

# The Good News Gazette

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

April 2017

## Easter Reflection on John 20:1-18

Have you ever mistaken someone for someone else? Tapped them on the shoulder or shouted out to them in a crowd or just tried to say hello?

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade English class I had a teacher who would constantly mistook me with another student and another student with me. To be fair, her name was Emily she had dark hair, though it was longer than mine, and we were about the same height. Other than that we looked nothing alike.

It was so bad that sometimes she would yell at us when we wouldn't respond when she called us by the wrong name. We would sometimes get each other's papers or tests back. And heaven forbid we stood next to each other, it would throw her off completely.

But I think we've all done this on some level or another in our lives. There was one point I thought I saw a friend get off the school bus and ran up to say hi and walk in with her only to find it wasn't her at all but someone I had no idea who she was. There may even be times we've done double takes – where we are traveling or just moved somewhere new and we see someone who looks exactly like someone else we know. Only it can't possibly be them for we know they are about 4 hours away.

And this is what Mary does, only in the opposite way. She mistakes Jesus for the gardener. In her weeping perhaps she can't see clearly enough. Her eyes almost swollen shut. Perhaps all she sees is a blur of a man walking past and so she just blurts out her question hoping to find an answer. Certainly, she receives an answer she didn't expect. Jesus calls her by name and her tears of sorrow suddenly turn to tears of joy. For this one she thought was the gardener was in fact her Lord, her Risen Lord!

And what if we too, like Mary, have mistaken Jesus for a gardener, a garbage man, a stranger we don't recognize on the street. And what if, unlike Mary, we don't ask any questions, we don't offer any communication, conversation and we miss the moment of hearing Jesus speak our name? Do we miss encountering our Risen Lord?

When our expectations are for something else are we open to the idea that we are wrong? Are we open to hearing our Risen Lord call us by name? Or do we mistake him for someone else? Do we tell him, "I'm sorry you must be looking for someone else because I don't know you?"

This mistaken identity reminds me of Matthew 25:31-46 where Jesus tells a story about the least of these. Giving food to the hungry, water to the thirsty, visiting the prisoner, clothing the naked – whatever you do for the least of these you did to me.

But John, in a way, expands on this. It isn't just the least of these that are Jesus or a part of Jesus' family that we are to treat well and care for. It can be anyone, like a gardener. Our Risen Lord could be mistaken for any stranger among us. But when our eyes are too blurred to see, when our hearts are so torn, when we aren't willing or open to the idea of experiencing God in that moment, will we still experience the Risen Christ? Our Risen Lord could be walking among us but are we ready and willing to engage? Are we, like Mary, able to believe when we hear our name called out? Do we have enough faith to believe that the stranger walking among us in the garden could be our Risen Lord?

Do we treat that stranger as if this could be the case? Loving the stranger as Christ loved us? For who knows what miracle might await us if we are but willing to engage the unknown.

**Thank you to everyone who helped with the Roast Beef Dinner!**

**Deacons' Report**  
(It Is That Time Again)

A time for College and Military Personnel addresses. A box will be in the Library for donations. We need e.g. pencils, pens, candy, bars, etc. .Our Community Food Pantry served in February 56 families. We thank as always our Volunteers for all their help. Without their help, distribution would not run as smoothly. Kiwanis has kindly started a Birthday Box distribution for children under 6 and to 12 years of age. A Kiwanis representative distributes them. This is truly a Community Pantry.

**Buildings and Grounds**

Calling all spacklers: our buildings and grounds committee is hoping to plan a work day for spackling once the weather warms up a bit. Anyone who has any experience and would be willing to help, please contact Pastor Erin (erinmoore@chespresny.com, 469-4877). We have plenty to spackle to finish preparing the old gym/chapel area. Even if you can't spackle but are interested in helping to finish the project, here are a few other areas we could use help: fixing the pocket doors, painting, ceiling repair work, re-finishing the floors. Any and all help is greatly appreciated!

If you are interested, there are some pictures up on our facebook page ([www.facebook.com/chespresny](http://www.facebook.com/chespresny)) of the progress we are making on the old gym/chapel. Please feel free to take a look. We will continue to post updates as we go along, as well as information about our grand-opening when it's finally ready!

**Looking Ahead**

**April 2 – Deacon's meeting following worship**

**April 3 – Music and Worship meeting 1pm**

**April 5 – Lunch Bag Devotionals 12pm**

**Buildings and Grounds meeting 4pm**

**April 6 – Bible Study 10am**

**April 8 – HRP Green Healing Our Sacred Sites Lenten Journey in Peekskill 10am-12pm**

**April 9 – Palm Sunday**

**Session meeting following worship**

**April 11 – Women's Council meeting 1pm**

**April 12 – Lunch Bag Devotionals 12pm**

**April 13 – Bible Study 10am**

**Maundy Thursday Service 7pm**

**April 16 – Easter Sunday 7am SonRise Service and 10am Traditional Service**

**April 20 – Bible Study 10am**

**April 24 – Tentative Food Pantry Truck Delivery 3pm**

**April 27 – Bible Study 10am**

**Food Pantry Distribution 4-7pm**

**Save the Date: June 10<sup>th</sup> there will be a village wide garage sale. The church hopes to participate in some way. Session is meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> and hopes to have a plan to share after the meeting.**

If you have an article or announcement you would like to have in the next newsletter, please have it into the church office by April 20th.

Pastor: Erin Moore

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

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

