

The Good News Gazette

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

The Season of Easter

For Christians, unlike the rest of our society, Easter is not just one day but a 50-day period. For how can one day be enough to celebrate the great mystery of our faith? And while it can be argued that this celebration is done more than just the Easter season, it is the Easter season where it is most highlighted and celebrated. For 50 days, we celebrate and rehearse this new way of life we now have in our Risen Lord. This season begins at the sunset on the eve of Easter and ends on the Day of Pentecost (when we celebrate the birth of the Church and the gift of the Holy Spirit). It is called the “week of weeks” adapted from Jewish festivals and customs already in place. An excerpt from the *Companion to the Book of Common Worship* (Geneva Press, 2003, 117) puts it this way:

“For seven weeks, a week of Sundays, we acclaim the resurrection of Christ by the power of God. The period of seven weeks of jubilation can be traced back to its Jewish roots of the fifty days celebrated from the day after Passover to Shavuot (Feast of Weeks, Exodus 23:16). For Jews, the Feast of Weeks closed the season of harvest, which had been initiated by the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In a similar manner, early Christians observed a fifty-day period of celebration from Easter to the Day of Pentecost. To underscore the uninterrupted rejoicing of these fifty days, fasting and kneeling in prayer were forbidden at least as early as the end of the second century. On the Pentecost (“fiftieth”) day, not only was the fifty-day period concluded, but a festival with its own proper content was celebrated. The Jews observed a feast of covenant renewal and eventually commemorated the giving of the Law. Christians celebrated the gift of the Spirit as preparing the way for the day of the Lord. What Moses and the Law did for the Jewish community, the Holy Spirit now does for the community of Christ.”

Over these next few weeks, let us not just celebrate the season of Easter each Sunday, but every day. Let’s celebrate the new life springing up around us – the beautiful daffodils and tulips, the budding trees and the new leaves reaching out. Let’s celebrate the new cute chicks chirping around us, the new calves beginning to wander on their own, and even those baby ground hogs coming out to munch. But to do this, we have to be paying attention. We have to be observing the world around us and taking the time to enjoy it, to celebrate with it, to watch it grow around us. For seven weeks is a long time, certainly we will see changes as daffodils and tulips fade and make way for lilies and roses. Young birds, calves, and ground hogs will begin to grow into their more full-sized selves. Even the trees will dramatically change in seven weeks as their leaves reaching out become full. And maybe when we take the time to pay attention, we will realize our own growth as well. Our own growing and moving into living out this new life in Christ. We will realize the old parts of us we left behind, the parts of us and our past that have died and made way for the breath of the Spirit to fill us. We will realize the painful dormancy was needed to help us fully enter into this new life.

In this season of new life, let’s celebrate the journey of creation around us and ours, knowing it’s not always easy but it’s always worth it. Let’s celebrate the wonderful gift Christ gives us and creation this Easter season, the gift of new life!

Pastor Erin

Deacons’ Corner

The Deacons are sending care packages to local persons in the military. If you would like to help, come to the next Deacons meeting May 7 and find out what is needed for the boxes. We also hope to have a list posted on the bulletin board. We can make it a group effort in filling the boxes and have a fun gathering!

Buildings and Grounds

Calling all spacklers: our buildings and grounds committee is hoping to plan a work day for spackling. 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-finish 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) 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!

Thank you to everyone who helped with our church work day!

For those who missed the work day or who won't be able to join us at our next one, there is plenty to help with if you have some time. Stop by for an hour or so on your own time to help with any of the yard work listed below. Or plan with another member or two when a few of you might be able to get together to help.

Front of the building:

- Trim cherry trees and weed underneath
- Weed by church sign
- Cut any new growth coming out of the base of the dogwood tree
- Trim back hedges along the front of the sanctuary
- Weed by the front steps of the CE building

Back of the building:

- Trim back the larger bushes
- Weed the memorial garden
- Cut down any saplings in the memorial garden
- Replace paver blocks
- Remove dead bushes and any branches that have fallen
- Trim cherry tree
- Clean out the playground area

Of course, if you see anything else that might have been overlooked, please feel free to either let Buildings and Grounds know or take on the project yourself. Thanks again for all of your help to get our yard looking great!

Looking Ahead

May 1 - Music and Worship meeting 1pm

May 3 – Chicken BBQ planning meeting 6:30pm

May 6 – Work crew for gym/chapel

Weather permitting, church work day

May 7 – Communion Service

Deacons meeting following worship

Session meeting following worship

May 9 – Women's Council meeting 1pm

May 21 – Rev. Glenn Hendrickson will be leading worship

May 22 – Tentative Food Pantry Truck Delivery 3pm

May 23 – Presbytery meeting at First Presbyterian church of Goshen 9:30am

May 25 – Food Pantry Distribution 4-7pm

May 27 – Kiwanis 5k – help with breakfast

Save the Date: June 10th there will be a village-wide garage sale.

Pastor Erin will be away on vacation May 8th-12th, May 17th-21st, and away on study leave May 22nd-25th. If there is a pastoral emergency during this time please contact a session member or the church office.

If you have an article or announcement you would like to have in the next newsletter, please have it into the church office by May 15th.

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).