

# The Carillon

First Baptist Church of Penfield



2023

## In This Issue

Pastor's Meditation.....	1
December Birthdays.....	2
Notes From the Trustees.....	3
Pledges and Donations.....	3
Coffee Hour Schedule.....	3
Missions Report.....	4
Church Ladies' Lunch.....	5
Men's Lunch.....	5
Our Annual Christmas Celebration.....	5
December Flapjack Breakfast.....	6
Worship Service by Phone.....	7
December Adult Discussion.....	7
Wednesday Zoom Prayer Group.....	8
Wednesday Bible Club Meeting.....	8
2023 Ring in the Holidays Event.....	9
Health Safety.....	10
Who We Are.....	11

### Pastor's Meditation December 2023

Christmastime is here! For Christians, the greatest significance is the Incarnation, “God becoming a man,” which makes reconciliation with God possible for sinners like us. But Christmas season also has dizzying accoutrements; gifts, songs, decorations and nostalgia. My favorite of these add-ons is always the songs. My long suffering mother will gladly share that when I was four, I insisted on her playing “Jingle Bells” daily on

our Zenith console stereo. I suppose there would be nothing unusual about that, except that I insisted on hearing it every day - *from December through July*. I've never figured out why, except that, as I said, I love Christmas songs.

As years rolled on, Christmas LPs gave way to cassettes, and cassettes gave way to CDs, until the 2010s when many Christmas favorites found permanent residence on my phone. They are likely to remain there for the rest of my life, until some other technology takes over.

Through the years of ministry, I've repeatedly encouraged music directors during Advent to use as many Christmas songs as possible. Congregants love to hear and sing them. I've confessed to Naomi that I'd request “Jingle Bells” if that was a hymn. Christmas songs are bright and cheerful, the way one should feel about getting right with God. “Joy to the World!” and “Go Tell it on the Mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!”

Included with all these upbeat songs is a somber and little-known melody, “The Coventry Carol.” No Christmas collection should be without it. The Coventry Carol originates in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and mourns Herod’s insane attempt to kill the Christ-child by ordering the death of every child 2 years old or less. It resembles a sad lullaby. “Herod the king / in his raging / charged he hath this day / his men of might / in their own

sight / the little ones to slay.” The song aches with lost potential, the loving mothers whose innocent children were violently killed, all because of the dictates of a despot. This year, it is more relevant than ever. Our news is flooded with accounts of the horrific slaughter of the innocents, from Hamas attacking Israel, and Israel counterattacking Gaza. It is reported that dictators are on the rise globally. Whatever for? Do humans everywhere have too much freedom? Isn’t there already enough suffering?

Dark times remind us of the enormous gap between “what-is” and “what-should-be.” God became a man to bridge that gap. He entered this oft-painful world and became part of it. He allowed himself to be included among the innocents slaughtered. If you believe, as I do, that Jesus is God, then you know God has experienced suffering. God knows what it’s like to be us. God knows that it hurts, but also knows that evil will not have the final word. Scriptures promise God’s Kingdom, which already exists, but is on its way. We feel the pain of now, longing for God’s tomorrow, always believing that, through Jesus, the final condition of humanity will include songs of joy. Bells on Bobtail ring! Good Christian souls, rejoice!

In Christ, Pastor Steve

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## December Birthdays

- 8 Thomas Keenan
  - 10 Brenda Beechner
  - 10 Laura Swail
  - 17 Sue McNally
  - 20 Lois Neely
  - 20 Sandra Pray
  - 22 Ginna Bergonzi-Blackman
  - 22 Marian Lee Kuykendall
  - 23 Darwin Pray
  - 25 John Holderbaum
  - 28 Betty Hartman
  - 29 Alexandra Collison
  - 29 Sue Sparnecht
  - 31 Michael Kimball
-

## Notes from the Trustees

Our annual Stewardship Drive began on Sunday, November 19th. You should have received a mailing from the Trustees containing a letter with information about many of the good things happening within our church and a message about your support for our 2024 financial needs. If you haven't already done so, use the stamped envelope and pledge form to mail your commitment. You can also place the pledge form in the collection plate on Sunday morning. There are extra pledge forms and envelopes on the table at the back of the sanctuary, if needed. If you didn't receive materials in the mail, let the church office know.

The Trustees will start developing the 2024 budget during the month of December and will present it to the congregation during second hour on January 21, 2024. The congregation will vote on the proposed budget during the Annual Meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup>.

The Trustees have signed a plowing contract with Penport Property Services.

Respectfully,

Don Fox, Fritz May, Jack O'Brien, Mike Pray,  
Sarah Phillips, David Trump



## Pledges and Donations

Just a reminder that all pledges and donations can be mailed into the church office and will be deposited, or you can also use the Donate button on the church website (for a small fee).

Thank you!

Jeff Bertrand



## Coffee Hour Schedule

If anyone wishes to volunteer for Coffee Hour there is a calendar on the bulletin board in New Fellowship Hall.

Please contact Sarah Phillips by email or telephone. [dunes1158@yahoo.com](mailto:dunes1158@yahoo.com) or 585-329-7072

Thanks again to all my Coffee Angels who signed up last year.

Blessings, Sarah Phillips



## MISSIONS REPORT

Each December, the Missions Team presents the **Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO)** of the American Baptist Churches USA. The purpose of this offering is to remember, celebrate, and thank retired ministers and missionaries and their widowed spouses for 15 or more years of devoting their lives to serve ABCUSA churches and ministries. The theme for 2023 is, "**Good Will Come.**" It is fitting that **Good** should come back to each of them in the form of a "thank-you" check to express our collective gratitude for their service. According to ABCUSA, the checks in 2022 were modest, averaging \$154, but the gesture is an important part of the gift as well.

Following up on the October drive-thru **Ring In The Holidays** Collection of food and new clothing, we, the Missions team, again want to express our thanks to you for making that a success. Our goal is to be lifting up those who need help, and the bounty of food and clothing were welcomed and much appreciated! It is important to us that you know about the smiles and the difference you are creating for the recipients of these gifts.

The charity that was chosen for the November Flapjack breakfast was Penfield Ecumenical Food Shelf. A check for \$400 from the Missions budget will be sent to them right away because they are experiencing additional needs this holiday season. In an expression of thanks that we recently received

from the team at the PEFS, they wrote, "we've been busier than ever helping our Penfield neighbors." Isn't it gratifying to be in a position to help out with their enormous efforts!

On December 3rd the 2nd-Hour speaker will be Angela D. Sims, President of the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School in Rochester. Through our Missions budget, we annually support CRCDS, and our church has had a long-standing relationship with them. This 2nd-Hour presentation will be an excellent opportunity for you to become better acquainted with CRCDS and the educational programs there.

As we close another year, we wish all of you a Merry Christmas and Joy in the New Year

Ellen, Susie, Janette



**Church Ladies' Lunch**  
Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at Noon

**Bocaccini's Italian Bistro & Bar  
6720 Pittsford Palmyra Road  
located in the Perinton Square Mall**

The Ladies Lunch Group of FBCP invite the men of our church to join us for our Holiday Lunch his will be a wonderful time of fellowship together as we begin to celebrate The Birth of Christ.

**ALL ARE WELCOME, THE MORE THE MERRIER!**

If you are able to join us, please contact Saundra in the church office to let her know.

(To avoid any confusion, there was previous mention of a different restaurant, but that did change.)



**Men's Lunch**

**Thursdays at Noon  
Riki's Restaurant in Fairport**



**Our Annual Christmas Celebration**

Our Christmas Celebration will be held on Sunday December 17th, following worship.

This will be a special extended time of fellowship with one another.

We will have cake in celebration of Christ's birth. We will also have a wonderful variety of holiday cookies, as we are asking our church families to bring in a plate of their favorite cookies to share. All of the cookies will be greatly appreciated and enjoyed by others.

Please mark your calendars. We hope to see all of you there!



## December Flapjack Breakfast

Based on what took place on November 11 Flapjack leadership has decided we will, again, hold a Breakfast on December 16, the third Saturday in December.

Very soon I will post sign up sheets for volunteers needed to make the breakfast a success. The volunteers list will be bolstered in December by a few of the Troop 230 Scouts. I plan to have them help in the kitchen and on the serving floor.

Any questions regarding the breakfast may be directed to me at [jeffreyt656@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffreyt656@yahoo.com) or 585-278-4727.

I am looking forward to another successful, fun and fulfilling time on December 16. And, thanks to all who helped us start up again.

Best regards,

Jeff Phillips



## How to Join Sunday Worship Service by Phone

Dial in by phone to join each Sunday's virtual service

Zoom opens at 9 am

Worship Service starts at 9:30 am

Dial by your location

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

When prompted, punch in this meeting ID

-----> 839 345 585

When prompted, punch in -----> #



## Adult Discussion Following Worship

11:15-NOON

This is a recurring meeting  
In person and on Zoom

## Below is the Online Information

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84560421536>

### Call-in information

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

## December Adult Discussion Schedule

3<sup>rd</sup> Dr. Angela Sims, President,  
Colgate Rochester Crozier Divinity  
School

10<sup>th</sup> David McCullough DVD - *In the  
Dark Streets Shineth*  
(Hope through Peril) - Pastor Steve

17<sup>th</sup> CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

24<sup>th</sup> CHRISTMAS EVE – NO ADULT  
DISCUSSION

31<sup>st</sup> NEW YEAR'S EVE – NO ADULT  
DISCUSSION



## Wednesday Zoom Prayer Group

Please join Pastor Steve Wednesday for a Zoom Prayer Group Meeting. We will share our concerns and take them to God. Although we've scheduled a one-hour Zoom meeting, these are expected to end sooner. Please join us!

### **1:00 pm Prayer Group:**

Zoom Computer Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/950690121>

**Meeting ID: 950 690 121**

**Phone users dial: 1-646-876-9923**

**When Prompted, enter**

**Meeting ID: 950 690 121**



## Bible Club Meeting

**Wednesday, - Time: 6:00 pm  
NFH & Online/Zoom**

Please join us as we begin reading the Bible, from start to finish, using *The Daily Contemplative Bible*, which has segmented the entire Bible into 365 daily readings – cost is \$14. each. By the end of the year, we will have read the Bible cover-to-cover!

Pizza provided for those attending in-Person

### **How to join us online:**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86182075740>

**Meeting ID: 861 8207 5740**

**Call-in:**

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 646 931 3860 US

Meeting ID: 861 8207 5740



## 2023 Ring In the Holidays



Our FBP congregation generously donated an abundance of pajamas for the mothers and socks & underwear for the children of Open Door Mission's [Coldwater House for Women and Children!](#)



**Our FBP congregation's** donations for the Penfield Ecumenical Food Shelf Holiday Dinner boxes filled an entire car - with the seats folded down!

Your caring support is making a difference for 250 families in the Penfield area struggling with food insecurity.



## **Health Safety**

For the latest info on COVID-19, please go  
to the Center for Disease Control Website  
([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov))

Or call the CDC at 1-800-232-4636 for  
updates



## **Who We Are**

The First Baptist Church of Penfield was established in 1804 in what is now an eastern suburb of Rochester, New York.

We are affiliated with American Baptist Churches of the Rochester/Genesee Region, and nationally with the American Baptist Churches, USA.

We welcome all to worship with us. Our congregation is a gathering of people who are diverse in theology and political opinions, but who are all seeking to know God in a deeper and more meaningful way.

The First Baptist Church of Penfield continues to include all who seek Jesus as Lord - regardless of race, class, gender, disability, place of origin, or sexual orientation, identity, or expression.



# The Carillon

First Baptist Church of Penfield  
1862 Penfield Road  
Penfield, NY 14526



## **We have 3 methods of receiving the monthly newsletter.**

**Method 1—Open the link on our web page at [www.fbpenfield.org](http://www.fbpenfield.org)**

**Method 2—Pick up your personal copy at Sunday Worship**

**Method 3—Receive a printed copy via US Postal Mail**

Please help us to obtain a cost savings! Open the link or pick up!

If you wish to change your method, please e-mail us at

[fbpenfield@toast.net](mailto:fbpenfield@toast.net) or call the Church Office at (585) 586-2876.

## Our Church Staff

Rev. Steven D. Brotzman ~ Pastor

Dr. Naomi Gregory ~ Organist, Music Director  
Caroline Cooke, Caroline Duers, David Griffith, ~  
Choral Scholars

Saundra Augustus ~ Office Assistant

Laura Swail ~ Nursery Care

Meho & Hava Kapidzic ~ Church Custodians

## Contact Information

(585) 586-2876

E-mail ~ [fbpenfield@toast.net](mailto:fbpenfield@toast.net)

Website ~ [www.fbpenfield.org](http://www.fbpenfield.org)

Find us on Facebook

## Summer Church Office Hours

Tuesday thru Friday, 8:00am to 12:00pm

## **OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT**

*We welcome to our worship all who desire to know God through Jesus Christ.*

*We encourage each other to develop a relationship with God and to live as Christ taught us.*

*We covenant together to seek out and minister to those in spiritual, emotional or physical need.*