

The Good News Gazette

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

94--96 Main Street
Chester, New York 10918
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May 2010

How 'm I Doin'? See the article on the next page by Pastor Gerald Wondra.

WOMEN'S COUNCIL NEWS

On Tuesday, May 11th at 1 o'clock in the church library, we will gather for the monthly meeting. Betty Lutjens will give the Devotions and the program will be provided by Carol Ravert and Catherine DeAngelis. We will see one of the Lessons of Faith narrated by Ray Vander Laan entitled, "The Death and Resurrection of the Messiah." These films take place in the Holy Land and show the area where these events occurred. Some of the places are the Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem the Mount of Olives, etc.. You actually feel that you had been there! The ones that we have seen in the past have been exciting, informative and a blessing to all of us. Ingeborg Lange will provide the refreshments.

Please come and join us. You'll be glad you did!

SHOPRITE CERTIFICATES

By Carol Ravert

I am so grateful for the loyal purchasers of these certificates. I felt that an update would be exciting – and it is! Since July 1st, 2009, the beginning of the church year, through the end of April, we've sold \$37,450 worth of ShopRite cards, benefitting the church by \$2,045. It is a wonderful mission and I want to personally thank you all.

HIS CHOIR

HIS Choir will be on break July 4 through September 5, 2010. During this time you are encouraged to share your talent, vocal or instrumental, with the congregation. Return your blessing from the Lord with an offering of praise and thanksgiving to glorify His wonderful Name! Please speak to Maggie, if you are willing to share, with the date you would like to participate. We look forward, as does the Lord, to hearing your gift of love returned to Him. Thank You.

**PLAN AHEAD.....IT WASN'T RAINING WHEN NOAH
BUILT THE ARK.**

HOW 'M I DOIN'?

Former N.Y.C. mayor, Ed Koch, used to frequently ask that question. As your interim Minister, I feel that I also need to ask it,--as my term may be coming to an end by September of this year, unless by mutual agreement, the contract is extended for another 6 months. So. . . "*How 'm I Doin'?*"

My training manual for interim ministry lists 5 "***developmental tasks***" that it's important for interim ministers to be working on during their terms. They involve helping the Church. . .

1. *come to terms with history;*
2. *discover a new identity;*
3. *manage leadership shifts;*
4. *renew Denominational linkages;* and
5. *commit itself to a new future.*

Well, how 'm I doin', and how 're we doin'? I can identify progress under #'s 1 and 4: we had our time-line exercise with Rev. Bruce Tischler, the results of which still hang in our hallway; and, we now have a regular elder commissioner to the Presbytery, Catherine DeAngelis. Discussions are ongoing about #'s 2 and 5: ("*discovering a new identity*" and "*commit to a new future.*"). I wrote an exploratory piece called, "*What I See So Far,*" and that has been discussed by various groups. And, of course, we had our 2 "*Congregational Visioning Meetings,*" the results of which are now being evaluated by our Mission Study Team.

That leaves #3: "*managing leadership shifts,*" possibly the toughest nut to crack! On Saturday, May 15, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, we will be having an ***orientation meeting*** for all those who have accepted nomination to our new 5-team structure: *Music & Worship, Christian Education & Youth, Mission & Outreach, Stewardship & Finance, and Building & Grounds.* The meeting will involve: going over each team's area of responsibility, talking about what kind of communication will be necessary (especially because new people may be involved), and what kind of reporting and accountability will be expected between the teams and the Session. There may be time for each of the 5 teams to have a brief organizing meeting. Also, we hope to be showing the helpful video: "*Healthy Congregations.*"

What makes this such a crucial step is that it involves the ***intentional expansion of our leadership base!*** There may be new people taking part in the teams, and it will be important to make sure they feel fully included. Also, for those who have been doing multiple jobs in the Church, the challenge may be to be willing to back off some of those jobs to allow others to become more involved. A large dose of grace and understanding will be necessary!

But make no mistake about it--if we manage this step correctly, it could be the launching pad for a new surge of energy and commitment to the future of the First Presbyterian Church of Chester! Please pray for the Lord's leading. A letter will be going out to all nominees. The date again for the orientation meeting is Saturday, May 15, 10 a.m. to 12 noon. May the answer to Ed Koch's question be: "*We're on our way to better times ahead!*"

Gerald L. Wondra, I.M.

2010 TEAMS

MINISTERING TO THE PEOPLE

On May 15, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, there will be an orientation meeting for those who accepted nomination to our new 5-team structure:

Music and Worship Team

Christian Education and Youth Team

Mission and Outreach Team

Stewardship and Finance

Buildings and Grounds Team

At the meeting Pastor Wondra will go over each team's area of responsibility and talk about what kind of communication will be necessary, and what kind of reporting and accountability will be expected between the teams and Session.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER:

EVERY TEAM MEMBER IS IMPORTANT TO THE TEAM!

IT'S WHAT YOU SCATTER

I was at the corner grocery store buying some early potatoes... I noticed a small boy, delicate of bone and feature, ragged but clean, hungrily appraising a basket of freshly picked green peas.

I paid for my potatoes but was also drawn to the display of fresh green peas. I am a pushover for creamed peas and new potatoes.

Pondering the peas, I couldn't help overhearing the conversation between Mr. Miller (the store owner) and the ragged boy next to me.

'Hello Barry, how are you today?'

'H'lo, Mr. Miller. Fine, thank ya. Jus' admirin' them peas. They sure look good.'

'They are good, Barry. How's your Ma?'

'Fine.. Gittin' stronger alla' time.'

'Good. Anything I can help you with?'

'No, Sir. Jus' admirin' them peas.'

'Would you like to take some home?' asked Mr. Miller.

'No, Sir. Got nuthin' to pay for 'em with.'

'Well, what have you to trade me for some of those peas?'

'All I got's my prize marble here.'

'Is that right? Let me see it' said Miller.

'Here 'tis. She's a dandy.'

'I can see that. Hmm, only thing is this one is blue and I sort of go for red. Do you have a red one like this at home?' the store owner asked.

'Not zackley but almost.'

'Tell you what. Take this sack of peas home with you and next trip this way let me look at that red marble'. Mr. Miller told the boy..

'Sure will. Thanks Mr. Miller.'

Mrs. Miller, who had been standing nearby, came over to help me.

With a smile she said, 'There are two other boys like him in our community, all three are in very poor circumstances. Jim just loves to bargain with them for peas, apples, tomatoes, or whatever.

When they come back with their red marbles, and they always do, he decides he doesn't like red after all and he sends them home with a bag of produce for a green marble or an orange one, when they come on their next trip to the store.'

I left the store smiling to myself, impressed with this man. A short time later I moved to Colorado, but I never forgot the story of this man, the boys, and their bartering for marbles.

Several years went by, each more rapidly than the previous one. Just recently I had occasion to visit some old friends in that Idaho community and while I was there learned that Mr. Miller had died. They were having his visitation that evening and knowing my friends wanted to go, I agreed to accompany them. Upon arrival at the mortuary we fell into line to meet the relatives of the deceased and to offer whatever words of comfort we could. Ahead of us in line were three young men. One was in an army uniform and the other two wore nice haircuts, dark suits and white shirts...all very professional looking. They approached Mrs. Miller, standing composed and smiling by her husband's casket.

Each of the young men hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, spoke briefly with her and moved on to the casket. Her misty light blue eyes followed them as, one by one, each young man stopped briefly and placed his own warm hand over the cold pale hand in the casket. Each left the mortuary awkwardly, wiping his eyes.

Our turn came to meet Mrs. Miller. I told her who I was and reminded her of the story from those many years ago and what she had told me about her husband's bartering for marbles. With her eyes glistening, she took my hand and led me to the casket.

'Those three young men who just left were the boys I told you about.

They just told me how they appreciated the things Jim 'traded' them. Now, at last, when Jim could not change his mind about color or size....they came to pay their debt.'

'We've never had a great deal of the wealth of this world,' she confided, 'but right now, Jim would consider himself the richest man in Idaho. '

With loving gentleness she lifted the lifeless fingers of her deceased husband. Resting underneath were three exquisitely shined red marbles.

The Moral :

We will not be remembered by our words, but by our kind deeds. Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath.

Today I wish you a day of ordinary miracles
~ A fresh pot of coffee you didn't make yourself...
An unexpected phone call from an old friend ...
Green stoplights on your way to work....
The fastest line at the grocery store....
A good sing-along song on the radio...
Your keys found right where you left them.

Send this to the people you'll never forget. I just did....

If you don't send it to anyone, it means you are in way too much of a hurry to even notice the ordinary miracles when they occur.

**IT'S NOT WHAT YOU GATHER, BUT WHAT YOU SCATTER
THAT TELLS WHAT KIND OF LIFE YOU HAVE LIVED!**

The article above was sent via E-mail. Author unknown.

**COMPASSION IS DIFFICULT TO GIVE AWAY
BECAUSE IT KEEPS COMING BACK**

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