

The Good News Gazette

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH , 94-96 MAIN STREET, CHESTER, NEW YORK 10918

JULY 2009

Reclaiming a Sacred Space

On Saturday, May 23, a few church leaders and I had a special meeting with Rev. Bruce Tischler. He is a Presbytery staff person working in the area of enabling churches in transition to have a transformational vision of their future. We wanted to see what workshops or events Bruce could help us with during this interim period. After talking for a while it was determined that Bruce would lead 2 special congregational events in the Fall—one focused on our sense of our identity as a church, and the other seeking to discover what the community's image of us was. The plan was to reach out widely to as many of our members and friends as possible. We wanted broad participation in these events.

Then the question came up: *where should these sessions be held?* Naturally, the downstairs hall came up as the first possibility. But right away there seemed to be problems: because of accessibility, some of our members have trouble getting down there. Then one of our elders asked: *"Is the downstairs hall really the best place to hold visioning meetings?"* His idea was—it tends to be dark, with a low ceiling, and doesn't have windows with a view outside.

"What about the back room?" I naively asked. I had never been back there, so I had no idea what the room was now used for, or what the history of it was. *"Well, let's go look at it,"* someone suggested. So we all got up and walked toward the back.

When the door was opened, it was like an epiphany for me, still a relative newcomer. Here was a large, potentially charming room, with a high ceiling, windows, and an interesting and artistic back entrance. Right away I began to hear stories of its history: originally it was a chapel; then for many years it was used and loved by our youth as a gym. I'm sure there are many more stories and memories, and I'm interested in hearing them.

At present, the *Back Chapel Room* (as I prefer to call it)—is used by various groups to store materials: by the deacons for food supplies for the pantry, by D.V.B.S. for materials, by Korean young people for band instruments, and by others for medical supplies—all of these worthy and ongoing ministries.

But as I stood there looking around at this large, charming, and formerly *"sacred"* space, I couldn't help asking myself an important question: *is now the time for this space to be re-claimed for broader purposes—re-claimed for the broader mission of the Church, as we move into God's future?*

I couldn't help thinking of the story of the re-discovery of the Law by King Josiah in 2 Kings 22, when the high priest, Hilkiah, bluntly announced to the startled King: *"I have*

found the book of the law in the house of the Lord.”

Well, we didn't find the book of the law in the back chapel room, but what a collection of banners!

The Session has asked Rev. Tischler to lead 2 special Congregational events in the back chapel room in the Fall—one on Saturday, September 19, and the other on Saturday, October 3. Of course, we will need the help and co-operation of all the groups who store things there as we seek to clear the room as much as possible in preparation for these events. And we need all of our members and friends to now put these dates on the calendar!

Maybe God wants to open up new doors for us—for our mission in the future!

Respectfully, G. Wondra, I.M.

DEACON'S NEWS

The Deacons would like to thank everyone who helped us with the breakfast for the Kiwanis Road Race. Some people helped – very early - with getting things over to Carpenter Fields while others helped out with cooking and serving the 259 participants in the race. The event brought in almost a \$500 profit for the Food Pantry to help us continue to feed the growing number of Chester residents that rely on our Church to help them with food each month.

To further help or donate to the Food Pantry, please contact any of the Deacons. Thanks again to all who helped make this event possible and successful.

Music/Worship Team needs YOU to come forward during the summer months of July and August! HIS Choir takes a much needed break then, and we ask you to step up and fill in for them by singing or playing an instrument for the worship service to the glory of God. No one is asking you to be perfect in pitch or tone — just that you use the talent with which God has blessed you. The Lord loves a cheerful giver, — one and all who praise Him, and that giver is you! We have so many blessings to be thankful for — and this is one way you can express your love for them and for Him! So, please! place your name on the sign-up sheet you will find on the back table in the sanctuary or speak to Maggie. And!! We will all be blessed to have Nancy Sterling as our pianist for August 9th—30th; she will be delighted to work with you as you sing or perhaps play a flute, etc. I am most grateful for her willingness and her special gift. Praise the Lord! And Thank You to Him and her!

44th ANNUAL CHICKEN BBQ - July 11, 2009 - 3:30 to 6:30 P.M.

Here is a list of the dates & activities:

July 3, at 9:00am - Kitchen/Dining Room Clean-up.
(and 7/6, at 4:00pm) Please speak to Jerry Sutherland
(469-4166) if you are able to help.

July 9, at 9:00am - Preparation of coleslaw. Please
speak to Carol Ravert (469-2997).

July 10, at 9:00am - Preparation of potatoes & dining
room set-up. Please speak to Joan
Ribando (469-4208).

July 11, at 11:00am - Barbecuing chicken at Jack and Jen
Memmelaar's. Please speak to Jim
Seymour (469-4311) to volunteer.

July 11, at 3:00pm - All who work the dinner (Servers,
etc.) should arrive for pre-dinner
meeting and prayer.

The dessert will be brownies with ice cream. A church pan and recipe will be provided, if you supply the ingredients. Please speak to Rosemary Eckard (469-6425) if you are willing to bake brownies.

Volunteers are also needed the day of the barbecue to wait on tables or work in the kitchen. Please speak to Marsha Seymour (469-4311). Also see Marsha if you need tickets.

Our Women's Council will sponsor a bake sale at the BBQ and would appreciate donations of any type of homemade goodies you would like to make.

We hope you can fit our 44th Annual Chicken Barbecue into your summer schedule. The success of our church dinner depends on the time and energy you are willing to donate to this fundraiser. We are very grateful for all the support you give. Thank you very very much!!!!

2009 July Dinner Co-Chairpersons: Marsha Seymour & Jerry Sutherland

WOMEN'S COUNCIL NEWS



Our host Rosemary Eckard is in front (L to R) with Catherine DeAngelis, Betty Lutjens and Ruth Magyar. Seated are Ingeborg Lange, Janet Writer and Marsha Seymour. And standing are Edna Babcock, Nancy Sterling, Carol Ravert, Helen Braidotti and Maggie Johnson.

Our special thanks to Alan Eckard for taking this picture so that everyone could be included!

Salads, casseroles, shrimp, fruit, homemade desserts, etc., graced Rosemary Eckard's dining room table at our final meeting for the year. We shared readings that we enjoy – poems, stories, scripture, etc.. Some were quite humorous, but all were very meaningful.

The day started with a lovely surprise from John Miller all the way from Washington, D.C.. He sent a lovely bouquet of flowers to the women of the church to thank them for all that they do. We each had a chance to bring a small group of flowers home and some were delivered to Tricia Ravert's hospital room. We each had the opportunity to speak to her which I am sure cheered her up. Thank you so much, John, for your thoughtfulness.

We had our regular business meeting and a motion was made to donate all the proceeds from the Bake Table at the Chicken Barbecue in July to help pay for one of the new kitchen appliances for the manse. This would help to lessen the burden on the church treasury. We would appreciate all of the ladies (and men) of the church to help us to raise money for this worthwhile cause. Our next meeting will be a planning meeting on September 14th. We will also have a luncheon. The destination and time will be determined later in the summer. Look for it in the August newsletter and plan to join us. Have a happy, blessed summer.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

HELLO EVERYONE!

The First Presbyterian Church of Chester will be sponsoring *Gadget's Garage*, a Vacation Bible School Program, from July 27-July 31 from 9am-12 noon each day. We hope you can all come.

At *Gadget's Garage*, we'll learn about Jesus, meet new friends, get to do fun activities, sing awesome songs, make crafts, play games, eat snacks, and more! It will be a lot more fun if you and your friends are there.

We hope you can join us!

Co- Directors.

Tricia Ravert and Janet Writer

A Green Thumb of Beauty

Gardening fever is upon us. It seems as though everyone is a gardener, even if they live in a big-city apartment. Even if they have eleven green thumbs. Even if they wouldn't pull weeds for a million dollars. Even if they don't know the difference between a spade and a rake. Even if they hate vegetables and bugs, are allergic to bees, or have spring allergies. Suddenly everyone is a gardening maniac.

Well, there are certain things anybody can plant—sweet P's in a straight row, for instance: prayer, patience, peace, passion. But it's not enough for a gardener to love flowers. A gardener also must hate weeds. As good plants grow, you pinch off bitter ones like panic. Paranoia, and passivity. And by the way, while gardening, do squash pride. And please, lettuce love one another at all times.

Begin now to cultivate your half-acre of love. All it takes is a few seeds no larger than grains of sand. The blossom of a good deed fades with time but that lasting perfume is the joy you receive from doing it.

Barbara Johnson

2009 Team Chairs and Co-Chairs

Ministering to the People

Music and Worship Team: Maggie Johnson (469-4268)
Marsha Seymour (469-4311)

Meets monthly on the first Monday at 1 PM. Subject to change.

Christian Education and Youth Team: Janet Writer (469-2578)

Extended Family Outreach Team: Sara Green (469-2975)

Stewardship and Finance: John Ravert (469-1801)

Buildings and Grounds Team: Jerry Sutherland (469-4166)

We are always looking for our brothers and sisters in Christ to help us serve the Lord. Want to join a team in our church? Please contact the team chair/co-chair. We look forward to working with you in the Lord's ministry.

Pastor:	For Pastoral Services please call our Clerk of Session, Scott Vogt at 469-3068.
Clerk of Session:	Scott Vogt (469-3068)
Moderator of Deacons:	Matt Van Der Meulen (469-6427)
V. Moderator of Deacons:	James Peterson (610-3670, cell 325-1829)
Treasurer:	John Ravert (469-1801)
Secretary:	Ruth Magyar (469-4078)
Church Office:	469-4877