



June 9<sup>th</sup> marks Pentecost Sunday. This is also usually referred to as the birth of the church and should really be considered an important church holiday much like Christmas and Easter. Often, however, it is overlooked. But, this is the moment that Jesus told his faithful disciples to wait for, the coming of the Holy Spirit, this rush of the mighty wind, these tongues of fire falling upon them. It was an exciting day, indeed, with people speaking in tongues, and all being able to understand. Many turned to Jesus that day and became followers, as many as 3000 we are told after Peter preaches the good news.

It marked something good and new and unimaginable. It also pushed the disciples along their journey. For weeks they'd been hanging out in Jerusalem, as Jesus told them to, to await the Holy Spirit. Some still in the upper room, some moving about, though perhaps still cautiously. Yet, once the Spirit comes, they are called to be on the move, begin this journey to be Christ's witness's to the ends of the age, to proclaim the good news, teach, baptize, welcome, and obey Christ's commands.

And for some, this new thing was scary, it was different, it challenged what they always thought they knew, it shattered not just beliefs but boundaries as God continued to do the unimaginable, the impossible. We've been seeing this the past few weeks in our Acts readings. God converted Saul (Paul) who was heavily persecuting the follower of Jesus, God raised Tabitha a faithful disciple and care-giver of widows to life to continue on in such holy work, and God welcomed the Gentiles into the fold of God, giving even these once considered unclean outsiders the gift of the Spirit.

So it makes me wonder, what is God doing in our world, even in our own midst, today that is unimaginable, impossible? What new thing is God calling us to, if we like Saul (Paul), like Peter listen for the Word of God, if we lean into the unimaginable, the impossible? For we should always remember, for God, nothing is impossible.

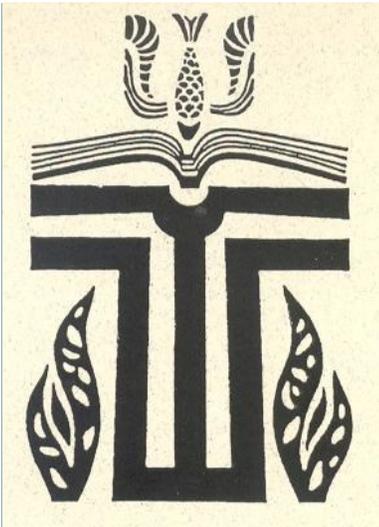
Pastor Erin

PS: As a special Pentecost treat, we are excited to be welcoming the Covenant Brass Quintet back with us on June 9<sup>th</sup> to help us celebrate the opening of our community room. We've hosted this group twice before with wonderful reviews by all who came out. The concert will begin at 3pm in the new community room with a light meal to follow. Please join us in an afternoon of great music, fellowship, and a wonderful celebration!



## Good News Gazette

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



### Tour de Goshen!

Mark your calendars! August 18<sup>th</sup> we will be participating in the Tour de Goshen again. We hope to host a pasta dinner the night before along with the water station down at the Erie Train Station. More information will follow. If you are interested in helping to organize the dinner, the water station, or join Pastor in her ride, please see Pastor Erin.

## DEACONS CORNER

Getting ready for the Chicken BBQ? We are having a book sale table set up on the day, also. Anyone wanting to donate books (both hard and soft cover) or help in any way with this fundraiser, please contact one of the Deacons. Date of Chicken BBQ is June 8<sup>th</sup>, please join us and enjoy the day!

### Chicken BBQ June 8th

I know, you are thinking it can't possibly be BBQ time, but it is! The Village Wide Yard Sale is Saturday June 8<sup>th</sup>, so once again we will be selling our chickens for take-out only. \$6 per half (pre-orders need to be in by June 2). Sides of coleslaw and macaroni salad \$3 container. Please see sign-up sheets in the library for much needed help (note: coleslaw prep will be Thursday, June 6, at 9am).

### NEW SOLAR OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYONE

Thanks to the support of HRPGreen and the Budget, Finance and Property Committee of the Hudson River Presbytery, community solar through Solarize Our Congregation allows **Hudson River Presbytery churches and their congregants to lock in savings of about ten percent on their electric bills for up to 20 years with no upfront cost** while supporting a Care for Creation mission.

Community solar is a new paradigm that that enables electricity customers to receive the benefits of solar energy without installing panels on their own property. Subscribers enroll in a community solar project and save ten percent on the utility bill credits they receive. New York State has provided special incentives to solar developers to encourage them to build community solar projects to accelerate the transition to clean energy while increasing access to its benefits. Religious institutions are eligible to participate, unlike some other organizations and businesses.

Six churches and about twenty members of HRP congregations installed solar on their own property through last year's version of Solarize Our Congregation - many more wanted to but discovered that installing solar was not cost effective for them. Community solar eliminates that hurdle as **there is no cost to participate and savings are guaranteed. In addition, churches will receive a \$200 donation when they enroll and will receive a \$150 donation when a member of their congregation enrolls.** Please see Pastor Erin for more information in how to enroll in this great program!

### Help needed with being a Polling Place

Last year, Session decided to host a Polling Place in Chester as the Board of Elections was in need of a new space. We hosted both the primaries and the general election with the help of a few church members. This year, we need a few new volunteers to help coordinate this effort. If you are interested or willing to help with this please see Pastor Erin.

## A message from our Capital Campaign Committee

Imagine the excitement of those first faithful Presbyterians in Chester when in August of 1798 their first building was completed, even if not quite ready for worship. While they did exhaust their expenses before it was fully finished, they also did not let that stop them from starting to worship in this wonderful new space. Just a few months later they would call their first pastor Rev. Simeon R. Jones and begin this grand new adventure together formally establishing the first church in Chester; Faithfully following God's call.

Remaining so faithful that within 30 years they had out-grown the size of their church and needed a new building! On Christmas Day 1829, what must have been a very joyful celebration, the new building was dedicated. Yet, this building didn't even last the 30 year mark before another building project came underway, again for more space. In 1854, the sanctuary we know and love today was completed and dedicated on January 4 with much excitement. Perhaps, even more with the expansion of the chapel space in 1884. Finally, they had a space large enough to welcome all who came through their doors. A space that woke sleeping parishioners (and neighbors) with its new bell as well as sound the alarm for fire calls. A space that cared for the community around them.

Perhaps some of you understand this excitement, for there must have been a similar excitement and joy in 1967 when the brand new Christian Education wing was built. A space for education, offices, studies, and meetings. A space to expand the ministry of the First Presbyterian Church of Chester and provide for growing needs in the community.

Our congregation's history has seen a lot of changes, from building to building to new structures and additions. Now, 50 years after our last building project, perhaps it is again time to consider changes that need to be made to help us preserve our past as well as prepare for our future.

In the book of Isaiah, God tells the prophet, "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" As faithful believers, we have to trust that God continues to do new things around us and calls us into them as well. Trusting that God can and will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. For our church ancestors truly believed and followed. The best way to honor and preserve the past of those faithful saints is to prepare for our future, for the new things God continues to do both here in Chester and throughout God's created world.

As you may know, our regular Stewardship Campaign provides us with funds for an annual budget that covers our daily operations (utilities, insurance, etc.), worship and education needs (music and bulletins), and staff salaries. In this annual budget there is little room for emergencies and virtually none for upgrades. Yet, in the past few years we replaced our heating system in the sanctuary, added air-conditioning, replaced the roof on the manse, replaced part of the roof of the barn, etc...

## New Flags

We thank Ron Brooks in his work to replace our yellowed and old flags in the sanctuary. Here are a few words Ron has to share: "I am pleased to present these flags (American and Christian) to the congregation as replacements to stand in the sanctuary. I noticed 'Old Glory' was yellowing, her broad stripes were no longer gleaming nor were her stars so bright. After considering cleaning, I challenged myself to go for it and replace. My family encouraged me with donations and then neighbors who are families of Veterans joined me. I was moved by their support." Donations came from Nicole Giuliano & family, Fran Doellinger, The Martino family, the Brophy family, and the Brooks family.



31 May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works— 32 who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke. 33 I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. 34 May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the Lord.

35 Bless the Lord, O my soul. Praise the Lord!

-Psalm 104: 31-35

For the past year, the Session has examined the need for a capital campaign. The monies from such a campaign would allow us to upgrade our facility on a non-emergency basis and deal with maintenance issues that have been building up for several years. The Session has identified several areas of need for CPC. The list of potential projects is long - some of you have given suggestions that we've included as well. Some of the projects identified include:

- Make our buildings more energy efficient to both save funds as well as be better stewards towards taking care of God's good creation.
- Make our buildings more handicap accessible. We want to be able to welcome everyone who comes through our doors. Right now, we aren't always able to do that but with this project we hope to be able to provide better hospitality to all who walk, crawl, or roll through our doors.
- Upgrades to the flooring and lighting in our sanctuary.
- Improvements to our parking lot and church sign to better serve our members and welcome visitors to our church.
- Upgrades to the heating system in the CE building. This is both to heat more efficiently as well as plan for the future when our aging, expensive boiler will need to be replaced.
- Residing the sanctuary and community space (old chapel space) as well as clean up our curbside appeal. We understand many in the area do not think we are still open given our outward appearance. We hope to provide updates that will help anyone passing by to know we are still alive and well.

Overall, between our needs and our dreams, the Capital Campaign will be \$200,000, which for some may feel very overwhelming. However, like we stated, that includes both needs and dreams. This year we are going to start with what Buildings and Grounds recommends as top priorities. Some of these top priorities include ways to help us save better in the future, for example, by adding new insulation to all of our buildings. The total we trust we can raise in our first year is \$20,000.

We know that we can't do this alone and have hope for community involvement, so we invite you to an information session after worship on June 9th. During this meeting, we can discuss more about the projects, priorities, and hopes to achieve our goal.

Yours in Christ,

Capital Campaign Committee

## June Second Offering

Our second offering for June 9<sup>th</sup> will be our Pentecost Offering. A gift to the Pentecost Offering helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people, and also address the needs of at-risk children. 40% of the Pentecost offering is retained by individual congregations to make an impact in the lives of young people within their own community. The remaining 60% is used to support ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency:

- Young Adult Volunteers
- Ministries for Youth
- Children-at-Risk

## LOOKING AHEAD

June 2 – Deacon’s meeting following worship

June 3 – Bible Study at 10 Main St. 10 am;  
Music and Worship meeting 1pm

June 6 – Coleslaw prep 9am

June 7 – Set-up for Chicken BBQ (time TBD, see James Peterson)

June 8 – Chicken BBQ (helpers come between 7-10am);  
Yard Sale table set up (7:30am)

June 9 – Pentecost! Wear Red!  
Covenant Brass Quintet Concert 3pm

June 10 - Bible Study at 10 Main St. 10 am

June 17 - Bible Study at 10 Main St. 10 am

June 18 – Women’s Council 1pm

June 24 – Bible Study at 10 Main St. 10 am;  
Food Pantry Truck time TBD

June 27 – Food Pantry Distribution

June 28-July 5 – Pastor Erin will be away on vacation if there is a pastoral 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 June 24<sup>th</sup>.*

Remember to wear  
**RED** on Pentecost  
Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>!  
And join us for a  
special celebration  
during coffee hour as  
we celebrate the  
birth of the Church  
in the world!

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