



## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ORONOCO

September 2018 Newsletter



On Sept. 9, we will resume our Coffee & Conversation time from 9:00-9:45 on Sunday mornings – a time of discussion on faith, life, and everything in between. This is a time to come together with coffee and snacks (or breakfast ... depending on how early you get up 😊) and have some discussions around a variety of faith topics – some Bible study, some prayer, some faith formation, some topical studies. No pre-reading or prior knowledge required. We'll be diving back into our study of the gospel of Mark. Anyone is welcome – to attend, to lead the discussion, to suggest a new topic of study.

# A Message from Our Pastor



It's newsletter article time again, and here I sit  
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## WRITER'S BLOCK.

Maybe it's because there's a lot going on – in my own family life and in the life of the church. Maybe it's because the summer is wrapping up and this time of year is always a little slowness-inducing. I could say it's because I'm sleep-deprived, but you've probably all heard me say that our new baby sleeps through the night already.

For whatever reason, any good ideas I may have had have flown out the window ... probably because it looks so darn nice out there! 😊

Often, when we consider talking about our faith, we feel inadequate. We feel like we come up short – like we're unsure of the “right” words to us, the “right” way to express ourselves, the “right” things to say in terms of theology and church lingo and everything else. I wish I had a dollar for every time someone said to me, “I can't speak about my faith in public. I didn't go to seminary. I don't know what to say.”

Okay, folks ... I *did* go to seminary ... and here I sit today NOT KNOWING WHAT TO SAY.

It reminds me of a scene from one of my favorite movies – *National Treasure*. The basic premise of the movie is that Nicholas Cage is a historian and treasure hunter who's spent his whole life searching for the lost treasure of the Knights Templar. At the beginning of the movie, he's trying to riddle out one of the many clues that he finds along the trail of this treasure, and he's solicited the help of the people around him. They're all trying to work out what this specific clue might be referring to when one of the less intelligent characters spouts off a theory that comes out of left field – something that is only marginally related to what everyone else is talking about and is almost certainly *not* what the clue is referenc-

ing. When he does this, one of the other characters (the “comic relief” guy), says, “Snorkel! See I can do it, too. Albuquerque!” The comic relief character is poking fun at the less-than-intelligent character for blurting out what sounds like random words as opposed to offering a truly helpful thought.

Sometimes, when we consider talking about our faith, we feel like that – like what we're saying makes little sense with what's going on around us as opposed to offering something useful, thoughtful, or polished. We feel like, instead of coming up with something wise and inspiring and faith-filled, we're just blurting out random words. Trust me ... there are PLENTY of times I've felt like that myself (including today as I write this newsletter article).

Thankfully, we are far from alone in feeling like this. Even the apostle Paul struggled with saying the “right” thing. But Paul also reminds us that it's not up to us to say the perfect thing:

*In God's wisdom, he determined that the world wouldn't come to know him through its wisdom. Instead, God was pleased to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching. Jews ask for signs, and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, which is a scandal to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. But to those who are called—both Jews and Greeks—Christ is God's power and God's wisdom. This is because the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.*  
– 1 Corinthians 1:21-25

So when it comes to sharing your faith, be encouraged! Don't be afraid to say the “wrong” thing because God is working through you for good, using even the most random, seemingly nonsensical testimonies to spread the good news of Christ and the love of God to all those who need to hear it.

Snorkel!  
Albuquerque!  
...  
Resurrection!  
Hope!  
Love!  
Forgiveness!  
Alleluia!

*Pastor Gina*

## Summer sermon series: “Gifts of the Dark Woods”

*Gifts of the Dark Woods: Seven Blessings for Soulful Skeptics* is an incredible book written by Dr. Eric Elnes, a pastor, author, and speaker who hosts an online community (“Darkwood Brew”) “for an engaging exploration of Convergence Christianity.” His book explores the different ways our experiences in the Dark Woods are not something to be feared but instead are gifts and ways to encounter God. The seven gifts/blessings that Dr. Elnes addresses are: the gifts of uncertainty, emptiness, being thunderstruck, getting lost, temptation, disappearing, and the gift of misfits. “This is a book for anyone who feels awkward in their search for God, who seeks to find holiness amid their holy mess, who prefers practicality to piety when it comes to finding their place in this world.”

Throughout the summer, we will be tackling one of these gifts each Sunday – talking about what it is, where we find its presence and blessing in Scripture, and how we can embrace it instead of shying away from it in our own walks of faith.

## Fall Church Clean-Up Day



We will be gathering sometime in the fall – before the weather turns too cold! – to do some deep cleaning and tidying up in and around the church. This year, part of that will include removing the cold-damaged bushes around the ramp and replacing them with something new, pressure washing the outside of the church, and even painting the spots that need some touching up. We will coerce you to come and help with drinks, pizza, and desserts provided!

The Session has yet to determine a date for this but will come up with one soon, so be on the lookout!

## Update from Revs. Shelvis & Nancy Smith-Mather

Revs. Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather are the missionaries serving in South Sudan and Uganda who we support with our 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Spare Change Sunday funds. Shelvis, Nancy, Jordan, and Adalyn welcomed another daughter/sister into their lives in October – baby Nicole. If you would like an update on the incredible work that Shelvis and Nancy are doing with RECONCILE International and how their fami-

ly is doing, please go to <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/shelvis-and-nancy-smith-mather/>. In the top right portion of the screen you will find a box with link to their 10 most recent update letters. Also on this page, you can find links to contact both Shelvis and Nancy as well as information on how to contribute financially as an individual to their mission.



## Kids' Sunday School

Children ages 6-12 are welcome to join us for Sunday School! We will be holding Sunday School on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month. Kids will be dismissed from worship following the sermon so they can spend some time exploring Scripture with fun lessons and great materials. A big, GIANT thank you to Karen Peterson-Rucker, Gail Rucker, Jenny Rand, and Joanne Schenck for volunteering to teach!!

## PT Office Admin Position

We are seeking a new part-time office administrator – 8 hrs/wk at \$16/hr. The session has determined that it would be best if our new office admin is **not** a congregation member, but if you know anyone who might be interested, our position description can be found on our website and our Facebook page. You can also pick up a copy (or copies) to distribute in the church office.

## Presbytery Meeting

The next Presbytery meeting is **Tues., Sept. 11 at 4:00 p.m.** at First Presbyterian Church in Buffalo. As always, Presbytery meetings are open to anyone. If you're interested in coming, please contact Pastor Lisa.

*“I have just three things to teach: simplicity, patience, compassion. These three are your greatest treasures.”* —  
Lao Tzu

## All Around the Campfire



We had so much fun with our campfire gatherings last summer that we're at it again this summer! One Sunday a month, we'll be gathering in the evening on the church lawn. There will be a campfire. There will be lawn games. There will be s'mores. This is a chance for us to spend some fun, relaxed, unstructured time together, and to invite people who may not be as comfortable coming through the church doors for the first time. Bring your neighbors and friends. Bring kids. Let's have fun!

Sept. 23: 5:30-8:00 p.m. **LAST ONE!!**

## Mowing Sign-Up

There are a few more open slots on the sign-up sheet for mowing the lawn. The sign-up sheet remains on the bulletin board. If you can help, please sign up for the week you intend to mow. The church mower is in the shed. Talk to Ron Peterson-Rucker or Pastor Lisa if you need the shed key.

## Peace & Global Witness Offering (World Communion Sunday) October 7, 2018

We make a special point of remembering our unity with Christians worldwide on World Communion Sunday, the first Sunday of October (10/7/18). The Peacemaking Offering encourages all parts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to work for peace. Each congregation is invited to find ways to promote peace within the congregation and within the community. The Peacemaking Offering supports the peacemaking efforts of the church at every governing body level and provides an opportunity to witness to God's gift of peace in the world. Please watch for the special envelopes and consider how you may help.

## Session Clerks' Minutes Review Day

On Sat., Sept. 29, we will be hosting a number of local clerks of session for the annual minutes review. Instead of trying to gather all the clerks from all the sessions in the presbytery on one single day, this year, the presbytery is holding 3 minutes review days

– one in the southern part of the presbytery (us), one in the northern part, and one at the presbytery office – in hopes that people will be able to make one of those days and not have to drive quite so far.

The event will be from 9:00a-noon, so we don't have to worry about lunch. However, we will need to provide coffee, juice, and some things to snack on throughout the morning. There will be a sign-up sheet for cookies and/or bars. Thank you!

## Dorothy Day Dinner



The annual September Dorothy Day House dinner will be served on Wednesday, September 26. Mike & Jenny Rand are coordinating the event and will be looking for volunteers to prepare and serve food. A sign-up sheet for salads and dessert is posted on the bulletin board. See Mike or Jenny for the meal plan. This is a great way to "Play It Forward" and experience God's love. Your help is greatly appreciated by all the Dorothy Day residents.

*The Lord is near to all who call on Him,  
To all who call on Him in truth.  
He fulfills the desire of all who fear Him;  
He also hears their cry and saves them.*  
Psalm 145:18-19

Eunice Markham, Joan Swarthout and Joyce Rucker



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## IN TOUCH WITH THE WIDER CHURCH

### Presbyterian Church Contact Information

Presbyterian national website...[pcusa.org](http://pcusa.org)  
Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area website...  
[ptcaweb.org](http://ptcaweb.org)  
PTCA weekly email newsletter...contact [communications@ptcaweb.org](mailto:communications@ptcaweb.org)  
Presbyterians Today monthly magazine...subscribe (at cost) to Presbyterians Today, P.O. Box 5178, Brentwood, TN 37024-9931 or call 1-800-558-166

### Birthdays for the Month

9/14 Sarah Rand  
Peter Johnson  
9/15 Mia Ke Zhen Tiede  
9/23 Mike Rand

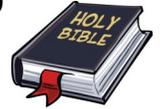


### Church Office Contact Information

Office Phone# 1-507-367-4711  
Email: [oronocopc@bevcomm.net](mailto:oronocopc@bevcomm.net)

## Readings for the Month of September

Sun., Sept. 2 – Ezekiel 36:24-28; Acts 10  
**Gifts of the Dark Woods #9**  
**Labor Day weekend**



Sun., Sept. 9 – James 2:1-9, 13-17; Mark 7:24-37

Sun., Sept. 16 – Psalm 19; Mark 8:27-38

Sun., Sept. 23 – 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14; Luke 9:51-62

Sun., Sept. 30 – Mark 9:38-50; Galatians 6:1-10

### Church Staff

Organist: Katha Johnson  
Secretary:  
Custodian:  
Pastor: Rev. Lisa Johnson

### Presbyterian Leadership Team

Kim Stanton, Treasurer  
Kay Erdahl, Asst. Treasurer  
Mike Rand, Clerk of Session  
Ron Peterson Rucker, Ruling Elder  
Ellen Warner, Ruling Elder  
Janice Ostrom, Ruling Elder  
Mike Rand, Ruling Elder  
Linda Sorensen, Ruling Elder  
Lance Sorensen, Ruling Elder  
Ellen Simon, Deacon  
Joanne Schenck, Deacon  
Karen Peterson Rucker, Deacon  
Jenny Rand, Deacon  
Gail Rucker, Deacon

### People of the Church

Janice Ostrom, Co-Moderator  
Jenny Rand, Co Moderator

Presbyterian Church of Oronoco  
PO Box 118  
Oronoco, 367-4711



**Check out our website at  
[www.oronocochurch.org](http://www.oronocochurch.org)**

**Worship is held at 10:00 a.m. each Sunday  
Communion is on the first Sunday of each month  
Coffee & Conversation 9:00—9:45  
Sunday School 2nd & 4th Sunday of the month**



**Reverend Lisa Johnson—Contact Information:  
Cell Phone 1-507-995-7310 Email address: [pastorlisaj@gmail.com](mailto:pastorlisaj@gmail.com)  
Pastor Lisa's blog: [pastorlisaj.wordpress.com](http://pastorlisaj.wordpress.com)**