



At the beginning of October a number of us met with Michelle Snyder to go over our church assessment (Holy Cow!). We gathered outside in the sun, as it was warmer than inside, and we listened and conversed. We learned a bit about our congregation through this assessment with how we compare to other churches similar in size across the county (and across denominations). For some, what we thought about the church was confirmed, for others, it opened their eyes a little wider.

We learned that we are a very generous congregation. Comparably, many churches have a giving level of about 2%. Holy Cow assesses that 3.5-4% is ideal, we are over 4% in our giving! And reflecting on this, I believe it shows in more than just how we share our financial resources but also how we share our time and talents (something perhaps the assessment lacked was how involved members are in the life of the congregation). Many of our members give so much time to the church, whether through the food pantry, keeping up with our finances, all of our buildings and grounds projects or the church dinners and fundraisers. With this, many share their talents, their skills – mathematical skills, repair skills, creative thinking or just creative skills in general (all love the women’s council valentines even if not everyone enjoys making them!).

We learned so many churches in our presbytery are going through similar struggles. While they might not look exactly the same as ours, many are struggling with figuring out what’s next, financial situations, and connecting with the larger community. However, we also remembered things we used to do in the past that perhaps we might start again post COVID. For example, a thank you service for all the first responders. We learned, in some ways, we are in a better position than most for energy and growth. Of course, we still have to tap into this but the fact that we are in the “right” quadrant for this when many others aren’t, means we are doing okay as a congregation.

We also learned something about what it means to be “right-sized.” Michelle explained that many times churches try to look to the past with the 100 kids in Sunday School and pews filled with families that we often do things the way we’ve always done them. Only, with fewer people it often tends to be much more work, and, at times, can lead to much more disappointment. She encouraged us to determine what “right” size looks like for us, to live in to who we are right now – not who we once were, and celebrate our achievements and accomplishments. Michelle also asked us to reflect on what it means for us to be a church in this community (rather than a group like rotary, Kiwanis, or other community organization that does good work). What does it mean to bear witness to Jesus Christ to our neighbors here and now? What makes us different as a church compared to these other groups and how do we reflect the image of Christ in all that we do?

These are important questions to reflect on, not just now, but always. They are questions that as we move forward in further conversation and discernment from the assessment that we will keep coming back to again and again. How do we share the love of God in the here and now, in these ever changing times? How do we love our neighbors? How do we bear witness, be witnesses, to our Lord Jesus Christ? How do we share the Good News?

So I ask you to take some time to reflect on these questions. What does this mean for you personally and what does it mean for us corporately as a congregation (as the body of Christ in this community)?

“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love.” –Ephesians 4:1-2



Good News Gazette

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



Second Offering

Our Second Offering will be collected November 22nd for THR People 4 People. This funding remains local (Orange County and other surrounding counties) to help those who are struggling pay for things like utilities, rent, etc...

Nominating Committee Time:

We will have spots to fill on Session and possibly Deacons. A nominating committee will be formed shortly, but in the meantime please prayerfully consider how you might be willing to serve our congregation/community.

Yard Sale

A HUGE thank you to all who helped make the yard sale such a success! We were able to raise over \$1000! We certainly couldn't have done it without the collected effort. Thank you to all who helped collect items, who helped with set-up and clean up, and for those who helped work the sale.

November Pasta Dinner

We will be holding a Ziti Take-out Dinner Nov 7th from 4-6pm. Prep and cooking will begin around 1pm (tentative to change). Packaging will begin at 3:30pm to be ready for pick-up. Please let Pastor Erin know if you are able/willing to help. There will be a sign up sheet circulating. Thank you.

Also, we are asking, if able, to please pay in advance. This can be done by mailing a check to the church or online: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/124139002097>

Please help spread the word and sell some meals.

Good Clothes Collection

As you may know, our clothing bin has been removed due to the pandemic and we are unsure when/if we will get it back. However, Betty Ann Reilly has set up an account with a local consignment shop to sell used/good clothes and we get a portion of the sale (if they sell). We will work on setting up a place for drop off, but please be in touch with Betty Ann about what clothes the consignment shop is accepting (if they have too much of something, for example boys clothes, they will not accept more until what they have sells).

Possible Book Study

We will be starting a book study using the book, "A New Kind of Christianity: 10 questions that are transforming the faith" by Brian McLaren. We are looking at a Tuesday or Wednesday evening and to start either within the next month or wait until January.

Please contact Pastor Erin if you are interested so a date/time/place can be determined. A book can be provided.

erinmoore@chespresny.com or 469-4877)

Christmas Bizarre

Saturday, December 5th, we hope to hold a bit of holiday fun! The plan is to sell Christmas cookies by the pound, have a small craft fair, provide some live or recorded music, do some socially distanced pictures with Santa (paint a figure/cut out from plywood), etc... If you are willing to help in any way please see Pastor Erin. We will need help with baking cookies (can start now and freeze), packaging and selling cookies day of, the check-out table for the craft fair, possibly help with pictures. Also, please let Pastor Erin know if you have any other ideas to add to this day of holiday cheer!

Recycling, currently collecting:

-Vitamin and supplement packaging, Personal care and foot care packaging, and throat and nasal care packaging (blister packs, tubes, bottles, caps, lids, cans, boxes) and Infant formula and child nutrition packaging (tubs, bottles, caps, lids, cans, boxes)

-Any old cell phone cases or Popsocket brand products

—disposable razors and its packaging

—empty writing instruments (pens, markers, etc...), glue sticks, watercolor dispensers, paint sets, and flexible packaging.

— old cell phones, tablets, laptops, and inkjet cartridges (from HP and Cannon only, no toner cartridges). However, it is recommended that all personal information be cleaned from the devices before they are sent in.

Crop Walk

Many thanks to Jean and Okey for participating in the CROP Walk. If you meant to make a donation and forgot, please see Okey or Jean or you can donate online: <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/monroeny>

If you'd like to donate please make checks payable to CWS/CROP

Looking Ahead...

November 1 – All Saints Day Service (and communion); Deacons meeting following worship

November 2 – Bible Study in the community room 10am

November 4 – B&G meeting 6:30pm (community room)

November 7 – Ziti Take-out Dinner

November 8 – 10am Worship Service – possible meeting for crafts following the service

November 9 – Bible Study 10 am (Community Room)

November 15 – 10am Worship Service

November 16 – Bible Study 10 am (community room); Food Pantry Truck

November 19 – Food Pantry Distribution 4-7pm

November 22 – Christ the King Sunday (10am worship)

November 23 – Tentative Bible Study 10 am (community room)

November 29 – First Sunday of Advent

November 11-15 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 November 19th.

As a reminder, our services are posted to our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/chespresny/ and our YouTube page: [https://](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrLgI6VOe9lbmcfB4dRHGfA)

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Bottles and Cans

Do you just throw away your bottles and cans? Do you not bother redeeming them? We can help! Or, rather, you can help us!! Bring your bottles and cans for us to redeem and help support our mission and ministry in the community! They can be dropped off at anytime by the side entrance to the sanctuary or by the barn door.

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

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