



May 2026 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 June newsletter, please send the information to officeadmin@presbyteryofgeneva.org by **May 26, 2026.**





Faith & GriefSM Workshop

Join us for a multi-session workshop for those navigating grief. Participants explore sacred stories, share experiences in a supportive setting, and learn practices that offer comfort and grounding.

These workshops create space for reflection, connection, and honest conversation.

Mondays at 6 p.m.

April 27 - June 15

(Memorial Day off)

Wednesdays at 12 p.m.

April 29 - June 10

To register:
faithandgrief.org/calendar
or call 469-616-1795



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PITTSFORD**

Scavenger Hunt!

Mission and Witness Scavenger Hunt

Hosted by the Mission and Witness Committee of Geneva Presbytery

Purpose

- To tell others about your congregation's mission activities
- To learn about other mission activities near by
- To discover opportunities to collaborate in faithful and effective ministry

Event Details

When: Tuesday, May 26, during the Presbytery Meeting (begins at 10:00 AM)

Where: Camp Whitman on Seneca Lake, 150 Whitman Road, Penn Yan, NY 14527

What We Are Asking You to Do

- Send at least two people (more are welcome!) to the Presbytery Meeting
- Create a table display highlighting your church's mission activities, including any Matthew 25 grants received in recent years (photos, written descriptions, or personal testimonials are encouraged)
- Have at least one person at your table to answer questions and at least one person visiting other displays to participate in the scavenger hunt
- Register in advance so we know how many tables to prepare

How to Register

By Monday, April 27

Email: officeadmin@presbyteryofgeneva.org

Please put "Mission Fair" in the subject line of your email, then in the body of your email include:

- Your name and title
- Your church or organization
- Contact email
- Contact phone number
- A preliminary list of mission activities you plan to highlight (this does not need to be comprehensive. This information will help us create a more engaging scavenger hunt.)



We look forward to discovering more about how your congregation is showing concrete signs of God's love in the world!

Upstate NY Presbyteries Event September 25-26, 2026,

SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars, Presbyterians! You won't want to miss what's coming. September 25-26, 2026 at the Presbyterian Church in Geneva, NY: Six Presbyteries, Andrew Root, Learning, Fellowship, Music, and More!

More details are coming soon, so save the dates and check out the next newsletter for more information.

The United Church of Painted Post welcomes Pastor Nicole Matosan!

Pastor Nicole was appointed by Methodist Bishop Héctor A. Burges-Núñez. As a federated church, they alternate the process of pastor selection between the Methodist and Presbyterian congregations.

Rev. David Preisendanz will be retiring on May 31.



Please welcome Pastor Nicole Matosan!

Orchestra TOSHIYUKI SHIMADA
Music Director & Conductor
OF THE SOUTHERN FINGER LAKES

YOUTH ORCHESTRA SPRING CONCERT

FREE!



Sunday, May 17
4:00 PM

First Presbyterian Church

1054 West Clinton Street, Elmira, NY 14905

**Celebrate the season of renewal as the Youth Orchestra
takes the stage for its Spring Finale.**

Bursting with energy, color, and heart, this uplifting performance showcases the incredible talent, dedication, and passion of our region's young musicians—making it a perfect way to welcome spring and support the stars of tomorrow.

OSFL.org (607) 936-2873 info@OSFL.org

Western
Presbyterian
Church

WE ARE HIRING

MUSIC DIRECTOR



The Western Presbyterian Church in Palmyra, NY is seeking to hire a faithful and gifted part-time Music Director to lead and enrich the worship life of our church.

This role includes planning and leading music for all worship services, starting and directing a choir, coordinating special vocal and instrumental presentations, and collaborating with the pastor and worship committee to create meaningful worship experiences. Responsibilities also include organizing music resources, recruiting and guiding volunteer musicians, and providing accompaniment for services and special events as needed.

Ideal candidates will have strong musical proficiency (degree or equivalent experience), conducting and accompaniment skills, experience with church music, and excellent communication and organizational abilities. Prior church experience and a heart for ministry are essential.



To view a full job description and to submit your resume
[email office@wpreschurch.org](mailto:office@wpreschurch.org)



Address
101 E. Main St.
Palmyra, NY 14522



email
office@wpreschurch.org



Website
wpreschurch.org



Find us on
Facebook

Waiting, Witness, and the Way of Christ: Reimagining the Church's Calling

September 25-26, 2026

at the Presbyterian Church in Geneva, NY

with acclaimed author, podcaster, and seminary professor

Andrew Root

Learning, Fellowship, Music, and More!

For congregation members, presbytery committee members, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Teaching Elders, and Ruling Elders leading their communities into God's emerging future. You won't want to miss this!



Andrew Root, PhD (Princeton Theological Seminary) is the Carrie Olson Baalson Professor of Youth and Family Ministry at Luther Seminary. He is most recently the author of *Evangelism in an Age of Despair* and the six volume *Ministry in a Secular Age* series (including *Churches and the Crisis of Decline*, *The Congregation in a Secular Age*, *The Pastor in a Secular Age*, *The Church After Innovation*, *The Church in a Age of Secular Mysticism* and *Faith Formation in a Secular Age*). He is also the author of *The End of Youth Ministry?* and more than a dozen other books. Andy also serves as theologian in residence at Youthfront. He has worked in congregations, parachurch ministries, and social service programs

Friday, September 25th

9-11:30 am – Registration/Refreshments
10-11:30 am – Workshop with Andrew Root: A Church of Consolation: Proclaiming Good News in an Age of Despair
11:30am-2pm – Lunch (on your own in town)
1:30 pm – Registration Re-Opens until 4 pm
2-5 pm – Andrew Root Keynote and Discussion: The Church in a Secular Age: Why Things Feel so Hard and Our Best intentions may hurt more than Help
5-6 pm – Dinner
6-6:30pm- Evening Prayer
6:30 pm – Conversations, Confections and Coffee

Saturday, September 26th

9-11 am – Registration/Refreshments
9:30-11 am – Roundtable Discussions and Best Practices Sharing
Possible topics may include: Joint Committees on Preparation for Ministry Consultation
Joint COM Or Equivalent Consultation
Joint New Worshipping Communities/Church Development Consultation
Rose Niles, Presbyterian Foundation
Luke Choi, Board of Pensions
11 am-Noon – Second Keynote from Andrew Root: The Waiting Church
Noon-1 pm – Worship
1 pm – Lunch and Back into the Mission Field

Registration fee for both days is \$75, payable through the Presbytery of Genesee Valley's web portal. Please use the link below or the QR code.

The Presbyterian Church in Geneva, 24 Park Place, Geneva NY 14456

For detailed schedule, hotel information, and registration, go to <https://pbygenva.wufoo.com/forms/rzj499r0psc429/> or use the OR code.

Presented by the Presbyteries of Utica, Cayuga-Syracuse & Susquehanna Valley, Geneva, Genesee Valley, and Western NY





Dear members of the Geneva Presbytery,

We have paused the Matthew 25 grants for 2026 in order to align with the Presbytery budget cycle.

In early 2027, we will know exactly how much funding is available for Matthew 25 grants. At that time, we will reissue grant applications.

During 2026, we will focus on strengthening communication and collaboration in mission. We are hosting a Mission Fair at the Presbytery meeting on May 26 at Camp Whitman (150 Whitman Road, Penn Yan, NY 14527).

Matthew 5:37 reminds us: “Let your yes be yes and your no be no.”

We are taking these steps so that when we say “yes” to a charitable organization in our community, we have the means to follow through on that commitment.

With gratitude,
Rev. Lynn Rubier-Capron
Chair, Mission and Witness Committee
Geneva Presbytery

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF THE GENEVA PRESBYTERY

Presbyterian Women, Inc., is the women's organization in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is a community of more than 200,000 women who participate in Presbyterian Women (PW) and align its ministry and hearts around a shared purpose, the PW Purpose.

These commitments are lovingly conducted in Presbyterian Women groups in congregations, presbyteries and synods. At the national level, Presbyterian Women provides the resources, direction and opportunities to fulfill the organization's mission and ministry. Presbyterian Women's connectional structure allows one to participate as deeply and/or broadly in the organization and its commitments as desired.

Presbyterian Women are aligned under a shared Purpose, but the gifts of the Spirit allow PW to live into the Purpose in its own, unique ways. Some individuals or groups find themselves particularly drawn to one or two points of the Purpose. Other groups or individuals consciously work toward fulfilling all points.

Everything that PW does as an organization and as a community is guided by its PW Purpose, and that includes ministry, resources and relationships.

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves

to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,

to support the mission of the church worldwide,

to work for justice and peace, and

to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

Currently, PW of the presbytery of Geneva has five members, Cindy Banker, Virginia Champlin, Ellen Reynolds, Linda Werts, and moderator Joanne (Juana) Tunison. There are a few PW clusters at some of the churches in the presbytery, although the hope is to build upon that presence to include a more large and vital participation. Moreover, there is always room for more committee members.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne (Juana) Tunison,

Moderator

Shared by Cynthia Huling Hummel on April 12, 2026

It was a joy to worship this morning at the Huron Presbyterian Church & to celebrate Lois Wafler's 100th birthday & the baptism of her great grandson. What an amazing woman of faith!!



MUSIC for a Sunday afternoon

4PM - Sunday, May 3rd

#love

Christ the King Fellowship Presbyterian Church - 75 N. Main St. - Spencer, NY

Featuring the amazing organists:
David Jackson, Donna Frye, Peggy Sniezak, Jean Henssler,
Linden Foster, & Nancy McNamara!



COME ENJOY - ORGAN MUSIC & HYMN SINGING

Online monthly - each 1st & 3rd Thursday - 12 - 1 pm



LUNCH & LEARN

for Leaders

Lunch and Learn: Tapping the Brakes of Conflict

[Register here](#)

Mark Seifried and Stephen Beals of the SNEUCC Restorative Justice Task Team will share how circle process is a structure that can facilitate wholesome, holistic communication in congregations and other communities. They will teach some of the basics of circle process, introducing how this practice can create a safe container for communities to address difficult conversations before they escalate into entrenched conflict.

From the Synod Coach Network Leadership Team:

Coaching scholarships are available for individual leaders and teams through the Synod Coach Network.

Coach training scholarships are also available for the cohort that starts January 7, 2027 through **Loaves & Fishes Coach Training**. This ICF-accredited program is designed for faith leaders and changemakers who want to deepen their impact through coaching.

🔗 **Apply for a Scholarship:** <https://forms.gle/GRQPSJyAgwDmUu5T9>

🔗 **Learn more about coach training and apply:** www.loavesandfishescoachtraining.com/faqs

📅 **Upcoming Training Schedule:**

📅 **Orientation Meeting:** Thursday, January 7, 2027 (for registered participants)

- **First Online Retreat:** January 11–13, 2027
- **Monthly Online Classes:** Two Thursdays per month, 1–3 PM Eastern

Second Retreat: June 2027

🌱 **Why Coach Training?**

- Skills that enhance your leadership, deepen your listening, and empower others to grow
- Integrate coaching into the development and discernment of team ministry
- Preparation for **ICF certification** (ACC level), including 60 hours of training and mentor coaching

A supportive cohort model with **interactive retreats, observed coaching, and personalized feedback**

Whether you're seeking certification or simply want to integrate coaching skills into your ministry or leadership, this program is designed to meet you where you are.

If you have any questions, please be in touch.

Synod of the Northeast Coaching Network

www.snecoachingnetwork.weebly.com

Leadership Team:

Rev. Dr. Betsey Crimmins, ACC

Rev. Laurie J. Ferguson, PhD, PCC

Rev. Chris Garrison, ACC



Finger Lakes Bronze: A Spring in Your Step



Saturday, May 2nd at 3:00pm

Lyons United Methodist Church
93 Williams Street in Lyons


Sunday, May 3rd at 3:00pm

Congregational Church of Canandaguiá
58 North Main Street in Canandaguiá

**Free Will
Donations
Welcome**

Donate to the Presbytery online!

Presbytery of Geneva

Search 



Presbytery of Geneva General Fund

Give now



Camp Whitman

Give now



Individual per capita contribution

Give now



Ordination and Installation Offerings

Give now



Presbytery Meeting Offerings

Give now

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, Individual contributions to per capita, Ordination and Installation Offerings, and Presbytery Meeting Offerings. This is through the Presbyterian Foundation and long-time partner, Vanco, so it is very secure to use.

On our homepage www.presbyteryofgeneva.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, Ordination and Installation Offerings, Presbytery Meeting Offerings, and others in the future as we roll them out.





Top PC(USA) News *of the Week*



[‘That God is going with us’](#)

The Co-Moderators of the 226th General Assembly of the PC(USA) slip into the roles of Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration



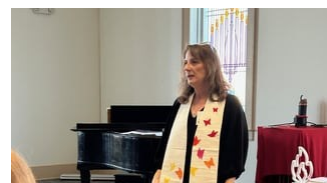
[West Virginia pastor will stand for Moderator of the 227th General Assembly](#)

The Rev. Dr. Bill Myers, pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Charleston, is on the lookout for a commissioner to stand alongside him



[Ministering in natural and unnatural disasters](#)

The Rev. Dr. Gini Norris-Lane urges presence, preparation and resilience in crisis response



[General Assembly committee leaders gather at the Presbyterian Center for training and for fun](#)

Seventy-three leaders from 11 committees learn from national staff and from one another



[A gentle breath of power in dangerous times](#)

Keynoter describes the Gospel of John’s slow burn of Pentecost





[Effective Budget Planning](#)

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

2:00 – 3:00 PM EST

Leader – Keith Clark-Hoyos

[Being the Helper: Trauma Informed Care for Young Children](#)

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

2:00 – 3:00 PM EDT

Leader – Sarah Erdman

[Leadership Transitions; Succession Planning for Church Leaders](#)

Thursday, May 14, 2026

2:00 – 3:00 PM EST

Leader – Keith Clark-Hoyos

Join Hands to Work, Hearts to God Crafting group

Gather monthly on the third Thursday, 7:00–8:00 pm via Zoom. Bring your “lap work” and connect through creativity and community.

Join an Online Book Club

Meet every other month (January, March, May, July, September, and November) on the second Saturday from 11:00 am–12:00 pm via Zoom. Enjoy thoughtful conversation around bestsellers, Christian fiction, and uplifting reads in a welcoming community.

If interested in either, please call or email Karen Smith at PRC

Phone: 631-821-2255

Email: karen@prcli.org



The 7th Judicial District's Clergy Day Committee Presents

Bench & Pulpit

A Clergy Conversation with the Courts

May 12, 2026 at 2 p.m.

Church of Love Faith Center

700 Exchange Street | Rochester, New York 14608

Light Refreshments will be Served

Join us for an interactive exchange as Judges, court leaders and members of the Clergy meet to share information and discuss ways to increase access and eliminate barriers to justice.

MEETING AGENDA

*Discuss Court Topics of Interest | Available Resources
Impactful Initiatives | Questions & Answers*

**Please share this invitation with any
Clergy members who may wish to participate**

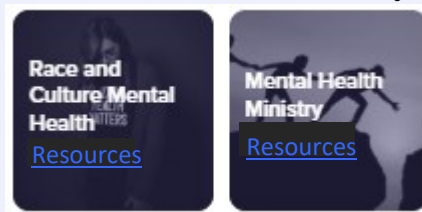
**Please RSVP by May 7, 2026
to rcoley@nycourts.gov or 585-371-3641**

May is Mental Health Awareness Month.

Expanding mental health awareness and understanding.

As we seek to educate, equip, and empower churches to reach out to, and with, people with mental health concerns and their loved ones, we have curated the following resources to support you in mental health ministry. These are designed for individual use and by leadership in mental health ministry in an effort to expand mental health awareness and understanding, end stigma surrounding mental illnesses, and expand the capacity of ministers and congregants to engage in mental health ministry.

Mental Health Ministry



“Anything that’s human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary.”

Fred Rogers

Reports & Study Guides



Guide for Mental Health Ministry (2024)

Churches and pastors are often the first line of defense for individuals and families seeking support and resources as they live with serious mental illness and navigate a complex, overwhelming and fragmented mental health system in the U.S.

Related Stories



April 15, 2026
Mike Ferguson
A conversation about hope

[Read More](#)



April 9, 2026
Mike Ferguson
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and its partners offer...

[Read More](#)



March 31, 2026
Mike Ferguson
Faith communities have a big role to play in mental health...

[Read More](#)



March 13, 2026
Darla Carter
Words of encouragement and solidarity for the work ahead

[Read More](#)

Called to, and Wired to, be in Community: Why There is Power in the Potluck

In 2003, I moved from Minnesota to Louisiana – basically from one end of the Mississippi River to the other. To say that there was a bit of culture shock (and temperature shock) is an understatement. Now, I had grown up in Maryland and lived in a number of other places before descending on Louisiana, but it was my first foray into the deep south, and I had a lot of learning to do – a whole new lingo to learn.

It took me a while to finally be able to say *y'all* without sounding like a politician pandering for votes. A “bless her heart” has periodically escaped my lips. And when I moved north to Michigan four years ago after 18 years in the south, I had to consciously add “g’s” back to words. But there was one question that always really stymied me: ***“Who are your people?”***

Now, for the lovely church folks who were asking this question, they were looking for some connection, some peg to hang my hat on their extended family tree. I appreciated their effort to find some way to make me “kin” despite my lack of roots in the area.

However, that question has wormed its way into the deep recesses of my brain and has become somewhat of an existential question of meaning and purpose for me personally and for me as a congregational pastor. And this question has shaped how I integrate my years as a bench scientist studying brain development and neural plasticity into my life as a pastor.

I think a critical issue for the church today is the place of community in a fractured world.

Recent developments in neurobiology have given us deeper insight into “our social brain” and how we are “wired” for relationships. Social neurobiology is a relatively recent addition to the field of neuroscience which investigates brain regions and neural processes involved in how we connect with each other, develop trust and empathy, and respond to social cues.

This research has shed light on how reduced person-to-person contact during the COVID-19 pandemic was particularly challenging for children and adolescents, whose brains were in a sensitive period for the maturation of brain structures involved in socialization. Social neurobiology has also been important for understanding the effects of loneliness on the health and well-being of individuals, especially those in older age. And it has helped us understand some of the limitations of connecting digitally. —————→

Jesus' ministry was centered around shared experiences, from calling a group of disciples to healings that restored isolated people to community, and many gathered meals. Jesus showed us the power of hospitality to form community as people across different social strata dined together. So, can we get an "Amen" for the power of the church to be a force of connection in a world that is too often disconnected?

Throughout the Hebrew scriptures and the New Testament, we are reminded that as a people of God, relationships matter. Some of our most poignant and profound scriptures relay stories of the joy of communal life and the pain and suffering when we fail to take our responsibilities to "rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep."

The scriptures observe that we are fundamentally a social species. What scripture does not tell us is how the emergent structures of community evolved hand in hand with the neural, neuroendocrine, cellular, and genetic mechanisms that support them. Neuroscience researchers are helping to fill in that gap.



The good news coming from social neurobiology is that gathering as a community matters.

The church I currently serve has made a big push for intergenerational ministry, a trend seen across many churches and denominations. Forming relationships across generations, having our children and youth know that there are people who care about their welfare besides their parents and teachers matters.

It is equally important for those at the older end of the aging spectrum to know that young people value their wisdom and stories. As their worlds get smaller, the church can play a powerful role in reminding our elders that they are a treasured part of the community, an antidote to the loneliness epidemic. While there is great pressure on churches to adapt to the current digital realities of the world (and much of this is justifiable), my prayer is that we continue to draw on our strength as a people who gather to sing and pray, eat and play, celebrate and mourn together.

Our social brains will rejoice!



The Rev. Dr. Lisa Schrott is a 2026 [Guthrie Scholar](#). She is the Pastor/Head of Staff of the Presbyterian Church of Okemos, MI. Lisa earned her Master of Divinity at *Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA*, with Honors in Practical Theology. Lisa is a second-career minister, having been an Associate Professor of Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Neuroscience at Louisiana State University (LSU) Health Sciences Center in Shreveport, LA. It was there that she felt a call to ministry.

Contact information: pastorlisa@okemospres.org;

Looking for a volunteer opportunity?



Formerly called
"Cities RISE"

Building Hope

Community Clean-up

WORKING TOGETHER. IMPROVING OUR COMMUNITY.

Join us!

*We need your help to spruce up
a neighborhood in Elmira*

**Friday & Saturday, June 26 & 27, 2026
9 am to Noon—Elmira, NY**

**REGISTER TO VOLUNTEER BY
June 15th**

www.chemungcountyhabitat.org/events or scan QR code.



2026 Mileage Rate Increased to 72.5 cents per mile

The IRS has set the 2026 mileage rate as 72.5 cents per mile, which is up 2 cents from last year. If you are doing any reimbursements for your church members, Presbytery committee members, pulpit supply, or moderator supply, please be aware of the change. Here is the information from the IRS website.

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-sets-2026-business-standard-mileage-rate-at-725-cents-per-mile-up-25-cents>

THE PRESBYTERY OF GENEVA ADDRESS HAS CHANGED!!

Please take note and change our address in all places you maintain it.

The new address is:



The Presbytery of Geneva
PO Box 17
Penn Yan, NY 14527



New
email
address?



New staff
or session
member?



Upcoming Event?

Please share!

If your church has photos of recent events, has news of an upcoming event, or some updated information to share, please email the presbytery office at:

officeadmin@presbyteryofgeneva.org