

# The Third PRESS



THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
EXALTING GOD / PROCLAIMING CHRIST / MAKING DISCIPLES

August 2022

## “God’s Other Worldly Love”

Did you ever notice how one of the first things people do when they look at a newborn is try to see which parent the child looks like? Of course, we all know that exercise rarely yields any agreement. But over time, one can start to see the parents in that child. Perhaps it’s the mother’s smile, or the father’s eyes. Whatever it is, people begin to see a resemblance in appearance. And, as time passes, other similarities can arise. Perhaps a daughter and mother begin to sound alike, or a son and father develop a similar walk. Most of this growing-in-resemblance is neutral in terms of values. But, over time, children can start to act like their parents, and uphold similar values as their parents. And this can be good, or not so good.

My point is that we do tend to become like – to imitate -- those we’re closely connected with. After all, who among us adults hasn’t said or done something and realized, “O my goodness! I’m sounding just like my mother, or my father!” Of course, we usually only act surprised by such actions when it’s something we vowed we’d never do or say – but there it is!

Well, what’s true for families – for better or worse – is true in our relationship with God – if we’re “children of God”. And, of course, such imitation of our God – who has revealed Himself in His Son, Jesus the Christ, is not to be avoided but embraced! In fact it’s commanded. And it’s commanded because such imitation will always bring out the very best in us.

As John writes about how believers are to live -- by walking in the light; by loving one another; by upholding what is good and true and right – he seeks to motivate such behavior by calling us to remember whose family we belong to, and, in turn, who we’re to imitate. We’re to imitate our Father in heaven – the One in whose image we were made.

So what’s this Father like? And what should we be like if we do imitate God in Christ? This is the subject I would like to explore over the next two newsletters. But before we start, let’s read the passage from John’s first letter that I’ll be focusing on for the August and September newsletters, 1 John 3:1-3. There, John wrote:

**See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. All who have this hope in Him purify themselves, just as He is pure.**

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ministers of  
reconciliation to God,  
inviting all people to  
faith in Christ Jesus  
our Lord and  
to holiness of life.

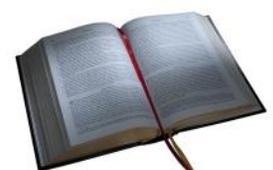


Our Mission:

To Love our God and  
Neighbor

To Proclaim the Gospel  
through Word and Deed

To Make Disciples of  
Jesus the Christ



What we all accept in the matter of physical descent John now applies in terms of our spiritual relationship with our heavenly Father. As children of God through faith in Jesus we're made into a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). In turn, that initial image that reflected a bit of the character of God – that image that was shattered by sin -- is slowly being restored as we allow ourselves to be conformed to the character of Christ in us. In fact, the expectation of becoming more like Christ is so much a part of who we're to be that it's one way in which our relationship with God is verified. In other words, if we say we're God's children – born of God as John described it in verse 29 of chapter 2 – we should be proving it through our godliness (Gal 5:22-23).

So what will that look like?

Fundamentally it will reveal itself through love for the Father, and for one another. (Mk 12:30-31; 1 Jn 2:10)

Notice that John again addresses his readers as “**dear friends**” (beloved) in verse 2. This address of the church by John is especially appropriate here since he's about to speak of God's love and all that God's love accomplished through Christ on our behalf. John wants the church to grasp how radically different and wonderfully liberating God's love is from all other loves this world offers.

For John, the truth of God's love is so exciting that's it's hard for John to contain himself, which explains why John opens verse 1 saying: “**See!/Behold!**” Like a child excited about his Christmas present, like a young woman wanting to show her friends her engagement ring, John is saying, “**Look at this!**” The force of John's exclamation demands that we take time to consider God's love and not just gloss over it as a given, or worse as something deserved!

For John, reflection upon the love of God for us should take a believer's breath away!

So let me ask you: “Does thinking upon God's love for you do that? Or, have you come to take it for granted, or worse, to dismiss it as no big deal?”

I hope our reflection on God's love will re-ignite or continue to flame the passion that God's love for us should stir in our hearts.

The second word in verse 1 adds to the wonder of that love. It's the word translated in the NIV as: “**How great**”. Its original meaning is: “**of what country?**” It's a word that expresses surprise at something so alien that we can't fully grasp the implications.

The disciples used this same word in Matthew's Gospel, when, amazed by the power of Jesus to still the storm on the Sea of Galilee, they cried out:

**“What kind of man is this? Even the wind and the waves obey Him.”** (Mt 8:27)

It's an expression of amazement-and-awe-and-fear all mixed together!

Jesus is in a different category than anyone we have, or ever will, come across. And so is the Father's love – that love Jesus demonstrated when He gave Himself on a cross for us and for our salvation.

The Father's love is a love in which the holy, perfect, sovereign God takes all the initiative to make selfish, prideful, and petty creatures His children. And, in taking us as His own, He changes us into something more beautiful than we can imagine!

The Father's love is a love that gives lavishly and freely to those who are utterly undeserving.

If we contemplate our sin and rebellion against the background of God's unapproachable light, we'll begin to sense something of John's wonder that the Father should ever bother with people like us. Yet, the love of God delights to change “rebellious sinners” into “grateful children” – children to whom He gives a new name and new status. We're given a new name – being called “children of God”; and, we're given a new status – being adopted into His family and marked as His own (Eph 1:5, 13).

Now, in order to appreciate the implications of this adoption, we have to remember what adoption was in the 1<sup>st</sup> century; and, we need to consider why the Father adopted us.

In 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman culture, adoption was a legal action by which a person took into his family a child who was not his own, and who, up to that point, had no rights within the family. And the person adopting did so in order to give that child all the privileges of one born into the family.

So, what might motivate someone to do that – often at considerable personal cost?

Perhaps there was something attractive or appealing about the child – that he was strong, or smart, or a clear leader. Perhaps there was an old friendship with the child's deceased parents. Or, perhaps there was need for an heir to pass on the family fortunes. The truth is, in most situations, there could be a variety of reasons: some very altruistic and some self-centered, but with most somewhere in between.

However in God's case there's nothing inherently appealing about those He adopts, nor any necessity that might call for any adoption on His part. God is complete in Himself so that anything God did or does is that others might be blessed. In turn, God adopted and adopts people to Himself purely out of His love.

Love, in its purest form, gives without condition or self-interest.

So it is with God, who sent His only begotten Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we – male and female, rich and poor, intelligent and ignorant, slave and free -- might receive the full rights of "sons of God." (Gal 4:4-5)

Our adoption had nothing to do with who we are, or how we look, or our status in society, or our country of origin, or our sex, or even our spiritual sensitivity. The truth is, there is nothing attractive or deserving in any of us to warrant God's love. Still God chose to love us. And He did so because of who He is.

God is love. (1 Jn 4:8b)

And God always works in accordance with His love – His nature – for He can do no other.

It was on this same principle of love that God chose Israel, as Moses indicated, saying:

**"The LORD did not set His affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath He swore to your forefathers, that He brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt."** (Dt 7:7-8)

Every Christian knows in our heart that it's that sort of unconditional love that has reached out to us through Jesus Christ, delivered us from the condemnation our sins deserve, and brought us into His family.

And yet, such "alien" love can be hard for many to accept.

And perhaps it's hard to accept precisely because this love is unconditional and limitless, and many of us have never known love like that.

The truth is that for many of us, although our parents love us, there is still a tendency, at least at times, for that love to come across as conditional. When we live up to their desires and expectations we're sure of their love. But when we mess up, well, perhaps there are times when we're not so sure – regardless of whether or not such uncertainty is justified.

But then, it's hard for us as sinful human beings to love unconditionally – even parents -- as much as they may try.

And then there are those who don't really try – those who have no qualms about making their love conditional.

I'm reminded of a situation I read of regarding a young man who, having done well on his college finals called up his dad to share the good news, only to be told, in all seriousness, "Good, that means we can still be friends!"

Such attitudes can cut to the very heart of a person seeking love and affirmation.

Because we've felt the effects of sin-tainted-love, and because we're sinners who have inflicted such effects -- it's a struggle for all of us to believe that God could love us unconditionally.

For most of us we're always trying to be good enough to persuade others to love us. And that carries over to our relationship with God. And so we embark on an endless treadmill of activity always trying to prove to ourselves and to God that our "grades" are good enough to "pass" His course.

It's hard to get beyond such conditional love and acceptance because this is how most of the world works – at its best! If we work hard enough and do what we're told, we learn from pre-school on up that we'll get the star, or the teacher's praise, or the "A". If we show up early and stay late and put in our best effort every day we're told by our boss

that we'll get that raise, or that promotion – or at least, we'll get to keep our job. All around us the blessings are conditional.

And we bring that world and those lessons into our relationship with God.

And that's why John needs to remind us that God's love is **“of another world”**.

In fact perverting the grace of God into a religion of works is a sure-fire way to rob ourselves of the love that God wants us to know. God doesn't require that our GPA – our “Godly Performance Average” – be above a 3.5 in order to apply for acceptance into His Kingdom. God lavishes love on all whom He calls to Himself (Eph 1:3-14).

Of course, this doesn't mean that how we live our life doesn't matter.

Unconditional love isn't love without rules and consequences. In fact, God is greatly concerned about behavior – about our attitudes and our actions – about how we love and serve both Him and others.

God doesn't turn His back on our weaknesses and sins -- just the opposite. God is so concerned about our lives that He condemns our sin. At the same time, He has made a way for our forgiveness – through faith in Jesus; and, He gives a means for us to overcome sin – through His indwelling Spirit. (Jn 3:16; 1 Cor 3:16)

God's love is perfect in its understanding of our needs and in supplying the means for our justification, and sanctification, and eventual glorification.

By affirming that God's love is unconditional we're acknowledging that God will bring all His children to His heavenly home – as He promises! For God to do any less would make Him a liar – a sinner. But that's something God can't do – that God can't be. Such is the surety of God's unconditional love.

Now, after affirming our unshakable status as children of God, John writes in verse 2:

**“What we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that . . . we shall be like Him.”**

This speaks to our “resembling” of God – to looking like God as His children (Eph 5:2). And unlike how we may come to resemble our natural parents, this resembling of the Father is a process in which God Himself is intimately and intentionally involved. God works in us through His Spirit to help us to “look” like Him – a sort of “complete life makeover” from the inside out.

God works in the hearts and minds of His children to make us to resemble His Son – something we can't do on our own. But we can cooperate in that inner transformation to help it take place. God does the regeneration. God lays the foundation. But then God leaves His Spirit to work with our spirit to build a life that honors God and is a blessing to others.

And this means that we need to do things to aid such transformation: things like reading God's Word and obeying that Word; things like worshipping God with all our heart and mind – in spirit and in truth, and serving others with compassion and joy; things like confessing our sins when we hurt others, and forgiving those who hurt us; things like looking at why we're doing the things we do, and, making sure that we're doing all we do for right and God-honoring reasons (Col 3:17, 23).

It's so easy to be busy doing good things for selfish reasons. And so, as children of God we need to take time to examine our lives and see what the motivation is for the things we do.

Are we doing things as a joyful expression of God's love for us, or, are we driven by some internal need for approval or acceptance?

Are we serving others out of a genuine desire to bless them, or are we serving in order to get something for ourselves, or to look like something we are not?

And as we do such self-analysis, let's remember that God's love is unconditional. And that's freeing! We don't need to nor can we impress God. What we can do is receive His love, and ask God to help us love more fully, more deeply, and more purely.

John writes to encourage us that as God's children our relationship with God is secure. And it's secure because our identity as God's dearly loved children depends not on our activity, but on His electing grace. And our God wants us

to know such security in Him so that we'll be freed to develop into the people we were meant to be when He first created humankind in His image.

In other words, God wants every believer to feel secure in our relationship with Him so that we'll be free to grow to the full potential of being a child of God – that we might in turn become like Jesus.

This confidence that John wants the church to experience will have two practical out-workings which John mentions in our passage.

First, it will help us to cope with those details of our faith that we cannot yet know.

And second, it will help us to cope with the hostility that the world has toward those who seek to live for the Lord – those whom the world “just doesn't get”.

As John indicates, there are aspects of God's truth which have yet to be revealed. And, because God has not revealed them to us, we shouldn't be trying to figure them out in our imagination. Instead, we should be content to know what God has made known, and to leave unknown what God has yet to reveal. (Dt 29:29)

For example, we don't know all the details of what heaven will be like -- and that's okay. After all, we don't need to know that in order to build the Kingdom of God on this earth.

We don't know how our resurrection bodies will be raised, or even what they will be like -- and that's okay. All we need to know is that we will be raised when Christ returns.

What we do know is that He is coming; that we are going to see Him as He truly is; and, in that moment, by the same grace that has made us God's children, we shall be made to be like Him. At that moment, the process which began when we first trusted Christ will come to its fulfillment, and the image of God in His children will be fully restored.

Such assurance is a very important ingredient in our living for Christ in a hostile world.

In fact, any persecution we might experience because we're living for Jesus should serve not to dampen our faith but to confirm and solidify it – after all, this is how the world treated our Lord; and should we expect anything better? (Mt 5:12; Jn 15:20)

John expresses this truth by saying: **“The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.”**

Now, when John speaks of “knowing” here, he's not saying that the world doesn't know our name, or our occupation, or other basic identifying factors.

What John is speaking of is our heart, our motives – what makes us tick. The world – those who are not children of God -- just can't grasp our devotion to Jesus. The world can't comprehend the significance of, and the fulfillment that comes with the relationship we have with God. The world can't fathom how we can be strong amidst life's trials – and not with the strength of mere inner fortitude that generates a stoic resolve to overcome – but with a strength that exudes joy and peace. The world can't understand how we can live with hope, even when all seems hopeless. The world can't conceive how we can live with the confidence that we're loved, even when we fail.

And not only can't those outside the family of God fathom what it is that we feel, and know, and experience, they don't even want to feel it, or know it, or experience it, because they're content to live in the darkness of a life separated from God.

Now, it's true that if we look at Jesus' ministry we see that there were times when He “seemed” popular – when multitudes hung on His every word. But as Jesus Himself noted, they were merely following Him for what they could get from Him to help them live for themselves. Most really didn't know Him – who He was, why He was here, what He came to accomplish. In turn, in the end, only a handful remained. (Mt 7:13-14)

The truth is, unbelieving people can only have false ideas and misconceptions regarding the heavenly Father, His Only Begotten Son, and His children. And often, because they can't perceive the joy and freedom that comes with new life in Christ, they foolishly see Christianity as being outdated, boring, irrelevant and unnecessary. And some fight against it, and even persecute those who hold to it.

Of course, we mustn't leave them to wallow in their ignorance, no matter how comfortable they are in that ignorance, or how hostile they are to the truth.

Out of love to them, and out of obedience to our God, we must do all we can to help those walking in darkness to come to know Jesus rightly – that they might know true joy and hope and peace and purpose.

At the same time we mustn't be surprised if many walk away from the “other worldly” love of God.

As we consider the world in light of our new life in Christ, what we must never forget is that this world has an end point. History is working toward a climax when the crucified, risen, ascended Christ will return in glory. This future fact is both a great hope and a great stimulus for the believer.

It has been observed that Prince Charles, as heir to the throne of England, lives already in the light of what he will one day be. He does not yet possess his full inheritance, but his whole life has been and is shaped by that inheritance.

One day we shall be like Jesus – changed into His likeness. In the meantime we live under the privilege of grace as God’s adopted children, knowing that on that day we need have nothing to fear and nothing to hide.

Knowing that our future is secure in Christ does give us confidence. But it must never make us complacent. Instead, knowledge of our future ought to make us concerned to do all we can now, in God’s strength, to live up to the name we bear, and the status we’ve been given, that we might become what we were created to be.

And I pray that such will occur one day, for all of us, to the praise and glory of God’s holy name.

God’s peace be with you.

Pastor John

PS: Just a brief word about our transition process to “ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians”. At present both Third Church and I have applied for and have been approved for reception into the denomination, “A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians”. We are now waiting on the Albany Presbytery (PCUSA) to determine what this transition will involve, and most especially what that will mean in terms of the property which at present belongs to the Presbyterian Church (USA). Once we are informed of their assessment and what they desire as compensation for us to receive the property (which will then belong to the membership of Third Presbyterian Church and not the new denomination we are joining) we as a congregation will need to act on that proposal. We will also need to call a congregational meeting to have one more formal vote to leave the Albany Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church (USA). That meeting will require a minimum of 50% attendance by current members, and a positive vote to leave. We hope all current members will plan to attend that meeting when the time comes. As already shared, please know that leaving PCUSA and joining with ECO was not a decision taken lightly by the Session. As we’ve shared in the recent past, the Session has been discussing, studying, and praying about any transition for well over a decade. Also know that this move will not change who we are, what we believe, and how we function as a church, but will align us more closely with other churches in our community who share similar values, beliefs, desires and calling. Please pray for the church, and for each other as this transition continues – that we may honor God and be a blessing to each other and our community for many more years to come. We will continue to keep you informed as the process is worked out in the coming days.

## Remember in Prayer...

### Our Shut-ins at home:

Stephanie Miller, Marilyn Gibbs, Edith Lovell,  
Ginny Steffen, Vaughn Skarzynski

**At Van Rensselaer Manor:** Don King

**At Peregrine Senior Living:** Jan Pedersen

### Those dealing with health issues:

Stan Bentley, Marilyn Gibbs, Doris Calamaras

### Our Church:

Pastor John and the Session

### Our Community:

Those who do not know the Lord.  
Those dealing with financial difficulties.  
That our schools would be places of safety  
The people of Ukraine

### Our World:

Missionaries serving around the world.  
Open doors for sharing the Gospel message.  
Persecuted Christians around the world

### Our college students:

Christian Multunas (RPI)

### Help Fill the Shelves at Hope 7's Food Pantry!

Hope 7's food pantry has stayed open to serve families in need right here in our community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Any non-perishable food items and/or toiletries are always welcome. Currently they could use juice, chicken noodle soup, toothpaste, and shampoo.

Donations can be dropped off at the church; taken to the food pantry (Monday through Friday from 9:30 - 11:45 AM); or you can contact Sue Laz to arrange for a pick-up.

Keep the food pantry in mind if your garden produces more than you need. The food pantry clients always appreciate fresh produce!



Your giving to Third Church enables us to support a variety of ministries, both locally and around the world. The funds given and the prayers offered for our various mission partners are appreciated and we wanted to share some of the thoughts and comments we have received from those we support.

**From Niki Campbell (InterVarsity at RPI and Russell Sage)** – “Over the last couple of weeks Potsdam, Clarkson, and RPI set out to do some online outreach to incoming freshmen. The results were not quite what we expected.

The attendance was slight; however, the conversations were deep. Upon debriefing the experience, we learned that our timing may have been off; that June was not the time that incoming freshmen were asking questions about coming to college. So, we are trying again...this time in August, a couple of weeks before school starts. While this outreach event did not meet our expectations, I am so proud of the students who used it as an opportunity to adjust and try again, undeterred.

Thank you as you continually hold this ministry before the Lord. He is so generous in all the ways He has provided, including a great cloud of witnesses who stand in the gap for us.”

**From Perry Jones (Capital City Rescue Mission)** – “Don came to the Mission about 2 years ago. His marriage had fallen apart and he had almost died twice from alcohol poisoning. He emphatically adds, “I needed help desperately.”

After entering the New Life Program, he began learning how to follow Jesus as his Savior and friend. Today he has been on staff for about a year, encouraging other guys who enter the Mission facing the same struggles he once had. Don finds joy in helping others.

Thank you for your partnership in this compassionate work which offers food, clothing, shelter, recovery, and life-change in the name of Jesus Christ. May it give you joy as well.”

Newsletters from the Vissani's, Niki Campbell, and Peter Halder are posted on the bulletin board in the narthex.

## Fellowship Time Ministry

Every Sunday after our time of worship we are able to join together in a time of fellowship with one another, and we'd like to tell you about the three opportunities you can be involved with in our Sunday Fellowship time.

The first is simply to participate. Fellowship Time (a.k.a Coffee Hour) helps build our bond as a family of faith (Acts 2:42). Fellowship provides us time to sit and chat with others over a light snack and beverage, and to catch up on life happenings and current events. As we fellowship, we build trust within our faith family. Trust allows us to share in the deeper issues of life we face knowing that we can find and offer care and kindness. For true fellowship results in mutual love (Jn.13:34)

The second opportunity is to serve as a Fellowship host. Hosting is a great and easy way to be part of the fellowship ministry and to connect with others in our church family. You'll find flexibility in serving as a Fellowship host. You can serve as often or as little as you are able, and you can team up with a friend and serve as co-hosts! Also, you are never alone, our Fellowship Coordinator, Natalia Multunas, is always available to offer her help and experience.

Lastly, you can donate to our Fellowship Time. We gladly accept donations of coffee, sugar, napkins, plates, paper cups, etc. for our weekly gathering. If you wish to make a monetary donation, please make your checks payable to Third Presbyterian Church and note in the memo area "Fellowship donation" and place your donation in the offering plates or mail it into the church office. Cash donations can also be placed in an envelope marked "Fellowship donation" and place in the offering plate as well.

If you have any questions or are interested in serving, please see Natalia or Bill Multunas.



### August Birthdays

8/2 Beth Casey  
 8/8 Sal Sceccitano  
 8/13 Owen Laz  
 8/14 Joe Pasinella  
 8/16 Maureen Somerville  
 8/23 Terry Marra  
 8/29 Bruce Tolagian



### August Anniversaries

8/7 Megan & Jason Laz  
 8/16 Julie & Graham Tootell  
 8/25 Peggy & Bill Siracusa

### General Financial Update for June

	Year to Date	June
Total Income	\$ 82,178.00	\$ 13,030.00
Total Expenses	\$ 86,327.60	\$ 14,693.55
Difference	\$ (4,149.60)	\$ (1,663.55)

## Bible Quiz for August 2022

This Bible quiz will consist of questions pertaining to “The Gospel of John”, chapter 13.

1. Where was the Upper Room in which Jesus ate the Passover meal with His disciple located? Nazareth? Capernaum? Jerusalem? Or, Bethlehem? (circle correct answer)
2. True or False: Jesus only washed the feet of 10 of the 12 disciples because Judas left before the foot-washing and because Peter refused to let Jesus wash his feet.
3. True or False: After Jesus finished washing the disciples’ feet, He put His clothes back on immediately headed out to the Garden of Gethsemane.
4. True or False: Jesus commanded that “foot-washing” would become a regular part of Christian worship, like Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, but that it be done once a year on Maundy Thursday.
5. True or False: When Jesus indicated that one among the 12 would betray Him, everyone knew that Jesus was talking about Judas Iscariot, and so, embarrassed because he was ‘called out’, Judas left the room.
6. At that Upper Room Passover meal, which disciple was seated on Jesus’ immediate right?
7. True or False: Peter, being a leader among the 12, sat in the other seat of honor on Jesus’ immediate left.
8. True or False: After Jesus said, “Where I am going, you cannot come” John asked Jesus, “Lord, where are you going?”
9. What command did Jesus say that, when obeyed, would show everyone that they were disciples of Jesus?
10. Of whom did Jesus say: “Before the rooster crows you will disown me three times.”

(Answers: 1. Jerusalem; 2. False; 3. False; 4. False; 5. False; 6. John; 7. False; 8. False; 9. Love one another; 10. Peter.)

**“You’re Outta Here!”**

When I graduated from Juilliard with my Bachelor’s Degree in organ, I along with a number of my fellow organ major graduates went on mostly to various church music positions. Sure, there was a little professional jealousy at play as some landed more prestigious jobs than others. But, and I’m sure God has long forgiven me, I saved most of *my* envy for my friend, Josh Singer. Josh, you see, didn’t get a lucrative church post, or at least the one he got wasn’t what got my dander up (whatever dander is!). No, the very *part-time* position Josh landed was as organist for the New York Rangers at Madison Square Garden! Yep, a couple of “CHARGE” fanfares, some clap-inducing pedal scales, an occasional “God Bless America”--and Josh was raking in an unbelievable amount of *bucks!* And *charge* what, by the way? The other team, the concession stand--charge your food purchases at the concession stand? Enquiring minds want to know!

Now, I have zero interest in hockey (or as some call it *organized brawls with an occasional hockey game breaking out!*). But I do know that when someone breaks the rules in that game, the referees will make you sit in a *penalty box* for X amount of minutes, depriving your teammates of your services for the duration of the penalty. Baseball is really MY sport and when you raise too much of a ruckus with the officials (aka the *umpires*) in that game about one of their calls or rulings--they’ll just throw you right out of the game! Leave the dugout, take a shower, watch the rest of the game on a TV!

Where is all this going, you rightfully ask?! You’ve all no doubt heard of Wilbur Snapp, right? Of course, you haven’t! Neither had I until just a few weeks ago. Wilbur just happened to be the organist for the minor league baseball team, the *Clearwater Phillis*--a farm team for the Philadelphia Phillies that played in *Jack Russell Stadium* in Clearwater, Florida. During a game in the summer of 1985, Wilbur took *serious* exception to one of the calls made by the umpires that day and decided to express that displeasure by blaring the song, *Three Blind Mice* on the stadium organ over the PA system. The home plate umpire was less than amused and signaled up to the balcony booth that he was ejecting the organist. The *ORGANIST!* This was truly an historic first--the stadium organist being ejected by an umpire. Wilbur wore this ejection as a badge of honor and basked in the notoriety this incident provided. He was often asked by fans for his autograph in the years that followed, and he always signed his name, *Wilbur Snapp--Three Blind Mice Organist*. Gotta love this!

It’s fair to wonder if umpires can rightly wield this kind of power. The rule that was cited for this was *Rule 4.06(a)* which prevents managers, players, trainers, and even bat boys/girls from inciting a demonstration from spectators. And while *organists* aren’t specifically mentioned, *Rule 9.01(c)* fills in that gap by stating, “*Each umpire has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.*” In other words, an umpire can throw out whoever he darn well pleases for whatever reason!

I don’t know how my friend Josh’s career developed beyond that Madison Square Garden stint, but I know this--I won’t be interjecting any snarky organ tidbits that sarcastically call out John on one of his sermon points. The last thing I need is to have the elders toss me from the worship service and send me early to the showers!

With (*whimsical*) joy in the journey,  
*Sal Scicchitano*

**Session Meeting  
July 11, 2022**

The regular monthly business meeting of the Session of Third Presbyterian Church of Troy, NY was held July 11, 2022, at 7:00 PM at the church. Those members present, which did constitute a quorum, were Deena Dominy, Sue Laz, Abby McAuley, Bill Multunas, and Kelly Valerio.

**Clerk's Report:** Average attendance for June: in-person - 35; online -10 (estimate). Rev. Perry Jones from Capital City Rescue Mission preached on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Reporting for the record the deaths Edna Wells on June 26<sup>th</sup> and Dorothy Multunas on July 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Committee Reports**

- Upward Ministry (Worship and Prayer) – we will have substitute organists/pianists on July 17, August 7 and 14 as Sal will be away those Sundays.
- Inward Ministry (Congregational Care and Christian Nurture) -- COVID restrictions concerning fellowship time have been removed and individuals are once again invited to host. The church hosted a reception after the memorial service for Edna Wells.
- Outward Ministry (Mission, Outreach and Communications) -- Mission spending for June was: Capital City Rescue Mission, \$1000; Dan and Mary Vissani, \$200; Capital District YFC, \$500, "Church Around the World" inserts, \$48.00.
- Stewardship: The General Fund treasurer's report was reviewed. There was a negative cash flow during June of \$1,663.55. This results in a YTD deficit of \$4,149.60. We are short \$160.00 per week to break even. Second Quarter Giving Statements have been distributed. Second quarter pledge Analysis shows out of 26 pledging units 12 gave at the pledged amount, 8 were over pledge, 6 were under and there were 3 non-pledged units that contributed during the second quarter.
- Nominating Committee has distributed the first round of nomination packets.

**Pastor's Report:** Sermon series on the Gospel of John is continuing (most likely through Lent 2023); Sunday School class on New Testament Theology is ongoing. Continued our study and discussion of Lead, by Paul David Tripp, looking at chapter 10.

**Next Meetings:** August 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00. Business Meeting. Please read chapter 11 of Lead by Paul David Tripp.

Time was spent sharing congregational concerns. These will be included in the closing time of prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Laz, Clerk



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