



PRESBYTERY OF GENEVA



FINGER LAKES NY

January 2025 Newsletter

Our Mission: *The Presbytery of Geneva lives to support and equip congregations and leaders to be Christ in the Finger Lakes and the world.*

Our Vision: *Radiating the light of Christ, the Presbytery of Geneva thrives as a community of servants, lifting up every congregation and leader in ministering together.*

The purpose of the newsletter is to announce upcoming events and opportunities sponsored by the Presbytery, its congregations, the Synod of the Northeast, the PC(USA), neighboring presbyteries, and partner agencies. If you have an item for the newsletter, please send the information to officeadmin@presbyteryofgeneva.org by **January 24, 2025**.





Greetings!

My name is Gretchen Duffy and I'm the new administrative assistant for the Presbytery of Geneva. My contact information will remain the same:

email - officeadmin@presbyteryofgeneva.org

phone: 315-536-7753

A couple of reminders for you: All financial matters should be sent to Cheryl Battaglia at finance@presbyteryofgeneva.org, all clerk related matters should be sent to Amy Loving Austin at statedclerk@presbyteryofgeneva.org, and all leader related items should be sent to Marji Ackerman at leader@presbyteryofgeneva.org.

Also, any paper mail can be sent to the PO box at:

Presbytery of Geneva

PO Box 24393

Rochester, NY 14624

I look forward to working with all of you.

Thank you!

Gretchen

Donate to the Presbytery online!

Online Giving for Camp Whitman and the Presbytery of Geneva is available from our website. Make contributions to Camp Whitman, the Presbytery's General Fund, and now to make an individual contribution to per capita (a request by several minister members). This is through the Presbyterian Foundation and long-time partner, Vanco, (known for offering envelopes from 'way back) so it is very secure to use.

On our homepage www.presbyterofgeneva.org, click on the "Make a Contribution " link or go directly to our Vanco donation page [Donate to Presbytery of Geneva](#). You can select our general fund, Camp Whitman, per capita, and others in the future as we roll them out.

David Ashby

Presbytery of Geneva Treasurer

treasurer@presbyterofgeneva.org



Presbytery of Geneva
General Fund

Give now



Camp Whitman

Give now



Individual per capita
contribution

Give now



An important reminder in any season

Recently I received an email from a congregation informing me that an email was going around impersonating one of their congregants involving UberEATS. They wanted everyone to know that this member did not need any assistance placing an UberEATS order. This email highlights what many of us already know. We and our congregations are susceptible to being scammed.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, in 2023, the American people lost about \$10 billion dollars due to fraud and scams. These are just the reported losses. The actual number is probably higher. The age group most likely to get scammed are the 20–29-year-olds; however, when scammed, those who are 70 years old and older lose the most money.

In 2023, the most effective scam was the “imposter scam.” The person seeking to defraud you pretends to be your bank, the government, your credit card company, a relative, and even your pastor. For example, I have had someone call me and tell me that they were from a government agency and that they had a package addressed to me containing drugs and cash. I can assure you that if a government agency has package addressed to me or anyone else containing drugs and cash, they are not going to call first. Another popular one I have seen lately is a text message supposedly from the US Postal Service. It says something like “we have your package, and it is incorrectly addressed, please contact us” and has a link in the message. As much as I like and appreciate the US Postal Service, we all know that the USPS is not going to call us or text us about a lost package.

Scams have always been around and will continue to get more sophisticated with time. Just as we adapt to technology, so do the people who want to con us out of our money. The lesson should not be to be less generous or less giving. The lesson should be to verify and to be more careful.

Here are a few suggestions to help our congregations and others with the constant barrage of potential scams.

- If you find out that someone is being impersonated, get their permission to tell your congregation. If your congregation knows that someone is being impersonated, they will be less likely to fall for it. Likewise, encourage them to report it to law enforcement.
- Encourage people to independently verify the request. More than one scam involving me supposedly asking for gift cards was foiled when the person being scammed texted me to tell me that they had the gift cards I had requested of them. Check the email address and phone number against the email addresses and phone numbers you have before you act on the request.
- Remind people that if you or anyone else really needs gift cards, that you will either buy them yourself or ask for their assistance in-person.
- Talk with local law enforcement or with a local bank or credit union. They may be willing to send someone to talk to your congregation about scams and how best to protect ourselves from being scammed.

Perhaps most importantly, remember that this can happen to anyone and that the more open and upfront we are about it the better prepared we will all be when it happens to us.

Warmly in Christ,
Rev. Evan Hansen



PRESBYTERY OF GENEVA

SMALL CHURCH GATHERING

An online discussion for fellowship and sharing

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY

4

10:30 AM

ZOOM

MEETING ID: 830 2565 2747

PASSCODE: 274302

We hope you will join us!

2024 PMA Peacemaker visits the Geneva Presbytery.

"The Frozen Chosen"? Historically, that is how some have viewed us as Presbyterians. A contradiction to that sentiment is Presbyterian Mission Agency's 2024 Peacemaker, the Reverenda Doctora Marielis Barreto-Hernández, pastor of Iglesia Presbiteriana de Aguada, Puerto Rico who culminated her 4-week stateside visit in the Geneva Presbytery region. While the premise of a peacemaker visit is to foment seeds of peace, justice, and mercy, Marielis went far beyond a powerful sermon, local touring, and volunteering. She epitomized what it means to be a devoted servant of the Lord. During her stay, many had the opportunity to get to know her, to fellowship with her, to pray with her. For Marielis, exercising her faith was (is) not a spectator sport; it requires full-out participation.

And she took that notion quite seriously, as evidenced by the bevy of activities undertaken.

In one short week, Marielis visited the North Pres Food Pantry with Pat Richards, Christ the King in Spenser and salsa dancing in Ithaca with Pastor Sabrina Slater, a tour of Seneca Falls Church with pastor Leah Ntuala, apple-picking in Watkins, enjoying a piano concert at the Big Flats Church with Pastor Denise Stone, working on a project with third graders in the Corning-Painted Post Schools, touring the Corning Glass Museum, and enjoying the many culinary delights that our region has to offer, not the least of which was lunch in a Mexican café with Elder Kathy Menges and Pastor Lynn Rubier-Capron in Horseheads.

But most notable was her sermon, "We have never seen anything like this." given on World Communion Sunday at First Presbyterian Church, Elmira. The service was combined with Elmira, Big Flats, Horseheads, North, and

Spenser and was attended by over 150 congregants. Pastors Lynn, Evan, Denise, Aaron, and Sabrina all participated, and Pastor Jane Winters provided a lively Children's Time. The choir was a combined effort of the churches, even singing a hymn in Spanish. The luncheon that followed was also well attended and offered an opportunity for guests to hear more from Marielis and to ask questions.

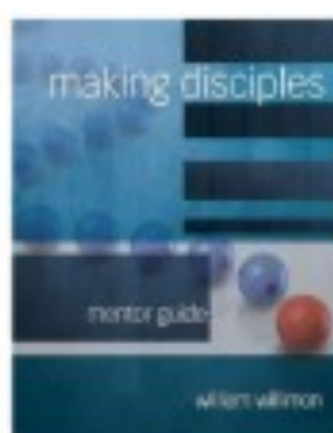
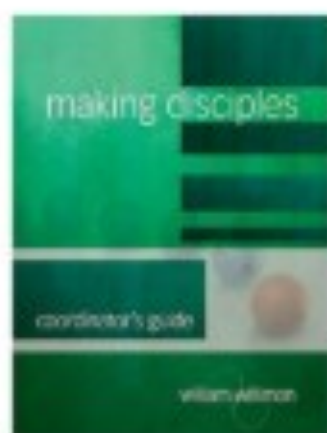
All-in-all, the week was a "gift" from PMA and Marielis has repeatedly expressed her gratitude for this incredible opportunity and experience.

Juana (Joanne Tunison) Chair, Mission and Witness



Getting ready for Confirmation?

For small congregations without a pastor or with only a few students, here is a member-confirmand mentoring option to consider (available on Amazon and Christian Book Distributors):



This collection and other denominational resources are available from the PC(USA) store.

Congregational Learning Day 2025
9 a.m. TO 1 p.m.
Saturday, March 1

ONLINE via Zoom video conferencing
Offering 6 Workshops—2 of which are given twice—and Worship
For New and Experienced Church Leaders and Church Members

Shared with the presbytery of Genesee Valley
for more information: <https://pbygenval.org/workshops-training/>

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Our mailing address is:

PO Box 24393

Rochester, NY 14624

315-538-7753

Camp Whitman: 315-220-0084

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