

# The Good News Gazette

The First Presbyterian Church  
94-96 Main Street Chester, NY 10918

November 2016

## Better Stewards

Over the past few months a few of us have been attending the Presbyterian Foundation Small Church Finances forums throughout our presbytery. While they might not sound all that exciting, they are actually producing a lot of good energy among small churches, at least what we can see in our region of the presbytery. The same churches continue to attend each meeting, there is great dialogue and questions, and there is a lot of support for one another.

Sometimes what the Foundation has to say to us is hard to hear. They started their first meeting with a video of a church closing its doors, selling its building, and beginning a new worshipping community in an unused downtown train station. It was to help us open our eyes to how we can be the best stewards with what God has provided us with for doing God's work in the community around us. This church that closed, its building had become too big for them, too much for them to handle, too costly. They made the very difficult and painstaking decision to sell the building in order to be able to still do ministry, Christ's ministry in their community. The Foundation emphasized, not everyone is called to sell their building and find a new space to worship and that it might not even be realistic for every church to be able to do that. However, they noted, every church and everyone is called to be the most faithful stewards they can be with what God has provided them with to do the ministry God calls them to do. The forums then continued to talk about stewardship and best finance practices.

At the most recent forum, just a few weeks ago held at the Marlboro Presbyterian Church, we were encouraged to determine how much it costs (the bare minimum) to have our doors open Sunday morning as well as the bare minimum to run the church throughout the week. This includes heat, electric, garbage pickup, phone, etc... as well as payroll. The bare minimum to have the doors open Sunday would be about \$40 per person per week (based on 46 members). For the week it would about \$46. Again, these are the bare minimums – doesn't include any repairs, maintenance, mowing the lawn or snow removal, Sunday School curriculum, etc...

For some, this number might seem a bit high to be able to give every week. For others, it might be less than they give weekly. But this is the reality of about what it costs per member, per week for the bare minimum to keep the church running.

The Foundation encouraged us to share these numbers with our congregations to help everyone realize the reality of the costs we face each week to keep the building open, up and running. This information isn't to make anyone feel guilty for what they are able to contribute nor give reason for anyone to give less, but rather help us understand the reality of where we are financially.

Certainly, these numbers aren't ideal and for a small struggling church they can seem crippling for some. But, it's good to go back to the original question posted by the Foundation – how can we remain faithful stewards of what God has provided us with, how can we continue the ministry in this time and place in our community? Maybe it is giving a few more dollars each week but maybe it is something different, something outside the box, something that could potentially make us uncomfortable.

Maybe it's a new worship service another day or night of the week... and maybe it's not something that necessarily looks like our traditional Sunday service. Maybe it's becoming more present in our community, like having Bible Study downtown or leading a book study through the library. Maybe we need to welcome our neighbors in with postcards, fliers, or other mailings to let them know about our ministry. Maybe rather than criticize those who take their kids to Sunday morning soccer games, we need to go to one or two of those games as a congregation and cheer on our kids in the community. Provide some hot coffee for the parents and hot chocolate for the kids, really get to know them and let them get to know us. Then welcome them to join us if they find they ever have a Sunday morning free.

Being faithful stewards isn't just about funding the workings of the church, keeping the doors open. It is also, and perhaps more so, being faithful to God's call. Using what God has provided us with, our finances as well as our talents and time, to live out God's calling on our lives, which is to be witnesses. We are to witness to Christ and how can we be witnesses if we aren't out in the world proclaiming God's love, mercy, and grace through our time and our talents? How can we witness to Christ if we aren't good stewards with what we've been provided?

Rev. Erin Moore

### **All Saints' Day**

We will be celebrating All Saints' Day Sunday, Nov 6th. Please take a moment to consider the saints that have helped you along your journey who have gone on before us and write them on the list in the library or on the bulletin board (or you can email Pastor Erin). Please note two things: If they were a member of this church or if they passed within this past year (since last November). There will also be a time in the service to name saints who are still with us who have helped us on our journey, so please consider who you might like to name during that time in the service.

### **Just Eat It**

Through HRP Green and the Green Onion we are partnering together to screen the documentary Just Eat It on **November 18<sup>th</sup>** down at the Green Onion. It is a powerful documentary about food waste. A brief description from [foodwastemovie.com](http://foodwastemovie.com) states, "Filmmakers and food lovers Jen and Grant dive into the issue of waste from farm, through retail, all the way to the back of their own fridge. After catching a glimpse of the billions of dollars of good food that is tossed each year in North America, they pledge to quit grocery shopping cold turkey and survive only on foods that would otherwise be thrown away. In a nation where 1 in 10 people is food insecure, the images they capture of squandered groceries are both shocking and strangely compelling. But as Grant's addictive personality turns full tilt towards food rescue, the 'thrill of the find' has unexpected consequences."

The time of the screening is still to be determined but check the bulletin, church facebook site, flyers around town, or call the church for more information.

### **Advent Lunch Bag Devotionals**

Mark your calendars now! We will be holding Advent Lunch Bag Devotionals for the four weeks of Advent. The first one will begin on Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> at 12pm in the choir practice room and we will share a lunch together afterwards. We will have one each of the following Wednesdays at 12pm our last one will be Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>. We look forward to having you join us for a time to slow down during such a busy season and focus on our wonderful Savior.

## **ROAST BEEF DINNER - November 5, 2016 - 4:00 to 7:00 P.M.**

The planning is done and the advertising is going out. Now, the rest of the work to prepare and serve another delicious meal continues. If you are able to help in any aspect of the dinner, please speak to the contacts below or Jerry Sutherland. Here is a list of dates and activities:

- Oct. 29, at 9:00am - Kitchen/Dining Room Clean-up: (Jerry Sutherland (325-2488 or 469-4311)).
- Nov. 3, at 9:00am - Preparation of coleslaw: Catherine De Angelis (469-2730).
- Nov. 4, at 9:00am - Preparation of potatoes & dining room set-up: Joan Ribando (469-4208).
- Nov. 5, at 3:30pm - Servers and other helpers arrive for last minute instructions & prayer: Karen Krawczyk (914-474-0640).
- Nov. 5, at 6:30pm - Dinner Clean-up: Karen Krawczyk.

The dessert will be carrot cake with icing. Please speak to Rosemary Eckard (469-6425) if you are able to bake. A church pan & recipe will be provided, if you supply the ingredients.

Kitchen volunteers are also needed the day of the dinner; please speak to Jerry Sutherland (469-4311). To reserve tickets for dining in or takeout, please speak to Catherine De Angelis (469-2730).

There will be a table for the Women's Council bake sale if anyone is bringing baked goods. Also, The Crafters will be selling items and the Deacons will have a Book sale.

As you can see by the many opportunities for your time & talents, the success of these dinners depends on your participation. We thank you for your continued support and hope you can be part of our November 5th Roast Beef Dinner!!!

Thank you!

...Jerry Sutherland

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### **Prison Partnership Program Forum**

The Hudson River Presbytery **Prison Partnership Program** is sponsoring a Forum to encourage all to reach out to the prison population with compassion and support. For many, the question is not why but how. Come learn what programs are already in place (you need not reinvent the wheel) and be inspired to create your own! Perspective will be shared by both Corrections Officers and Returning Citizens. Big Picture topics addressed will be Criminal Justice, Restorative Justice, Reentry Issues, Education, Rehabilitation, and Healing Communities. Nuts and Bolts topics will be discussed by congregants in our Presbytery currently running programs on Prison Correspondence, "Bars of Soap", Prison Visiting Programs, The New Jim Crow Book Group, and more. Join us on **November 12, 2016** at **Rye Presbyterian Church** from **9 am - 12 noon**. There is no charge. Please RSVP to [hans@hudrivpres.org](mailto:hans@hudrivpres.org) or just come!

## Looking Ahead

**November 3 – 9am Cole Slaw Prep and help for dinner**

**November 4 – 9am Potato prep and set up for dinner**

**November 5 – Roast Beef Dinner 4-7pm**

**November 6 – Communion and All Saints' Day worship service**

**November 10 – Bible Study 10am**

**November 10 – Stewardship training @6:30pm**

**November 13 – Congregational gathering conversation with Dr. Georgia Hooper-Peek at 1pm**

**November 14 – Tentative Food Pantry Truck Delivery 3pm**

**November 17 – Food Pantry Distribution**

**November 18 – Screening of Just Eat It @ the Green Onion**

**November 21– Greening of the church 9:30am (Music and Worship meeting to follow)**

**November 30 – Advent Lunch Bag Devotionals 12pm**

**Pastor Erin will be away on study leave from Nov 14-Nov 18. Please contact the church office or a session member if there is an emergency.**

If you have an article or announcement you would like to have in the next newsletter, please have it into the church office by November 28th.

Pastor: Erin Moore

Moderator of Deacons: Okey Barrett (845) 651-4707

Treasurer Alan Eckard

Assistant Treasurer Betty Ann Reilly

Secretary: Ruth Magyar

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If you are in need of pastoral care, please contact our pastor at the church office number (845-469-4877).