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# Good News

## First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca

315 N. Cayuga Street • Ithaca, NY, 14850 • 607-272-2800 • Rev. Kirianne Weaver, Senior Pastor • Rev. Cynthia A. Weaver, Pastoral Supply

Dear friends,

We have been blessed to share what I think has been an altogether lovely season together this past month: Lessons and Carols with our amazing choir, the Christmas Pageant, Christmas Eve’s candles, our beautiful decorations soon to be boxed again—and a Christmas Eve snowfall designed for every Bing Crosby devotee dreaming of a white Christmas. Christmas is a time of renewal—but what season of the Christian year isn’t about this theme, given us by an ever-forgiving God?

Thank God for that! Because among the many confessions I have to make, and by no means the greatest of them, is that it took us two months to realize the Post Office was not delivering our newsletters. We filled out forms and dropped them off faithfully—but alas, an additional online system meant that we had not been aware of some pre-processing that was required. We deeply apologize for your missing news from October and November, and for the tardiness of December when we realized what was going on.

We have waffled about whether to send out these newsletters late—but instead, we will dedicate a page or two in our newsletters going forward to articles that came from those missing months. There are things that relate to the life of the church that we want to make sure you all get a chance to see; look for “Back Page Articles” to find them. The newsletters are up on our website too, so you may always go and see them there.

Here in our January issue, which is always late due to the Christmas season and holiday, you’ll

### Found within these pages:

- [How to join our church directory](#)
- [Article reprints from Oct and Nov](#)
- [Karaoke night: Saturday, Jan. 18!](#)
- [...and lots of Christmas photos!](#)

also find among these pages an old article by Rev. Walter Dodds from back in 1941. What is old becomes new again! Perhaps the word “old” itself could use examining, as it rarely means what we think it does.

Indeed, the new year reminds us both that we have gotten older (try to remember to write ‘25) and, simultaneously, that all things are made new again. Snow continues to fall and show us perfect crystal blankets. Its fluff hides the autumn leaves last season left behind, the imperfect final mow we gave the grass, the cracks in the driveway, the tufts of weeds sprouting through the kentucky bluegrass and fescue.

God says, “Come, let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall become like wool.” We accept this with relieved and gladdened hearts; for there are not many hours in which our hearts don’t revert to bad habits, of judgment, selfishness, anger, or whatever. Advent, Christmas, the New Year, and every day that follows them: all are both old and new, confession and forgiveness, root and branch, hope and ancient consolation.

Be well, pray often, and do it all with love.

**Need to Submit an Article?** Please send it to the office: church.fpci@gmail.com by the due date. We print and mail the Good News on a monthly basis. Email subscriptions also available.  
**Due Date for the (always late) January 2025 issue: Thursday, January 2, 2025**

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## Worship Schedule: January 2025

### January 5: Communion

Scripture: Jeremiah 31: 7-14; John 1: 1-19  
Sermon: “Words”

### January 12: Epiphany

Scripture: Isaiah 60: 1-6; Matthew 2: 1-12  
Sermon: “From of Old.”

### January 19: MLK Jr. Weekend.

*In celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr., and his calls to Christian community, integration, equality and fellowship, we will walk (or drive) to St. James AME Zion church following worship.*

### January 25:

Scripture: Nehemiah 8; Luke 4: 14-21  
Sermon: “Repentance.”

### From Pastor Cindy

Dear Friends,

Another New Year has begun, and an assortment of bits and pieces has prompted me to write what follows as my New Year's greeting to you. This column is brought to you by the cleaning out of a hall closet, the news that rates of loneliness and depression continue to rise, and this prayer by one of my favorite liturgical writers, Thom M. Shurman:

*May we not keep our blessings,  
but give them away:  
so that others might learn new dance steps  
so that children might be fed,  
so bridges might be built  
and so grace may flow to all in your world.  
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

How are these three things related, you ask? Well, much of what I found I had kept in the closet, I had kept because of the memories associated with the items, and as it turned out, I didn't really want the painting of Elvis on black velvet, but I cherished the memory of pooling our coins at the county fair bottle toss so that one of us could win the big prize (which was passed from friend to friend). It was time to say goodbye to Elvis and to find the phone number and say a long overdue hello to an old friend.

In this post-COVID lockdown world we seem to be having difficulty reconnecting with the people and groups we value, and even if we aren't feeling lonely, we may be contributing to its rise unintentionally. So, it may be that it is time to clean out a closet and enjoy the memories it brings, and then make a phone call, send an email, or write a letter (yes, the Post Office still makes postage stamps), and reconnect with someone who shares your memories. This could help make

### Karaoke Night!

If you've been wanting for a little January fun, come to our church's first—ever, as far as we know—Karaoke night! We're meeting at K-House, one of the Triphammer storefronts behind the car wash (15 Catherwood Road). We've reserved a room so our community can gather privately to SING and have a great, family-friendly time!

## Church Karaoke Night! K-House Ithaca Saturday, Jan. 18 6:30-8pm

Pizza will be ordered, but there is food available from the K-House menu as well. Bring a friend or just bring yourself, and come join us Saturday night!

- Membership Connections

2025 not just a New Year, but also a Year of Renewal...and I would be remiss in my role as pastor if I didn't mention that God eagerly awaits your calls, emails, letters, and prayers.

In 2025 may you be a blessing to even more than you already are. With gratitude for another year with you,

*Cindy*

## Announcements and Reminders

### Could you help us Usher?

From time to time, we need substitute ushers for Sunday morning. Would you be willing to help? Ushering involves:

1. Coming early to greet people as they arrive
2. Handing out bulletins and helping people make their way around the church
3. Passing the plates during the offering
4. Cleaning up left bulletins following the service, and/or gathering the friendship pad sheets for visitor information

If you feel you could help us do these things, you could talk to Kirianne, Cindy, or Rick Vaughan, our organizer for each week's ushering team.

Welcoming people who come to church is one of the greatest things we can all do to help our church community grow strong!

### Birthdays in January



- 17—Annabelle Wood
- 19—Royal Colle
- 24—OUR CHURCH, in 1804!
- 27—Geoffrey Lightfoote
- 28—Ken White
- 28—Jan Parsons

*...We would love to add your **birthday** and/or your **anniversary**. If it's not here, please email the office at [church.fpci@gmail.com](mailto:church.fpci@gmail.com) and we will be happy to add it!*

### INSTANT CHURCH DIRECTORY:

A Church Directory helps everyone get to know one another. Ours is called "Instant Church Directory" - an app you can download and a printed directory you can pick up at church. To participate, email us at [church.fpci@gmail.com](mailto:church.fpci@gmail.com), call the office Tuesday-Friday between 9 and 1, or fill out an info sheet at church on Sunday. If you don't get a printed copy at church let the office know and we can mail you one!

### WINTER WEATHER POLICY:

Please remember—there is no role in a church service so important that you should risk your welfare to get here.

We will always be open on Sunday mornings at 10am for worship, but be safe above all else. The sabbath was made *for humanity*, not humanity to serve the Sabbath.

*We hold in our daily prayer:*

*David Brown; Jennifer Carlson; Mischa Dixon; Harris Faulkner; Vivian and Jim Russell; and Marj Smart.*



January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 9:00 am - Chancel Choir 9:30 am - Nursery available 10:00 am - Worship 11:00 am - Fellowship time 11:30 am - Bible Study 11:30 am - Youth Group 12:30 pm - Deacons	6	7 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7-8 pm - AA Meeting 7-9 pm - Irish Music	8 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 - 10:30 am - Wednesday Worship Meeting 3-4 pm - Soup, fruit 5:30-6:30pm - Shepherd Training	2 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 6:30 - 9:30 pm - Community Game Night 7-9 pm - YFN Music 7:30pm-Chancel Choir Rehearsal	3 9 am-1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	4 IWR—Dodds Hall
12 9:00 am - Chancel Choir 9:30 am - Nursery available 10:00 am - Worship 11:00 am - Fellowship time 11:30 am - Adult Education 11:30 am - Youth Choir 11:30 am - Youth Group	13 3-4pm - Kental Communion	14 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 10 - 11 am - Staff Meeting 4-5 pm - Adult Education Committee 7 pm - AA Intergroup Mtg 7-8 pm - AA Meeting 7-9 pm - Irish Music	15 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 - 10:30 am - AI Anon 9:30 - 10:30 am - Wednesday Worship Meeting 7:00-9:30 pm - Finger Lakes Pipe Band	16 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am-11:30 am - Family Playgroup 6:30 - 9:30 pm - Community Game Night 7:30pm-Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7-9 pm - YFN Music	17 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	18 6:30 - 8pm - Family Karaoke Night
19 9:00 am - Chancel Choir 9:30 am - Nursery available 10:00 am - Worship 11:00 am - Fellowship time 11:30 am - Adult Education 11:30 am - Youth Choir	20 Inauguration Day Martin Luther King Jr. Day	21 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 7-8 pm - AA Meeting 7-9 pm - Irish Music	22 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 - 10:30 am - Wednesday Worship Meeting 7:00-9:30 pm - Finger Lakes Pipe Band	23 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am-11:30 am - Family Playgroup 6:30 - 9:30 pm - Community Game Night 7:30pm-Chancel Choir Rehearsal	24 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	25 9:00 - 12 pm - Ithaca Suzuki Music Ed.
26 9:00 am - Chancel Choir 9:30 am - Nursery available 10:00 am - Worship 11:00 am - Fellowship time 11:30 am - Adult Education	27 7-8 pm - Session	28 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 10 - 11 am - Staff Meeting 7-8 pm - AA Meeting 7-9 pm - Irish Music	29 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 - 10:30 am - AI Anon 9:30 - 10:30 am - Wednesday Worship Meeting	30 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours 9:30 am-11:30 am - Family Playgroup 7:30pm-Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7-9 pm - YFN Music	31 9 am - 1 pm - FPCI Office Hours	

## Deacons and our Church Directory

*“KINDNESS is like snow. It beautifies everything it covers.”*

– *Kahlil Gibran*

The board of Deacons has had a busy few weeks filled with good work.

- **Poinsettias** - Geoff Lightfoot organized the distribution of Poinsettias to bring cheer to our members we visit. Thank you, Geoff.
- **Holiday Cards** – Thank you Deb Streeter and Tom Owens for making beautiful holiday cards. The Deacons will be sending the cards out this week. We want to make sure everyone receives a Holiday greeting. If we do not have your email, please be sure to leave your email on a fellowship pad or send an email to [church.fpci@gmail.com](mailto:church.fpci@gmail.com) to Sam Ofori at the church office.
- **Clothesline of Warmth** – All of your generous donations were donated to Open Door English which is located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of our church. It was truly an outpouring of KINDNESS. We received in donation 4 adult coats, 5 children coats, 1 pair of slippers, 11 hats, 1 blanket, 8 scarves, 18 pairs of gloves, and 1 pair of boots. Thank you!
- **Adopt a Family** – Through the Salvation Army Adopt-a-Family for Christmas Program our Board adopted a family with 5 children and we worked together shopping to bring cheer to the family for the holidays.

*Joyfully,  
Heather Lane*

Below is an insert we have been running in the church bulletin. We would love to have you join the church directory if you haven't already done so! You can cut out this page and mail it to us at FPCI:  
315 N. Cayuga Street, Ithaca, NY 14850

### Information to include in the Instant Church Directory:

Household name (example "Weaver"): \_\_\_\_\_

Household address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, state, zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary email: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday (no year): \_\_\_\_\_

Picture options:

- I would like a new photo taken
- I will send you a photo of me/us
- Please use my/our previous directory photo

### Individuals in your household:

Full Name (first)	Phone:	Email:

Does anyone in your household have a website or business you would be willing to share?

### Questions?

Call or email the church office for questions or help:  
607-272-2800 or [church.fpci@gmail.com](mailto:church.fpci@gmail.com)

## Voices from the past: Rev. Walter Dodds

*Please enjoy Rev. Walter Dodds' newsletter message to this congregation from January, 1942. His exhortations to bring friends to church and to pray hold true for us today!*

"Life is like a library filled with many books. Our days are the pages and the years the chapters. The Ithaca volume has, as yet, only recorded the events of chapter one and a few pages more, but every paragraph has been of challenging interest. So far in writing the book the minister's mistakes are not a few but however flagrant they have been he is appreciative of the way the Ithaca people have graciously overlooked the errors and omissions with patience and tolerance.

This year's new chapter is being written under the gloomy clouds of war and re-adjustment but somehow the light is not dim, for there is the light of Christ shining in the Christian church; a light that illuminates each step for those who stay near the Christ. The pastor needs his Christian friends in such a time for their beacons added one to the other are needed if he is to see clearly enough to write the current chapter in the gathering darkness.

Friends and members of the church often ask the minister what they as individuals can do for the work of our Master today. No general answer can be given for the gifts vary according to the individual. We do need **people**, and they are best won by the church through consistent recruiting by the membership. Bring your friends to the services of worship, and definitely invite them into our fellowship. Then, more than active service your church and your pastor need your prayers, and that is a contribution you each can make. The church can get along with a diminishing financial return but it will die without people and people's prayers.

## MLK Celebration: Sunday, January 19

For many years our church celebrated a special joint service on MLK Jr. weekend with our sister church, St. James AME Zion. In recent years this particular tradition has presented a difficult conflict for their minister, Rev. Terrance King, whose son's birthday falls at that same time.

Keeping our friendship and solidarity alive and strong, we invite you to walk or drive to St. James (116 Cleveland Ave) after our service is over that day. Those who choose may stay for their service and join in fellowship time with them.

***The church building here will remain open for a short time for some fellowship. After that it will be locked up—so don't leave your things there unless you have a key or have connected with someone else returning with you!!!***

### Find old Good Newses on the website:

Our website is [firstpresithaca.org](http://firstpresithaca.org).

If you would like to go back and see the October and November newsletters in their entirety, from the website's home page click on /News and Events/ and then /Publications/.

So to return to our figure of speech of life being a book, let us each take our share of the responsibility for its writing. Though our part be but that of a lowly comma, one omission may change the whole meaning of life's message for the world. God has appointed to each of us a work and our Master has shown the way. May His grace and help be with each of you.

Rev. Walter A. Dodds"

## And—can you believe it—More Photos Still!



# CHILDREN & YOUTH

## CELEBRATING 2024!

The youth had so much fun at the Yuletide Concert Dinner. Thank you all for supporting this youth fundraiser event by attending, volunteering and supporting this important ministry! Here are some of the wonderful photos from the night. If you have any photos from the event please share them with Mylika.fpci@gmail.com.



# Back Page Article! (originally appeared in October '24)

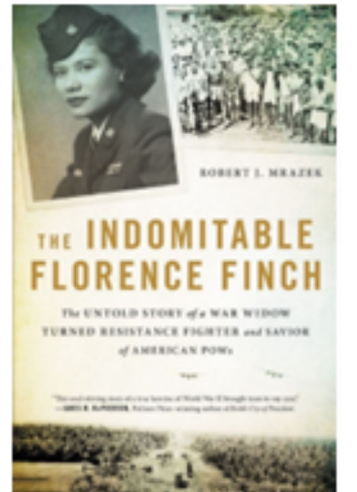
## Florence Finch Honored Again!

Speaking of stories, many of you have already heard about Florence Finch—a member of our congregation for many, many years, whose undercover work during World War II has been immortalized in a historical narrative: “The Indomitable Florence Finch: The Untold Story of a War Widow Turned Resistance Fighter and Savior of American POWs.”

Many more of us only learned her full story after her death, not before.

It is amazing to be able to announce that a new US Coast Guard Cutter will be commissioned in her name: the USCGC FLORENCE FINCH. On October 23, 2024, in Seattle, WA, her story, the legacy of her namesake and her Filipina heritage will be celebrated in a ceremony and reception.

We miss you, Florence.

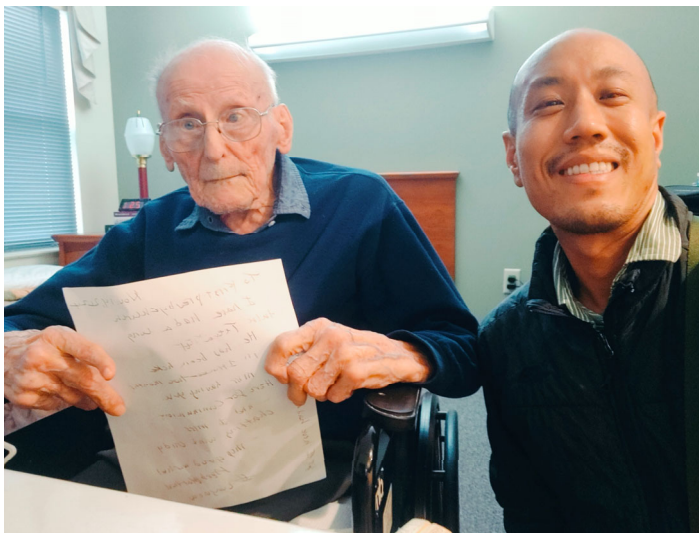


*Below: The USCGC FLORENCE FINCH, awaiting commission. Above, left: her crest. Above right: Florence Finch. Right: the cover of the book, by Robert J. Mrazek, retelling her true story.*



### Photos from December!

*What has Tee been up to, you ask? See below for photographic evidence! Oh, and also he got to visit family in California over the holidays. Listen for upcoming news about a mission trip!*



*Lots of events took place in December, so here begins several pages to enjoy! The Hanging of the Greens was a lovely gathering with so many who helped—these photos miss a lot of the angels who hauled bins up steps, opened careworn boxes of treasures, fluffed bows, hung garlands, ascended ladders and beautified the space with decorations and spirits of love. We are so grateful to all who helped!*

*The season can't happen at all without the dedicated work and willing volunteerism of so many who do so much. Our deep thanks to you all.*

*Photos include shots from the Hanging of the Greens, Lessons and Carols and the Yuletide Dinner.*



### More Photos from December!

