWyngaarden and Corrine Lane, we were thrilled to do it! The children enjoyed singing familiar Christmas hymns and songs and adding some Christmas color to their rooms at the Nursing Home. We hope that more people will be able to join us for future efforts as we find other ways to reach out to others. We are sad we will no longer be able to visit with Julia, but find joy from what we were able to offer her while she was "here", and peace in knowing that she is with God now. [*Pam Kenward, Christian Education Committee*]

From her room at the Genesee County Nursing Home Julie was deeply interested in all of the church's doings. She was a proud supporter of our accessibility improvement project. Julia was our oldest church member and we will miss her faithful commitment! [*Rev. Jim Renfrew*]

Per Capita - Our Fair Share

In each set of Offering Envelopes there is a single envelope at the front of the box that has the strange name of "*Per Capita Apportionment*". Each year we encourage our members to contribute to Per Capita, which is each member's fair share of the administrative costs of the Presbyterian Church (USA) denomination. Since the Per Capita contribution of our church to the Presbytery of

Genesee Valley, Synod of the Northeast and General Assembly is paid in January it is around this time of year that we encourage each member to pay her or his Per Capita. The recommended Per Capita amount this year is **\$22.64** for each member, and we urge all members to make use of the Per Capita offering envelope for this purpose.

It is important to note that our congregation receives many direct benefits in belonging to a healthy denomination. We benefit from having a pool of seminary-trained clergy available for our churches. Our own congregational leaders are offered a variety of training events through the year. We participate in area wide youth ministry events that we could never provide on our own. Our support for mission beyond our own congregation is maximized when we do it in concert with many other Presbyterians. We have borrowing privileges at the Presbytery Resource Center. When we need extra help, or when we run into problems, Presbytery staff and volunteers are available to us. And when needed, we are eligible for denominational loans and grants in support of our ministry.

A number of us do not make an annual financial commitment or request offering envelopes. Yet Per Capita for these members is being paid by our church just the same. If you do not have a Per Capita envelope please use a blank envelope and mark "Per Capita" on the outside of it. You may also write "Per Capita" on the notation line of your check.

Thank you for your faithful commitment to the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (USA) at Stone Church and around the world!

2005 Budget Update

The Stewardship Committee reports that financial commitments for 2005 from members and friends of the church (including children) total \$49,821, a seven percent increase over 2004. Following the Annual Meeting, Session adopted the 2005 Budget, which shows a shortfall of \$2300. Here is a brief summary of the 2005 Budget:

Overall Anticipated Expenses:	\$82,328.62
Estimates of Giving (pledges):	\$49,821.00
All Other Income:	\$30,155.00
Overall Anticipated Income:	\$79,976.00
<u>What is still needed for a balanced 2005 Budget:</u>	\$2,300.62

We also have non-monetary commitments to the church for computer work and lawn-mowing! Persons who have not made an actual pledge must notify the office if they wish to receive financial statements of their giving.

Church & Community News

Welcome to new elders *Don Engle, Mary Ann Blair* and *Vicky Truax*, and Trustees *Ron Glazier, Faline Tyler* and *Mark Dewey*.

Deacons

We encourage you to contribute food items to GCCU Emergency Pantry in Batavia when you attend on Sundays. March: canned meals & snacks; April: pancake mix & syrup. The following items are welcome contributions at any time: grocery bags, canned vegetables & fruit, and crackers.

Deacons also send out "*thinking of you*" and "*get well*" cards. If you know of someone who could benefit from receiving a card, please let Deacons know. You can use one of the forms designed for this purpose that are found at the back of the sanctuary.

We welcome to new deacons *Sharon Buczek* and *Kathy George*, and thanks to *Audrey Blount, Chrystal Britt* for completing their terms of service. [*Tracine Lundmark, Deacons*]

Presbytery Training Events

"Open Our Eyes: Seeing Jesus, the Church, and Its Mission in New Ways", featuring Dr. Leonard Sweet, Friday April 8 6-9 PM and **Saturday, April 9, 9 am - 1 pm;** at First

Presbyterian Church in Batavia. Marilyn Britt recommends this event HIGHLY!

"The Tabernacle Project", introducing a traveling spirituality center that can be used by congregations, **Saturday, April 30, 9 am - 3 pm**, First Presbyterian Church of Caledonia; come for an hour, come for the day; free!

"Let There Be One Earth and Let It Begin With Your Family", **Saturday, April 9, 9am to 1 pm**, New Life Presbyterian Church (Rochester); a workshop on Kindflict (resolving conflict through kindness). For parents and children with childcare for children under ten. Lunch included. Register with Nancy Allinger (624-2382).

Resource Saturdays happen at the Resource Center of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley, 1190 Winton Road South, Rochester. We have been great feedback from church members who have attended. Please register by phone 242-0099.

Saturday, March 5, 9:30-10:30 AM & 11:00 -12:00 PM. "PowerPoint 101" - learn the basics of PowerPoint presentation technology for education or worship. Enrollment is limited.

Saturday, April 2, 9:30-11:30 AM. "Leading a Healthy Congregation, A Workshop for Pastors and Church Officers" facilitated by Rev. Jimmy Reader.

Byron Youth Group

Valerie Liles, Youth Ministry Coordinator
E-mail: youthministry@byronfpc.org

March 24th - Thursday 6PM
Maundy Thursday Dinner

March 26th - Saturday 12:15PM
Town Easter Egg Hunt

April 2nd - 17th
Home Interiors Candle Sales
Delivery in Time for Mother's Day

April 29th - Friday 10AM to 4PM
Crossroads House (Batavia) Work Day

May 14th - Saturday 9AM to 11:15AM

St. Jude's Bike A Thon

May 21st - Saturday 8:30AM to 4:30PM
Presbytery MISSION MADNESS

May 30th - Monday 10AM to 3PM
Memorial Day in the Park

June 4th - Saturday 9AM to 3PM
Car Wash

For Full Details be sure to visit the BYG Bulletin Board at the top of the stairs at the church, call Valerie, or email at above address!

Christian Education

Calling all Kids! We have received new curriculum and plan to initiate it in March. We have new games, great activities, and incredible stories. Easter is coming soon, so watch for our Easter Egg Hunt and other special activities. Join us!

After School Program

Wednesdays from 2:30PM to 5:45PM. Homework, programs, snacks, friendships, and great conversations are what we enjoy. If you are in grades 5-12 you are welcome to pre-register and attend each Wednesday or any Wednesday. Bus transportation is available from the school - on either the first or second run. If you have an interesting hobby or knowledge on a particular subject it would be awesome to have some teen presentations done. A program can be 45 minutes to an hour long. **If you know someone that can bring a program to us, ask them... your parents, a teacher, an instructor, a friend, a community service club, an artist, dancer, actor, writer.... let Valerie know!**

Grandparent Adoption

I have spoken about this in church several times; the fact that we are looking for **adult mentors** for this program. **As and adult mentor it would be a simple, but rewarding experience.** Mentors would touch base

with their youth group member and help them with ideas for their partnership with the youth's church "grandparent" once a month.

Suggestions from parents at this age are sometimes not well received by youth... So, the idea is that the youth have another adult from our caring congregation to work on this project with. You would suggest things like writing a letter, baking cookies, sharing a movie night at home, snow shoveling, gardening, sweeping, scrapbooking, etc. Sometimes a youth may need to know that they could call you for a ride to visit their "grandparent".

There are several older members of our church we have identified as being interested in having youth visit them on occasion. Several youth have expressed an interest in this program. The youth have asked me several times when this program is going to start. We know that you have busy schedules, but you want to be involved. This might be the perfect opportunity for you to do that! It would be easy to fit into your schedule. Please think about adopting an older person/couple from our church this upcoming year with a youth group member.... it would mean so much to them! You might find that they enrich your life just as much. Speak with Valerie or Jim if you are interested.