



Sitting here determining this news letter article on Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> and I can't help but realize the significance of this date. Six years ago today we spent our first Sunday together. It was my first official day of being your new pastor. It's hard to believe it's been six years already. At times it feels like I just started and, well, with this year it feels like another 10 could be added on to that number!

We have been through a lot together, more than any of us could have ever imagined, especially this year through a pandemic! One that no one knew how to manage, no one was prepared for, and, certainly, one they didn't prepare me for in seminary (or any schooling). Yet, somehow we've managed to survive, to make it work, for better or for worse we've continued to worship our great God. This God who constantly reminds us just how far beyond our understanding God truly is... beyond our total or true comprehension. This holy mystery. This One who is able to make a way when there is no way.

For if we are willing to admit, yes, we've survived this time (so far, anyway), but it hasn't always been easy. We missed our family, church family, and friends. We lost loved ones and weren't able to fully mourn as a community. We feared for our lives and the lives of those we lost. We lost our jobs or secure income, we searched for new jobs or learned to work from home (some while juggling helping children with school). We had to figure out new ways of doing life and welcome in a new normal (when we'd rather just get back to normal). We had to figure out Zoom or Facebook live or YouTube (some of which we never imagined we'd use, some who found out they will never use them again). We had struggles and heartache, depression and anxiety. Some had to risk their lives to go to work daily while others weren't able to leave their homes. Some suited up (masks, gloves, etc...) to go grocery shopping while others were at the mercy of someone else doing their shopping (sometimes to have "substitute items" be something completely different, never to be used). Some slipped into bad habits, feeling lost and alone. Some felt very isolated while others prayed for just 5 minutes alone.

If we are willing to admit, there were times we wondered what was next, how much worse could it get – living with anxiety and fear. Some may have wondered where God is in it all, where is God in all the loss and pain and heartbreak? It's a fair question to ask, for even the most devout in the Bible have asked. The psalmists ask this question, some of the prophets cry out with it or tell the people to cry out to God (implying they ask where is God), Job, a faithful and blameless man, asked this question repeatedly. Perhaps it's one we've all asked (or one day might ask) in our lives during difficult situations/times.

And while there might not be a clear, easily spelled out answer in the Bible, all of scripture tells us what is true – God is with us. God is with us in the pain and heartache, the mess and loss of life. Emmanuel – the Christ child – literally means God with us. Jesus is the one who came to be God with us – to physically walk with us, live with us, teach us, love us in ways our ancestors had been blind to it before. But, not only that, Jesus came to teach and show us that there is always a way when we think there is none. Our God is a god of the impossible! When we think we are at the end of our rope, God provides. When loss is so painful and unbearable, when we fear what's next God's blessings come upon us – the daily bread we need for each day. When we think death has the final sting, resurrection life springs forth.

Continued on page 2



## **Good News Gazette**

First  
Presbyterian  
Church of  
Chester, NY  
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Chester, NY  
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### Second Offering

Our Second Offering will be collected Oct 25th for Church World Services—Blanket Sunday. More information will be provided in the bulletin. It can also be viewed here: <https://cwsblankets.org/>

These blankets provide warmth, safety, protection, and, for some, a sense of home and comfort for many across our world suffering from natural disaster, fleeing from war and violence, and many other horrors in our world. Please consider supporting this great ministry.

### 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.

### Continued...

Over and over again, scripture points to these two big realities. God is with us. God is a God of the impossible. From the very beginning when God creates something good, beautiful out of nothing – out of the formless void. God provides water to Hagar in the desert and a promise, too, that her son will be great when she first runs away out of fear and is kicked out by Sarah (Abraham's wife). God never leaves Joseph's side even when he is pushed in a pit, thought to be left for dead but then sold into slavery, trafficked down to Egypt and thrown in jail. God provides a way for Joseph to become Pharaoh's right hand man, even helps to save his family (and reconcile with them). God rescues the Israelites from Egypt, parting the Red Sea so they can walk on dry land, remains with them guiding them by day and by night. God doesn't even leave these stubborn and stiffnecked people when they wander the desert for 40 years! All of this is only in the first few chapters. These stories passed down for generations and generations to those living in exile, wondering where God is... to those after the exile wondering if God has left them... to those in Jesus day who realize this one to truly be God with them. Once again showing how God is with us, providing a way even when we think there is no way.

Our God is with us, indeed, even during these difficult times. Our God is still God of the impossible – making life among barrenness (and old age), making dry land through a river, making new life among death. So yes, from time to time we can with the Psalmist, the Prophets, and Job (among others) we can cry out, asking where is God, but let us never forget, God is with us and nothing is impossible for our great God!

### Possible Book Study

We are looking into the possibility of starting a book study/book club with "A New Kind of Christianity: 10 questions that are transforming the faith" by Brian McLaren. Please contact Pastor Erin if you are interested so a date/time/place can be determined. A book can be provided.

([erinmoore@chespresny.com](mailto:erinmoore@chespresny.com) or 469-4877)

### Yard Sale

Columbus Day weekend we will be hosting a yard sale. Please contact Pastor Erin if you are willing to help with pricing/sorting before the sale, setting up/clean up of the sale, or working during the sale.

### November Pasta Dinner

We are hoping to hold a take-out only pasta dinner in place of our roast beef dinner. This would include baked ziti, baked meatballs (other suggestions welcome), bread, and maybe a salad. A brief meeting for those interested in helping is scheduled for Oct 4 following church (rain date Oct 5<sup>th</sup> 7pm).

## 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

The Deacons, via Jean and Okey Barrett, will be walking in the Monroe Crop Walk on Oct 25<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to know more/participate in the socially distanced walk please see Okey or Jean or view the Monroe Crop Walk Page: <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/monroeny>

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

## Looking Ahead...

October 4 – World Communion Service at 10am - if participating at home, please know to have elements available

Pasta Dinner meeting following worship (rain date 10/5, 7pm)

October 5 – Tentative Bible Study 10 am at Carpenter Field Pavilion

October 7—Buildings and Grounds meeting 6:30pm

October 10 – yard sale

October 11 – Outdoor worship (weather permitting) followed by

October 12 – Tentative Bible Study 10 am at Carpenter Field Pavilion

October 18 – Tentative outdoor worship – details to follow on the 11th

October 19 – Tentative Bible Study 10 am at Carpenter Field Pavilion; Food Pantry Truck

October 22 – Food Pantry Distribution 4-7pm

October 25 – Heavily adapted World Day of Prayer (Lead by Pastor Erin)

October 26 – Tentative Bible Study 10 am at Carpenter Field Pavilion

October 15-20 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 October 21st.*

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

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

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCrLgI6VOe9lbmcfB4dRHGfA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrLgI6VOe9lbmcfB4dRHGfA)

## 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

Church Office:

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