



# News From The Heart

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JUNE 2018

**First Presbyterian Church of Cazenovia, NY**

In the Heart of the Village since 1799

## Pastor's Journal

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### Call to Support Refugees from Syria and Around the World

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations have supported refugee resettlement since the refugee crisis created by World War II. The 160th General Assembly (1948) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America stated, "The United States should pass legislation to bring in at least four hundred thousand displaced persons during the next four years. ... As they arrive, our church people should stand ready to open their homes and provide work for these unfortunate victims of war" (*Minutes*, PCUSA, 1948, Part I, p. 204). The people in the pews who approved that policy did so because they knew that scripture calls us to shelter the homeless and welcome the stranger.

The call is no less necessary today. Nearly 60 million people are displaced by war and persecution; 30 million of those displaced are children. The crisis in Syria alone has displaced 11 million. Families are risking their lives and fleeing their homes to seek safety. They are spending months journeying, sleeping outside, paying smugglers for safe passage, and praying for a future for their families in a place that is safe from conflict.

They fear and flee many of the organizations that we also fear: ISIS, Boko Haram, Mara 18, Los Zetas. Right now governors are attempting to block the resettlement of Syrian refugees into their states because members of ISIS are sometimes Syrian. Ask yourself, should a victim's shared nationality with perpetrators of violence exclude them from protection in this country?

Entering the U.S. as a refugee is not a quick or easy process. Refugees are the single-most scrutinized migrant group to enter the U.S. They undergo rigorous screening by multiple security agencies at multiple times during their pre-arrival processing. This process can take more than two years. Once they arrive in the United States, they continue to be screened every time they leave and reenter the country and when they apply for employment cards, green cards, or naturalization.

The risk is low and the humanitarian need is great. While, technically, governors cannot dictate where the federal government resettles refugees, the State Department only resettles refugees in areas where they know communities will thrive. Governors are saying for their states, "No room at this inn." Now is the time for the faith community to speak up on behalf of refugees, from all countries. Do not let the noise of a fearful few drown out compassion, facts, and logic. Answer the call to act prayerfully and recommit as an individual, congregation, or mid council through cosponsorship, volunteer hours, and donations through your local resettlement agencies. Then send or personally deliver a letter (a sample can be found on the PCUSA website), to your governor about the kind of society we should be. Thank you!

Since the beginning of the Syrian civil war in March 2011, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has been engaged in responding to the needs of displaced persons and refugees. The response has been in collaboration with and support of ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) members and other

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ecumenical partners who are providing relief to refugees in neighboring countries and to internally displaced Syrians. PDA has also been providing direct assistance to our mission partner, the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL), which is also providing relief and care.

In addition to providing funds for humanitarian response for Syrians overseas, PDA is working with our partner in refugee resettlement, Church World Service (CWS), to resettle Syrian refugees who are coming to the United States. CWS is one of 9 national organizations that works in cooperation with the US Government to receive newly arriving refugees and provide for their initial resettlement through a network of local offices in over 200 locations around the U.S. The US Government has committed to resettling 10,000 Syrian refugees this year. To learn more about the US resettlement process and how churches can be involved in welcoming and accompanying refugees as they rebuild their lives, you can read the [Frequently Asked Questions](#). Please contact [PDA](#) for additional assistance.

(excerpts from [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org))

Dear Friends,

As most of you know by now, First Presbyterian Church is engaged in a collaborative mission initiative – as part of a growing village wide effort – to create a safe, nurturing, hospitable community in which New Americans (second-phase refugee families) can feel welcomed and supported as they begin a new and better life in this country. As you can see by the above informational paragraphs taken from the Presbyterian Church (USA) website, the effort to reach out in compassionate response to the global refugee plight is part of a denomination-wide mission effort. Our Presbyterian brothers and sisters have already long been engaged in this relief effort, which is becoming increasingly urgent worldwide.

Recently, we submitted an application for the Birthday Offering Grant of the Presbyterian Women (PCUSA) for additional funding to assist us in our local effort in that regard. The Presbyterian Women's Birthday Grant is awarded each year to up to five recipients who are engaged in innovative mission initiatives which correspond with the broader mission of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Each recipient receives between \$100,000 – 300,000 to support their mission effort. We developed this grant application in collaboration with Beth Broadway and staff at Interfaith Works (CNY), and the co-chairs (Cindy Sutton and Caroline Cargo) of our Cazenovia Welcomes Refugees (CWR) steering committee. We believe our mission effort in CWR is very deserving of denominational support and directly in line with its current mission. We feel that we have a very good chance of qualifying for these grant monies, which will then be used to develop further housing options for refugees in the Cazenovia area.

I had the honor of drafting the cover letter for the grant application, which I want to share with you. It gives a brief context for the inception of the vision for our local initiative, as well as setting it in a broader historical context. The cover letter reads as follows:

Soon after Diane and I arrived here in Cazenovia to begin my ministry at First Presbyterian Church (in August of 2016), we were invited to a Faith Leaders' Luncheon by representatives (Bob Hood and Kelli Johnson) of a local civic action group called Common Grounds. It was a small but friendly group of clergy folks from Cazenovia area churches and we readily made connections.

At one point we were commiserating about property upkeep citing a common issue of being, as one colleague put it, "property heavy." In the case of First Presbyterian Church it was the exist-

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ence of a beautiful, historic Manse, which the new incoming pastor opted not to live in for the first time in the history of the church.

In the course of that conversation I mentioned that, in 1981, First Presbyterian Church had previously adopted a refugee family who fled Cambodia (and the Khmer Rouge regime) in the aftermath of the Viet Nam War; and that there had been a handful of informal conversations amongst some of our members that perhaps we could once again use the Manse for that purpose now as well. As I shared that, I could see a light come on in Bob Hood's eyes. Bob offered that the Common Grounds Committee had been talking – and dreaming – about the possibility of engaging in refugee resettlement in Cazenovia for several months. Furthermore, that Interfaith Works (of Central New York) had been invited into that conversation just a few months prior. Apparently, Diane and I had unsuspectingly walked in on the middle of an ongoing conversation. From that first Faith Leaders' Lunch gathering, the conversation then began to expand to include both our respective congregations, as well as the village at large.

Now, having lived here for about a year and a half, I've come to discover that our current conversation regarding the refugee plight seems to be part of a larger conversation which has been going on for over two hundred years in Cazenovia.

Established in 1793, Cazenovia natives had been on the Revolutionary War battlefield as its village founders fought for liberty from British monarchy. When Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott led a convention of nearly 200 women at the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York, in July of 1848, thus launching the Woman Suffrage Movement, the women of Cazenovia were proudly represented. Cazenovia was a significant participant in the Underground Railroad when, in 1850, Frederick Douglas and abolitionist Gerrit Smith gathered in Grace Wilson's apple orchard (here in Cazenovia) with some 50 fugitive slaves, along with about 2,000 villagers joining the protest to denounce the impending Fugitive Slave Act.

Indeed, the conversation for human rights, equality/equal access and social justice has been going on a long time in the Village of Cazenovia. That fierce strain of advocacy still runs strong in this dynamic little village. As those who are now engaged in a missional collaboration, we are calling Cazenovia Welcomes Refugees, we are at the same time grateful, proud and humbled to now have the opportunity to carry that conversation forward with intentionality as a global village, as we seek to respond compassionately to the growing plight of those whose lives have been disrupted by regional conflict, religious persecution, ethnic cleansing, genocide and other forms of traumatic displacement.

June 20<sup>th</sup> is World Refugee Day. People around the world will be praying and engaging in civic action to respond to the global plight of refugees. We believe that – through this local mission initiative – we are following the call of our Lord Jesus Christ to reach out with compassion to the stranger, the persecuted, the lost and the least. It is our most fervent and prayerful hope that the Presbyterian Women will want to join us as a significant partner of this vital mission effort. Meanwhile, we will certainly keep you informed as CWR continues to develop and expand, dream and envision.

And thank you for your ongoing prayerful support.

In Christ Jesus,

*Tom*

## Sunday School

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### Sunday School Calendar

June 3-Communion Sunday-Older children remain in Service

June 10-Third Grade Bibles and Teacher Recognition in Service.

June 17-Father's Day-Sunday School Coffee Hour

June 24-Regular Sunday School

### Summer Sunday School with Sharye Skinner

The Summer Sunday School will once again be lead by Sharye Skinner starting July 1st. Children can look forward to many fun activities as they learn more about our faith. Thank you Sharye

## Ben Lake Memorial Concert

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On Sunday July 15th at 4:00 PM Caz Pres will host a Ben Lake Memorial Concert in Conjunction with Cazenovia Counterpoint.

Musicians from Symphoria include Kelly Covert on flute, John Friedrichs on clarinet, John Raschella on trumpet, Sonya Williams on violin, Arvilla Rovit on viola, Greg Wood on cello, Sar Shalom Strong on piano and Kevin Ernste on electronics. Philip Fillion, an Eastman School of Music grad will play a world premier piece on the organ.

## Session Highlights

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**Pulpit supply:** June 17 and 24 Bill Porter; July 1 Jane Dasher

**From the Treasurer:** Like last month, income is lagging behind budget. Expenses are about on target. Year-to-date deficit is about \$29k. Our cash position is fine.

**Trustees:** Phase 2 of the Pass-Thru Project is about to begin. This is the upgrade to the accessible door into the Meeting House. The annual painting project of the church will be starting soon, the North side of the church building is this year's focus. A couple small painting projects we'd like to involve congregation in as part of campus care.

**CE:** Sharye Skinner will again do the Sum-

## Annual Church Picnic

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The Christian Education Committee invite the congregation to the Annual Church Picnic on June 10 following the service. We will be grilling hamburgers and hot dogs for everyone to enjoy. The CE Committee will also provide, drinks and ice cream as well as place setting. Please bring a dish to share and your favorite lawn games.....And please pray for SUNSHINE.

### A Note from the Women's Association

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We have just purchased eight new table cloths for use in the church. Please remember that these need to be returned immediately after being used.

mer Sunday School. Thanks Sharye!

**Fellowship:** Is diligently working on the Membership and is working to ensure everyone is cared for.

A committee consisting of Nick Kagey, Kevin Curtis, Kristin Schierer, John Perriello, and Craig Buckhout did a careful financial review. All books are in good and proper order.

Please feel free to speak with any Session member or Rev. Oak if you have any concerns or questions about what is happening at church. We need to know your thoughts and ideas!

The next Session meeting will be July 9, 2018, if you have any ideas or requests, please have them to us by then.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 9 am - Choir Rehearsal 10 am - Worship Service 11 am - Ronald 11:15 am - Jubilate 6 pm - AA @ First	28	29 9:30 am - Tai Chi @ 12 pm - AA @ First	30 6 pm - Caz Community	31 12 pm - AA @ First	1 Office Closed	2 9 am - AA @ First 9 am - YL Garage Sale -
3 9 am - Choir Rehearsal 10 am - Worship Service 11 am - Outreach 11:15 am - Christian Ed 11:15 am - Jubilate 4 pm - Cubscouts @ 6 pm - AA @ First	4 6 pm - Cub Scouts @	5 9:30 am - Tai Chi @ 12 pm - AA @ First 5 pm - Cub Scouts @	6 5 pm - Cub Scouts @ 6 pm - Caz Community	7 12 pm - AA @ First	8	9 9 am - AA @ First
10 9 am - Choir Rehearsal 10 am - Worship Service 11 am - Church Picnic 11:15 am - Jubilate 6 pm - AA @ First	11 6:30 pm - Trustees	12 9:30 am - Tai Chi @ 12 pm - AA @ First 6 pm - Worship and	13 7:30 am - Men's 6 pm - Caz Community	14 12 pm - AA @ First	15	16 9 am - AA @ First
17 9 am - Choir Rehearsal 10 am - Worship Service 11:15 am - Deacons 11:15 am - Jubilate 4 pm - Cub Scouts 6 pm - AA @ First	18 6 pm - Cub Scouts @	19 9:30 am - Tai Chi @ 12 pm - AA @ First 5 pm - Cub Scouts 7 pm - Caz H2O Color	20 Newsletter Deadline 12 pm - Alice Edwards 6 pm - Caz Community	21 12 pm - AA @ First	22	23 9 am - AA @ First
24 9 am - Choir Rehearsal 10 am - Worship Service 11 am - Fellowship 11:15 am - Jubilate 6 pm - AA @ First	25	26 9:30 am - Tai Chi @ 12 pm - AA @ First	27 6 pm - Caz Community	28 12 pm - AA @ First 1 pm - blood drive	29	30 9 am - AA @ First

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Non-Profit Organization

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Permit No. 2

## Upcoming Events

### Alice Edwards Circle

Noon, Wed, June 20, 2018

Meeting House

Hostesses: Marion Barbero,  
Donna Denison, Janet  
McCobb, Diane Phillips

Picnic Day!

No sandwich needed!

Please a smile and a personal care product for Caz Cares.



**American  
Red Cross**

**Blood Drive**

Thursday,

June 28th,

1-6pm

### Men's Breakfast

7:30 a.m. June 13th

Meeting House

All men are welcome to  
gather for breakfast and  
discussion

