

The Good News Gazette

The First Presbyterian Church
94-96 Main Street Chester, NY 10918
February 2017

Friday, January 27th we screened the film, “Just Eat It” down at the Green Onion. It was a very well done documentary about food waste. Nearly 50% of all the food in America gets wasted – thrown away. While the majority of it is from household waste, there is a lot of overall waste throughout the system of our food industry. Food gets thrown out from grocery stores at alarming rates. In the film we saw a dumpster the size of a swimming pool filled with containers of humus that were thrown away and still had 3 months till their sell-by date. There wasn’t any recall or any reason that could be figured out why it was thrown out.

However, it’s not just waste from grocery stores, much of what is produced on farms is wasted as well. Thankfully, it is sometimes composted and thus adds nutrients back into the ground to produce new food, but not always. We saw how a celery farm wastes about a pound per square foot of produce because of the way the food is packaged. They tried to hire help to collect all the scraps left over in the field after cutting it down for packaging but it wasn’t worth the extra cost. We saw dumpsters on trucks filled with imperfect apples and peaches that are considered garbage because they had marks or blemishes or didn’t look pretty enough. The amount of waste is absolutely incredible. In fact, the amount of waste made it incredibly easy for a couple to quit grocery store shopping cold turkey for 6 months and pretty much survive off of food that would otherwise be thrown out. In that 6 month period they only spent \$200 on food and had some of the most incredible meals. At one point, they let friends come over and “shop” from their kitchen because they had too much food and didn’t want to have to throw out anything they had collected.

This couple had no idea how easy it was going to be to take on this challenge. They initially thought it would be a struggle. Their friends and family thought they would be lucky to find enough food for one meal a day, when in fact, the husband wound up gaining 10lbs in the 6 month period from the abundance of food.

But what does this mean for us? For those in our own country who are struggling with food security and those around the world who struggle with food security? There are many in developing countries that survive on less than \$2 a day, which does sometimes mean just one meal per day. They don’t have the opportunity to go dumpster diving or go to the local farmers markets and collect what would be thrown away. How is it that we’ve become such a culture of abundance we don’t realize the many who would love to just have food security every day?

Following the film, we discussed some of these issues and one woman asked, now that you’ve seen this film, have become more aware of the issues, how many of you will change your habits as a result? Only about half the crowd raised their hands. Others were realistic that even though they want to and will try, they’re not sure they will be able to as it would result in realigning their way of life, their routine. It would require them to rethink the way they purchase food, when they go out to eat, how they prep their food, always eating leftovers, etc... A big commitment no doubt. Much like following Christ. We realign our lives, it requires us to rethink everything – how we live, act, react, etc... Certainly, some days are easier than others, some days we bring the light of Christ to all we meet, some days we fail to live into Christ’s call. But we need to remember, this is a journey, we take it one step at a time, realigning our hearts and minds to God. Perhaps just like committing ourselves to wasting less food, just one step at time, doing what we can, then we too can make little changes become big changes. And perhaps both can be tied together. Realigning our hearts and minds to God each day can help make us more aware of not only what we have to be thankful for – the food we eat that nourishes us to go out and do God’s work – but also more aware of those who are without, reminding us not to be wasteful with what we have and perhaps even to share our abundance.

Pastor Erin

Installation Service

Now that Pastor Erin was voted to be moved from designated pastor to permanent pastor, another installation service is needed to mark the occasion and make it official! The service is scheduled for February 26th at 4pm. We would love to spread the news far and wide to our community of Chester to help us celebrate. Please help spread the word with anyone who might be interested in celebrating with us! We will try to get invitations made up and if anyone is crafty and would like to help with this please see Pastor Erin. Also, what is a Presbyterian celebration without food? Please consider making something to share!

Buildings and Grounds Update

We will be starting work on the chapel/gym on February 18th! We will be taking the Challenge to Change grant we received from presbytery and stretching it as far as we can to do some proper and much needed repairs and get the area all set to be functional again! We will be fixing the cracks in the walls, building some closet space and protections around the furnaces, fixing the ceiling, putting in some new windows, hoping to fix the pocket doors and get a handicap bathroom in the space. A group from NJ will be coming up to help with the labor graciously at no cost to the church, however, if you would like to join in on the project please let Pastor Erin or Gene Winters know. Also, it would be great to provide them with a hot meal for lunch to show our appreciation for all the work they are doing. If you are willing to help with this, please speak to Pastor Erin. We will keep you up to date on the progress!

Also, we need to finish cleaning out the space as best as possible. If you have an extra half hour or hour to spare during the week please consider stopping by to continue the clean out!

Training Opportunity

Officer Training for Ruling Elders and Deacons

Saturday, Feb 18, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm at First Presbyterian, Goshen (33 Park Place, Goshen, NY 10924)
8:30 refreshments and registration begins. This invitation is for all Ruling Elders and Deacons:

- those who are soon to be ordained and installed;
- those newly ordained and installed elders and deacons; and
- those who are continuing on Session/Council and the Board of Deacons, having been ordained and installed in years past and would appreciate a refresher course or a bit more knowledge on the Constitutional questions.

If you are currently serving or about to start serving (or even considering serving in the future) please consider attending this wonderful training event! Gene Winters attended an earlier one in January out at Holmes and has nothing but good things to say about it! It is a wonderful opportunity that we should take advantage of to become more equipped in serving our congregation and community.

Please let Pastor Erin know if you are planning to attend so she can supply you with a few reading materials to help prepare you for the meeting.

Leadership Development...HRU on March 11, 9:00am – 2:30pm

There will be three "majors" offered at Hudson River University: **stewardship and finance; Christian education; and healthy interaction in times of disagreement and conflict**. Each of these majors will have three 80 minute classes and participants can "major" in one area, taking all three classes, or can be a "liberal arts" student and take classes in two or all three major areas.

This university is open to all "students"... old and young... any church members, officers or friends from any of our HRP congregations! The best part is that tuition is FREE!!! There will be a cost for lunch but any and all instruction and materials will be at no charge.

Looking Ahead

- February 9 – Bible Study 10am**
- February 12 – Session meeting following worship**
- February 13 – Music and Worship meeting 1pm**
- February 15 – Presbyterian Foundation Small Church Seminar @ Scotchtown 6:30-8:30pm**
(light dinner provided at no cost)
- February 16 – Bible Study 10am**
- February 18 – Training in Goshen 9am-1pm**
Construction work beginning for the chapel/gym
- February 20 – Tentative date for food pantry truck 3pm**
- February 23 – Bible Study 10am**
Food Pantry Distribution Day
- February 26 – Pastor Erin’s Installation Service (for permanent position) 4pm**
- March 1 – Ash Wednesday Service 7pm**
- March 5 – Communion Service 10am**
- March 7 – Women’s Council 1pm**
- March 8 – Lunch Bag Devotionals 12pm**

If you have an article or announcement you would like to have in the next newsletter, please have it into the church office by February 22nd.

Pastor Erin will be away on Study Leave February 19th-20th. Please contact the church office or an elder if there is an emergency.

Pastor: Erin Moore

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

Treasurer Alan Eckard

Assistant Treasurer Betty Ann Reilly

Secretary: Ruth Magyar

Church Office: (845) 469-4877

E-mail: info@chespresny.com

Website: www.chespresny.com

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/chespresny

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