



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BUFFALO

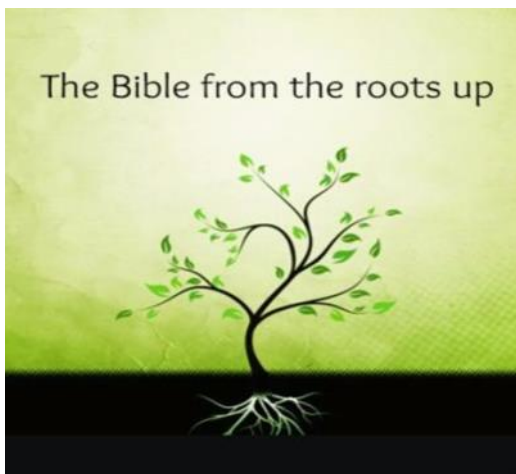
NEWSLETTER

Fall 2019



COMING MID-SEPTEMBER— A NEW COURSE!

By Rev. Dr. Kenneth E. Hughes



organization aside, there is much more about the Good Book that is hidden from the view of many Christians.

Such as the fact that the Bible did not just spring into being. Its 66 books (by Protestant count) and their origins still are shrouded in mystery. What we do not know about the Bible probably equals what we do know.

We do not know, for instance, who wrote most books, or when they were actually committed to printed form. Things we take for granted, like the order in which we read the Bible – Genesis to Revelation— is largely a human construction, not necessarily the sequence in which these writings were produced.

Perhaps the single most important and

underappreciated fact is that not one of the original manuscripts of any book of the Bible exists, or has yet been discovered. What we have, in various forms, are copies of the biblical texts, some of which were produced probably centuries after they were first written.

So this course – *The Bible from the Roots Up* – is something different. Many Bible studies focus on scripture's fruits, on what is above ground, so to speak. But in the six sessions of the "Roots" course, we are going to explore what is so often unseen, how the Good Book came into being. Rev. Dr. Ken Hughes is your guide for this exciting investigation of the writings we hold sacred.

Watch for a congregational survey on the days and times of the *Roots* course.

We know all we need to know about the Bible, right? For example, the Old Testament has 39 books, period.
...Unless you're Jewish, in which case there are 24 books.
...Or Roman Catholic, in which case there are 46 books.
...Or Eastern Orthodox, in which case there are 51 books.

The varied ways faith traditions organize the Old Testament is one of the much overlooked facts about the Bible. But

Welcome Marykate!

Tell us about yourself:

I grew up outside of Buffalo, in Lancaster, NY. I went to the University at Buffalo for my undergraduate study and ended up getting my MBA there as well. Right after I graduated, I started with an organization called WNY Independent Living where I was the Community Events and Outreach Coordinator. My responsibilities included managing outreaches and events throughout the 5 counties of WNY to connect people with services and raise awareness of the organizations mission of empowering individuals with disabilities to live independently in the community of their choosing.

What attracted you to the Director of Engagement and Outreach position at First Church?

What attracted me right away was the prospect of managing relationships to internal and external stakeholders within the community. Although I don't have a Presbyterian background, I am excited to not only solidify the relationships that the church currently has but to see how many new relationships we can form, and how they can be mutually beneficial to all involved.

What is one thing you have learned so far that has excited you?

Seeing how passionate many of the members of the congregation are is really inspiring. Many are involved on committees and participate in many events. Its great to see a strong support base. I hope I can help that base to grow and flourish.



Marykate in her office



homecoming

11:00 AM WORSHIP
BBQ POTLUCK TO FOLLOW

Homecoming Sunday will be **Sunday, Sept. 8 at 11:00 AM**. We will have our traditional BBQ potluck. The church will provide hot dogs. Please let the Church Office know what you'll be bringing. We'll also have cake to celebrate Mark Juan Armesto's birthday!

Please encourage your far-flung family and church friends (old and new) to join us on this special day. The goal of this day is touch base with those who were members or were connected to members. It is a **FIRST CHURCH FAMILY REUNION**.

Another storage space reclaimed!

One clear sign of growing vitality at First Church is the amount of floorspace that has been put back into active service for our ministries. The latest "living space" to be reclaimed (joining the Amos Calendar gathering area and the Chapel courtyard entrance) is the office of Marykate Waringa, adjacent to the church administrative offices.

The vast majority of work needed to convert this from a dusty storage room into a bright and roomy office was done by the church's in-house maintenance staff, Cory Connell and Rama Salim.

We trust this conversion will result in a vibrant platform for Marykate's work in engaging the congregation and raising our visibility in the community beyond our walls.



ESCALATE PEACE WNY

ONE WEEK WITH AN INTERNATIONAL PEACEMAKER

This fall there will be an opportunity to meet a leading voice for peace, and to gather as a community with the common goal of promoting harmony and good will. Rev. Thang Van Lian, a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar, will visit Western New York in early October as one of a number of “international peacemakers” selected by the Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) to witness to the power of non-violence.

Rev. Thang comes with first-hand knowledge of the cause to which he testifies. He grew up in a poor, rural village experiencing significant challenges, racial and religious discrimination, and life-threatening situations. Based on this experience, and his 20 years in ministry, Rev. Thang will speak about the Rohingya crisis, the current civil war on ethnic minority groups, the silence of the Myanmar churches, and what a faithful response might look like to the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar today. He also will share the current peace, justice and development work of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar.

Rev. Thang will make presentations at multiple locations during his WNY visit. If you are interested in attending one or more of these sessions—which will include opportunities for dialogue with Rev. Thang—please let us know by registering at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/EscalatePeaceWNY>.

Details will be steadily added to the Eventbrite registration page, including presentation times if not already provided.

Tuesday, October 1 — 6:00 p.m. presentation and dinner at **North Presbyterian Church in Williamsville**

Wednesday, October 2 — 6:00 p.m. – General public forum with panel discussion involving academics, community, and faith leaders on Myanmar-related issues at **First Presbyterian Buffalo**

Thursday, October 3 — Evening presentation at **Lewiston Presbyterian Church**

Friday, October 4 – 5:00 p.m. — Presentation at **Robert R. Jackson Center, Jamestown** under sponsorship of the First Presbyterian Church of Jamestown

Sunday, October 6 — **World Communion Sunday; events at First Presbyterian Buffalo**

9:30 a.m. — Adult Christian Education presentation

11:00 a.m. — Rev. Thang preaches in worship and celebrates communion; Peacemaking offering collected

12:15 p.m. — Reception in chapel

Season of Peace — a five-week pilgrimage designed to deepen the pursuit of peace. Presbyterians are invited to define and deepen their calling as peacemakers. This season is a time of encouragement, challenge, inspiration, and education.

Path of Peace Daily Reflections

The reflections for the 36 days of “A Season of Peace” come from a diverse and varied set of voices within our church. They are organized weekly using four of the areas of emphasis: poverty, racism, violence, and migration/refugees:

Week 1 September 1-7: What Does It Mean to Commit to Peace?

Week 2 September 8-14: Making Peace by Addressing the Root Causes of Poverty

Week 3 September 15-21: Making Peace by Disrupting Systemic Racism

Week 4 September 22-28: Making Peace by Ending Violence

Week 5 September 29-October 6: Making Peace by Supporting Refugees and Migrants

You have the option of [subscribing](#) to these reflections for daily delivery by email or request a printed copy from the Church Office.



Notes and News

The church Book Group will gather on **Thursday, September 26** at 6:00 PM at Ilsa Cooper's home to select books for the 2019-20 reading year. Bring a dish to share and your book recommendations (preference for books available in paperback).



Quinton Meyer is collecting egg cartons for his farm. Donations can be left in the Church Office.



The next opportunity to serve meals at Friends of Night People will be Wednesday, October 30. See the sign up sheet in the Narthex to volunteer.



Our volunteer work with Family Promise WNY is on hold while the host church builds a shower facility. Look for this ministry to resume in 2020.



Rev. John Long has a bulletin board outside the Church Office following the immigration crisis at our southern border. Check it each Sunday for updates and opportunities to act.



This year's portion of the Pentecost offering allocated to First Church was donated the Gay and Lesbian Youth Services (GLYS). The CMO Committee chose to donate the nearly \$190 collected to help at-risk youth.



Due to staffing changes at Literacy Buffalo-Niagara, the Wednesday tutoring program is no longer held at First Church and will resume at the Niagara Branch Library beginning in September. First Church hosted this class for many years and it will be missed. Special thanks to all those who tutored over the years!



Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church presents:
on the Bridge

Gather with the Buffalo Community to fly the American flag in Remembrance of the Fallen Heroes and Victims of 9/11.

Wednesday, September 11th 8:30 to 10:15 AM

Where: The Scajaquada pedestrian bridge, which crosses over to Hoyt Lake at Delaware Park (Rte 198 overpass). Join Firefighters, Police, EMS & military personnel and veterans who come together to commemorate the Anniversary of 9/11

Former associate pastor Rev. William Samford is retiring from his church in Hawley, PA. Contact the Church Office for more information, and the address to send cards or gifts.



I would like to thank everyone for cards, emails, texts and, most especially, prayers following my recent eye surgery. I want to send a big thank you to the Women's Association for the beautiful peace lily. All of your prayers, kind words and actions have brightened my days. The good news is my vision is clearing, although it is a slow process. When I am able to drive again, I look forward to attending church and thanking you in person.

—Janet Hill



Congratulations to Maria Oakley and her partner, Rob, who became engaged this summer! We look forward to the wedding, which will be held at First Church!



We share the joyful news of an addition to the Whipple family: Case William was born on Tuesday, August 27 at Millard Fillmore Suburban hospital. He and mom, Rebecca, are home and both doing well. Big Sister Harbour is delighted to have a little brother to watch over. This addition to Nolan and Rebecca's family follows close on the heels of them moving to a new house, in Hamburg. We ask God's blessings and offer the congregation's congratulations!



We are saddened by the death of Jane Turner Hansen, mother of Ilsa Cooper, in Getzville on August 14. Jane was 98 and according to Ilsa had been in relative good health until a number of medical issues began in March. A memorial service will take place in October.

Clerk's Corner

The following actions were taken by Session at regular meetings in May and June and by the congregation at its meeting in August. There was no July Session meeting.

- ✓ Approved installing the door hardware and exterior lighting as presented by Dr. Bond.
- ✓ Approved the contract with StaffBuffalo according to the terms presented by Rev. Dr. Hughes.
- ✓ Approved the First Presbyterian Church engage a realtor to advise as to the value of 176 College prior to putting the house up for sale.
- ✓ Approved communion for July 7, August 4, and September 8 (Homecoming Sunday).
- ✓ Approved a memorial event for John Burgess on Saturday, June 1 at 3:00 P.M.
- ✓ Approved investigating painting a labyrinth on the floor of the chapel, including pictures and pricing.
- ✓ Dispensed with the reading of the Mission Statement at Session meetings.
- ✓ Agreed to deposit the entire \$100,000 from the Mueller bequest into the Third Century Fund, earmarked the way that the donor requested.
- ✓ Closed out the Perry account and transferred the funds to the Geri Lyon Food Fund.
- ✓ Suspended the requirement for three bids pro tem.
- ✓ Accepted the Supreme Sealing bid for sealing and restriping the parking lot for \$2,615.
- ✓ Accepted the bid from Milio Concrete for replacing the concrete apron and sidewalk from Pennsylvania at a cost of \$8,115 and authorized additional work to repair the sidewalk in poor condition.
- ✓ Approved the resolution authorizing Michael Henry, President of the Corporation, and Mark Armesto, Treasurer, to enter into and execute a project agreement with the State of New York identified as EPF project #168617, and to have authority to sign any related documents.
- ✓ Approved the memorial service for the mother of Cathy Smith of Gateway-Longview on Saturday, June 15 at 11:00 A.M. in the chapel, officiated by Rev. Laura Norris-Buish of our Presbytery.
- ✓ Authorized Dr. Bond to contract with T-Mark Plumbing to dig up the sewer line to solve the drainage issues in the basement for \$8,375, which includes permits, street cuts, and street and sidewalk repair.
- ✓ Approved the memorial service for Jose Gomez and reception at First Church on Saturday, June 22 beginning at 11:00A.M.
- ✓ Approved the request of Rev. Dr. Hughes for First Church to serve as primary host for an international peacemaker during the weekend in which World Sunday is observed (October 4-7).
- ✓ Approved the wedding of Ian Henry and Leah Woodard on Saturday, September 12, 2020.
- ✓ Approved the wedding of nonmembers Samantha James and Michael Barry (member of Bacon Memorial Presbyterian) at First Church on Saturday, August 15, 2020, officiated by the pastor of that church, Rev. Lisa Giacomazza.
- ✓ Approved that First Presbyterian Church will not hold the mortgage for any purchase of the manse.
- ✓ Agreed to take appropriate legal steps to terminate the contract between First Church and the Bansas, as long as financing to purchase the manse is not secured before June 21.
- ✓ Agreed to continue to work with Michael Dixon, attorney-at-law, to represent First Presbyterian Church in the sale of the manse.
- ✓ If the way be clear, agreed to enter into a contract with Gurney, Becker and Bourne (Kristan Anderson, Realtor) to sell the manse.
- ✓ If the way be clear, approved the contracted realtor to sell the manse as is for cash.
- ✓ Approved the request for VOICE/Buffalo Immigrant Leadership Team to hold a community celebration at First Church on the evening of August 17.
- ✓ Elected Mark Armesto to serve as Clerk of Session pro tem, beginning in August.
- ✓ Approved the baptism of June Frances Gardner on Sunday, July 14.
- ✓ Approved a Session recess in July.
- ✓ Approved the pastor's study leave from June 30 to July 7.
- ✓ Approved that 40% of the Pentecost offering be donated to Gay & Lesbian Youth Service (GLYS).
- ✓ Agreed to partner with One Symphony Circle and Allentown Association and take part in National Night Out on August 6.
- ✓ Approved the request from OSC to have First Church secure a beer and wine permit and security for the Meat Raffle scheduled for Saturday, October 26 from 5:00-9:00 P.M. at the Elmwood Village Charter School.
- ✓ Elected as ruling elders serving in the Session Class of 2022: Mark Armesto, Don Houck, Liz Kamke and Gifty Koramoah, and James Gardner to fill the unexpired term of Elder Jose Gomez in the Class of 2021.
- ✓ Elected deacons serving in the class of 2022: Denis Wettlaufer, Olga Rico-Armesto, and Russ Carlson.

Respectfully submitted, Janet Hill

FIRST CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Ken Hughes, *Pastor*

RevKen@firstchurchbuffalo.org

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The Reverend John Long, D.D.

Parish Associate for Community Outreach

JohnRLong17@verizon.net

The Reverend Jack Smiley, *Pastor Emeritus*

Christina Banas, *Communications & Office Manager*

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Dr. David Bond, *Organist/Choirmaster, Bookkeeper*

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Cory Connell, *Maintenance Coordinator*

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Rama Salim, *Custodial & Security Assistant*

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Marykate Waringa, *Director of Engagement & Outreach*

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Voicemail extension: 205

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

(beginning September 8)

11:00 AM Worship in the Sanctuary
11:15 AM Children's Sunday school
12:00 PM Fellowship time

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

*Staff meetings are held each
Wednesday from 10:00 to 11:30 AM*



EST. 1812

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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(across from Kleinhans)

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Instagram: @1stChurchBflo

Twitter: @1stChurchBflo

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFICERS

SESSION AND TRUSTEES BY CLASS AND TERM

Class of 2020

Lucas Lloyd (2)
Janet Hill (1) *Clerk*
Henry Porter (2)
Sue Snyder (2)

Class of 2021

John Darby (2)
James Gardner (1)
Jean Hess (1)
Tina Osei (1)

Class of 2022

Mark Armesto (2)
Don Houck (2)
Liz Kamke (2)
Gifty Koramoah (1)

BOARD OF DEACONS BY CLASS AND TERM

Class of 2020

India Asplundh (1)
Barry Farmer (1)
Madeline Mason-Brandon (2)
Suzanne Pilon (1)
Lou Ann Luther Riegler (2)

Class of 2021

Mary Field (2)
Jim McKeel (1)
Sheila Miller (2)
Shannon Rogers (1)

Class of 2022

Russell Carlson (1)
Olga Rico-Armesto (1)
Denis Wettlaufer (2)

OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

Michael Henry, President

Rebecca Whipple, Vice President

Mark Armesto, Treasurer

Janet Hill, Secretary

The mission of historic First Church is to bring diverse people of metropolitan Buffalo together to follow Jesus Christ through worshipping God, fostering spiritual growth and serving the community.