

# Ilion Presbyterian News

**January 2021**

**Pastor Rick Riggle**

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2020 is finally over, and I have been thinking a lot about what to make of all that has happened this year. History, I am sure, will recall it as the year of Covid-19, and it certainly has been the dominant theme. I thank God that a vaccine is starting to roll out; by the time you read this our daughter will already have received hers, but I think that is really only the beginning of the end of all of this. It will be a long time until we learn what the new normal is going to look like.

Paul writes these words to the church in Rome: *We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.* I sometimes think this is the most misused passage in the bible. Often quoted at times of suffering to somehow tell people that their suffering is a good thing. It doesn't say that at all. It says all things work together for good, for those who are called. We are called to learn and find ways to take what feels broken and make it whole, to learn and grow and become transformed in the image of Jesus.

So what does that mean for the year 2020. So many things have happened that have challenged us as the people of God. Of course covid-19, but also racial unrest, political turmoil, a nation divided, churches fighting and a sense that it is only going to get worse. None of those things are good. They are a brokenness in the fabric of creation that cannot be denied. So if all things work together what can we think.

We can think of how much we have learned in this time. We have embraced new technology which makes it possible for people who can't get out to join us online when we begin to worship again. I checked the other day and saw that 65 people had viewed our last worship service. That is more than we have in church so we are reaching new people.

We can think about the ways we have continued to reach out in our community and around the world through our missions. The schools received sanitizer and masks from the church. We have given food and money to the food pantry. We helped Catholic Charities make sure that people in need received a Thanksgiving meal. We gave significantly to One Great Hour of Sharing and the lunch bunch continues to feed anyone who asks. We have moved forward to do mission in spite of everything.

I think about how generous you have been through all this. Your giving has continued to be strong in the face of the uncertainty. Your faithfulness in sharing with our church family is always a blessing and makes me so proud to be a part of this church.

I have said this to many people but it bears repeating. We are a healthy, vibrant, living church. We are small and aging, of course, but we continue to move forward working together to make our world and our community a better place. In a dark year we have been light and I know that we will continue to be light in 2021.

Thanks for everything you all do

Pastor Rick



## **Prayer List:**

- Men and women who protect us and our freedoms.

**Cody Adams,**

**Kiersten Barnes/Richard Davis,**

Barbara Connor,

**the Devereese Family,**

Allan Dickinson,

**Art DuBois,**

**Lenore Ebersole,**

**Phyllis Fasolo,**

**Sarah Getman,**

**Marilyn Hext,**

Julie Hulser & Julie's granddaughter, Jocelyn,

**Dave & Jane Jacquays,**

Amanda Lawrence (Christine's daughter),

Barbara Maley,

Joan Matteson,

Pat & Marge Moylan,

**Millie Ritter,**

**Dale Rohrer,**

Anita Smith,

**Angela Traglia,**

**Darlene Whalen,**

**Gretchen**

Joy Bagwell (George Gullis's niece by marriage),

**Linda Cate,**

Brianna Nicole (Christine Lawrence's daughter)

Clifford Dibble (Anita Smith's son),

Beverly Doolen,

George Dunbar,

Jenn Eldredge,

**Betty Foor,**

**Fran Harrod,**

Loren Hughes,

**infant Grayson,**

Dr. Aimee,

Sharon Lennox,

Marty March,

Laureen Mitchell,

**Rebecca,**

**Henry Rocker,**

**Lorie Schrader,**

Jane Smithson (Lynne Orendorf's mother),

Kirsi Viskari (friend of the Eldredges),

**Ricky Wilson & mom,**

Christian Sympathy is extended to Nancy Flanagan on the passing of her husband, David, on December 11, 2020. Nancy was one of Sami Pulver's caregivers, only learning of her husband's cancer after Sami's funeral.

Also to Lynne Orendorf & her family on the passing of her father, Bob Smithson on Dec. 19;

And to the family of Beverly Doolen who passed on Dec. 20.

We also heard of the passing of former long-time member George Jackson who passed away in Vermont on Dec. 26. For those who remember the Jacksons, Linda's address is 57 Drew Lane, Shelburne, VT 05482



HAPPY NEW YEAR !!!

WELCOME TO 2021

The "Lunch Bunch" are about to be making bag lunches again starting January fifth. We are looking forward to serving all who would like a lunch. You may pick up your lunch at our door, or in most cases, we will deliver to your door. There is not a charge nor do we ask you for a donation for this meal. Generally though, we won't refuse to take a donation, either!

We offer three kinds of meat, two kinds of bread, cheese, a cup of fruit, chips, a dessert and a beverage, regular or diet soda or a fruit drink. You may place a request at the Church. Call 315-894-2070 to talk to someone or leave a message and a phone number so we can call you back. You may refer a friend or relative, also.

We will be operating with a small crew due to the Covid restraints. There are sometimes different people doing different jobs and we may not fill your order correctly. If we make an error in your order please tell us. Sometimes we do Goof!

We are contemplating offering a cup of soup-to-go, in January. Pick up at our door only as it would be very, very difficult for our volunteers to deliver it. This is a first for us. If it doesn't work out, we tried!

Pray for the COVID "gnat" to be gone! We've had enough of it.

### MIS Notes:



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

Thanks to all who contributed to "One Great Hour of Sharing" in 2020. We collected \$885.00 which is frankly much more than expected. So again, thanks to all that were able to donate.

A huge hug to all who continue to support our efforts to help out the local food bank. Since our big drive in July, August, and September, I have taken over more food 3 more times. As we all know, the need is ongoing. The church will be open on Tuesday's and Thursday's for the Lunch Bunch, so if you have food you'd like to donate or have purchased, someone will be there in the mornings on those 2 days. I will check in periodically and take over donations.

One final note:

This has certainly been a year for reflection, endurance, acceptance, resilience, etc. It is very hard not to become overwhelmed. I think a worthy goal this year is to think less about improving oneself and more about what we can do to improve our community in some way, no matter how small you may think it is. We truly are all in this together. Much love to all who are struggling, as well as our heroic health care workers. Know you are not alone. I send you light and love. Susan and the MIS team.

The First Presbyterian Church

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Address Service Requested