



I don't know about you, but it seems like especially this time of year my mind always has a million things going through it. As a pastor between Advent, Christmas, Epiphany and the short break between Lent and Easter, there's so much to do and plan and think about. And not just with the church but with life, too!

There is just so much to think about. Perhaps you've experienced this from time to time as well, your mind racing, this unceasing of thinking. It's easy to just get lost in our thoughts and let them take over, take control, but as theologian Henri Nouwen frames it, our unceasing thinking can be turned into unceasing prayer. If our minds are going to wander in unceasing thinking anyway, we might as well turn it into something more productive, don't you think?

So whenever you feel yourself slipping into over thinking or over analyzing a situation, where you are worried or concerned and can't get it off your mind, turn it over to God in prayer. If you can't stop thinking about your health concerns, turn them into prayers to God. If you can't stop thinking about your job search or family situation, turn them into prayers to God.

God already knows you are stressed or anxious, worried, or over analyzing. God knows the thoughts of your mind and heart, but turning them into prayer turns them over to the one who is the source of all love, of all life. It gives us some freedom to let go and trust that God is working through them. It allows us to enter into a continued dialogue with God rather than an inner monologue with ourselves. It reminds us we aren't as alone in the situation as we might feel. Perhaps, it gives us strength to make it through another day.

Brother Lawrence, a Carmelite Monk in Paris in the 17<sup>th</sup> c. strived to do this as much as possible. But not just turning his thoughts into prayers but even the actual tasks he did daily. While washing dishes he'd offer up prayers to God, whether thanking God for another good meal shared, thanking God for the day and the ability to work, or praying for continued strength to work again tomorrow, Brother Lawrence tried to do everything to the rhythm of prayer.

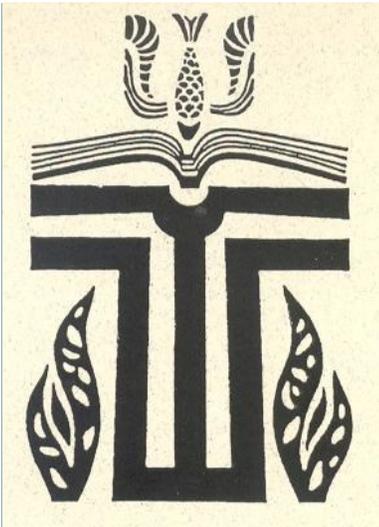
As we continue into this new year, may we like Nouwen and Brother Lawrence, learn to offer our thoughts and actions as prayers up to God, to continue a conversation, a dialogue with the one who truly is the source of all love, all life. May these prayers transform us and the world around us. Amen.

Rev. Erin Moore



### **Good News Gazette**

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



### **Lunch Bag**

### **Devotionals**

Beginning March 4, every Wednesday in Lent we will gather for Lenten Lunch Bag Devotionals at 12pm.

Join us for a time of devotion and fellowship with a bagged lunch.

March 4

March 11

March 18

March 25

April 1

April 8

## **Deacons**

Welcome back to Helen Braidotti into active service as Deacon! Other Deacons and their duties are as follows: James Peterson: Moderator and Treasurer, Helen Braidotti: assistant moderator and assisting with home communion, Jean Barrett: secretary, Vanessa Magyar: creative thoughtfulness and thank you notes (assisting Joan Van Der Meulen with the thank you notes), Edna Babcock: newsletter and assisting with home communion, Joanne Brooks: care and share and follow-up with members who haven't attended church for a few weeks to make sure they are okay and to let them know we are thinking of them. A thank you to all the help the community has given us with the food pantry. It's so good to see your very welcome service now and hope and pray for your continued support. Thanks always to Pastor Erin for being at our meetings to guide us.

## **What is Per Capita?**

Per Capita is a fundamental way in which all of the over 9,000 congregations and mid councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are connected and advance the work of the wider church. Annually, churches pay "per capita," an apportionment based on their membership, which provides general support for the Hudson River Presbytery, the Synod of the Northeast, and the General Assembly. Through per capita giving, the church unites in common mission in the world; mission that one congregation on its own – or even one hundred – would be unable to achieve on its own. For 2019, the total per capita apportionment is \$39.00 per member. Approximately 66% goes to the Hudson River Presbytery, 12% goes to the Synod of the Northeast, and 22% goes to the General Assembly.

## **What does Per Capita Giving Support in Hudson River Presbytery?**

Per Capita giving provides about 60% of all staffing costs for the presbytery, including staff salaries and benefits for the General Presbyter, the Stated Clerk, the Finance Manager, the Office Manager, and the Journal Clerk. It provides financial resources for rent and utilities and non-staff operating expenses for our Presbytery Office.

Per Capita provides complete financial resources for the working expenses of the Faith and Order Committee, the Personnel Committee, and the Committee on Representation and Nominations, the Presbytery's Moderator, the Investigatory Committee, and the Training of the General Assembly and Synod Commissioners as well as expenses related to Presbytery Meetings. It further provides financial resources for the workings of the Committee on Ministry and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, which includes work with Commissioned Ruling Elders.

## Crafters Corner

We are hoping to start crafting come February! We are looking at either Wednesday morning or Thursday afternoon. Please see the sign up sheet in the library and look for an announcement in the bulletin or on our Facebook page for more details to come. If you would like to craft with us but aren't able to make it to church, please let us know either by phone or email. We are also open to meeting at someone's house as well. Any and all are welcome to join, no skill level is needed!

## HELP NEEDED ASAP

We are in need of someone to take over bill paying and overseeing the bank accounts only for a treasurer/overseer position. The income side of things is handled and the person to take over bill-pay and bank account oversight will not be responsible for income recording. Please see a Session member if you or someone you know is interested. Need this help ASAP.

## Possible Lenten Evening Prayer

There is a possibility for Lenten Evening Prayer similar to last year. Please see Pastor Erin or sign up in the library if you are interested.

## LOOKING AHEAD

**February 2 – Annual Meeting following worship**

**February 3 – Bible Study 10am; tentative Music and Worship meeting 1pm**

**February 9 – Joint Session and Deacons Meeting following worship**

**February 10 – Bible Study 10am at 19 Main St.**

**February 17 – Bible Study 10am at 19 Main St.**

**February 18 – Women's Council Meeting 1pm**

**February 24 - Bible Study 10am at 19 Main St.**

**Food Pantry Truck 3pm**

**February 25 – Tentative Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper**

**February 26 – Ash Wednesday Service 7pm**

**February 27 – Food Pantry Distribution 4-7pm**

**February 29 – Women's Council Tea**

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 19th .

## February Second Offering

Our second offering for Sunday, February 16th will be for Apportionment. Apportionment (Per Capita) this year is \$39 per member. Please consider covering at least your portion, if not a little extra. It would be a great help to the church!

### Ruling Elders:

Vicki Braidotti

Ron Brooks

Ruth Magyar

Jerry Sutherland

Matt Van Der Meulen

Clerk of Session

Gene Winters

### Deacons:

Edna Babcock

Jean Barrett-

Helen Braidotti

Joanne Brooks

Vanessa Magyar

James Peterson—

Moderator & treasurer

Church Office:

(845) 469-4877

E-mail:

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Website:

www.chespresny.com

Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/  
chespresny

## Fundraising Ideas/Plans

We have what might be some high aspirations for fundraising this year, but we are hopeful and excited by new possibilities! We've had a brain-storming session both sharing ideas as well as planning what might work best. You can see below, we've tried to find some sort of idea for every month. There will be a print out of this list in the library, please indicate if you would be willing to help plan any specific event (or add your own idea to the list).

February – Women's Council Leap Year Tea on the 29<sup>th</sup>

March – Tentative scheduled Roast Beef Dinner for the 21<sup>st</sup>

April – (skip)

May – “Wing Fling” at one of the local breweries (would need someone to help with wings); Kiwanis Road Race

June – Chicken BBQ

July – Possible Pig Roast at one of the local breweries

August – Pasta Dinner the night before the Tour de Goshen; and possibly an ice cream social

September – Craft Sale and Silent Auction

October – Partner with the Cemetery Committee and Historical Society to do a Cemetery Tour (Historical/Halloween themed); possibly pasta dinner Columbus Day weekend

November – Tentative Roast Beef Dinner

December – Christmas House Tour

Other ideas that have been shared:

Jigsaw puzzle competition

Rummage Sale

Chili cook-off

Some sort of create your own herb garden

Pictures with Santa

Garden Tour

Diner fundraiser (would just need someone to go talk with the diner and set up a date)

Homemade soup (pick-up only)

The Ultimate Discount Card

## Possible Outreach Programs

Monthly Church Dinners

– Free dinners to the public, if we can get a grant from presbytery would folks be willing to help with an easy meal – soup and salad, pasta, chili, etc...?

Storytime – Once a week or once a month offer story time and snacks to pre-schoolers.

Book-swap event

Collecting/  
Packing School Supplies