

The Good News Gazette

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

October 2017

On October 31, 1517 Martin Luther, a German (Catholic) Monk, grew tired and angry of Pope Leo X's new round of indulgences that went out to help build St. Peter's Basilica. Luther nailed his 95 Theses on the University of Wittenberg's Chapel door. His theses laid out critiques of the indulgences, of good works that popes could grant to people to cancel out penance for sins. Luther claimed these corrupted people's faith. He also sent a copy to the Archbishop Albert Albrecht of Mainz urging for an end to the sale of indulgences.

The Catholic Church wanted no part of these 95 Theses or to shut down the sale of indulgences. They asked him to recant, he refused unless they could find scripture to prove him wrong. This battle went back and forth for a bit until 1520 the pope had enough after his authority was called into question and threatened Luther with excommunication. Luther publicly burned the letter in defiance and was officially excommunicated.

This sparked the Protestant Reformation and where our roots come from as Protestants, Presbyterians, today. While we don't believe in everything Luther pushed for and wrote in his theology – we aren't Lutherans, it is because of Luther that others stood up against the church. Reformers like Huldrych Zwingli who followed Luther just a few years later with a reformation in Switzerland. Making a pathway for John Calvin to follow along with John Knox in Scotland– two major reformers that we claim helped form Presbyterianism.

While Luther never intended for a new denomination or for a break away from the Catholic church, he hoped and desired most for a reform of the Catholic church, but 500 years later we find ourselves celebrating his bold risk of pushing for reform. The Reformation's motto - *Ecclesia Reformata, Semper Reformanda* – Reformed and always to be reforming. They understood how easily both a church and the Church could become corrupt, this is the very reason they left the Catholic Church. It was, and still is, important to continually take an inward look at the Church and determine if it is being as faithful as it can be in this time and place. This motto is one we as Reformers are still called to live into today. So the end of October, the 29th, we will be celebrating the great Protestant Reformation and this motto of reformed and always to be reforming. Celebrating the great reformers who helped get us to this point today and the reformers and innovators of our day continuing to push the Church to remain faithful to its calling.

Pastor Erin

Yard Sale/Chicken BBQ

Thank you to everyone who helped to make this event such a success. The combined total for both the yard sale and the chicken BBQ was about \$1,700 income. We couldn't have done it without such wonderful volunteers! Anything left over from the yard sale was boxed up and we hope to have it picked up by an organization that can use it. Currently, the VVA doesn't pick up from churches anymore. If you know of any great organizations that would pick up from the church, please let us know.

Presbytery Info and Event Training

There are many exciting changes happening in our presbytery:

Last December the Presbytery voted to go back to the council system of governing after trying a new form of governing (JETHRO) for a number of years. This was after it was discovered the new form of governing was never followed through and there was much confusion and little oversight. A council was voted on and approved in January and strives to not fall into the same old role the previous council had, but rather acknowledges a new form of council must be created. The council consists of the General Presbyter as moderator, the Stated Clerk (not a voting member), a representative from Budget and Finance, Grants Committee, and Personnel Committee, the immediate past presbytery moderator, current moderator, and moderator elect as well as 4 at large members. For the past year, Pastor Erin has served on council to help re-frame it and figure out the best way forward. After a year many things have been updated and set in place. We are starting to live into the model with forming Healthy Vital Communities of Faith and Leadership Empowerment teams as well as new partnerships. More information about the new structure can be found on the bulletin board and Pastor Erin can try to answer any clarifying questions.

At the September Presbytery meeting, a search committee for a new General Presbyter was voted and approved. Pastor Erin will now be serving on this committee (as well as co-chair of COM) and will start working with the rest of the 7 member committee October to write a Ministry Information Form (MIF) and begin the search process for our next presbytery leader. The hope is to have the new GP called by the summer of 2018. As of January 1st she will no longer be serving on council to fulfill these new roles.

Hudson River University – Presbytery Training

October 28th 9am-3pm *****Free training event*****

There will be 3 classes in each major (minus the clerk training) you can pick one major or jump around to different classes (or just do one class).

Majors offered: Stewardship (Planned giving, A&B tracks of presbytery stewardship training)

Christian Education (Children, youth, and adults)

Officer Training (Elder and Deacon training – same workshop that Gavin offered last spring)

Clerk of Session Training (101/beginners and advanced)

Advocacy (How to do it in local congregations, how to deal with tough issues, how can your congregation to advocacy with other congregations in Hudson River)

More information will be provided and posted on the bulletin board for times each class will be offered.

Bible Study

We are currently working through the book of Romans. We meet Mondays at 10am downtown at 19 Main Street. If you'd like to join us, please contact Pastor Erin and she will get you caught up!

Book Club

Pastor Erin would like to know if anyone would be interested in a book club (possibly an evening). Books she is considering for the book club: Jesus for President (Shane Claiborne and Chris Haw), The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness (Michelle Alexander), If the Church Were Christian: Rediscovering the Values of Jesus (Philip Gulley), Green Like God: Unlocking the Divine Plan for Our Planet (Jonathan Merritt), Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now (Walter Brueggemann), America and Its Guns: A Theological Exposé (James E. Atwood). Please see the bulletin board to sign up.

Looking Ahead

- October 1 – Deacons meeting following worship**
- October 2 – Bible Study 10 am (19 Main St)**
Music and Worship meeting 1pm
- October 9 – Bible Study 10 am (19 Main St)**
- October 15 – Session meeting following worship**
- October 16 – Bible Study 10 am (19 Main St)**
- October 17 – Women’s Council meeting 1pm**
- October 22 – Women’s Council leading worship – Second Offering for CWS Blankets**
Monroe Crop Hunger Walk – 2pm
- October 23 – Bible Study 10 am (19 Main St)**
Food Pantry Truck
- October 26 – Food Pantry Distribution 4-7pm**
- October 28 – HRU (Presbytery training) 9am – 3pm at Stony Point**
- October 29 – Reformation Sunday – Celebrate the 500 year anniversary of the Reformation!**
- October 30 – Bible Study 10 am (19 Main St)**

Pastor Erin will be away Friday, October 6-October 8th for vacation. If there is an emergency, please contact one of the elders.

If you have an article or announcement you would like to have in the next newsletter, please have it into the church office by October 23rd.

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).