



A colleague recently shared this picture with me. It is from Dublin, California during the 1918 Flu Epidemic. While at first it made me laugh a bit, wondering how they survived putting a mask on a cat, the continued conversation around the photo didn't just make me laugh, it made me hopeful. Hopeful because it got me thinking about how that Epidemic eventually ended. They eventually stopped wearing masks. Life, in a sense, went back to normal. But, at the same time, certainly there must have been things that changed as a result of that season. They may not have worn masks forever, but what did they do forever as a result of that season? What did they learn? What did they come to value and cherish? Did they hold their loved ones closer? Did they learn to slow down? Did they get better at washing hands? Did they appreciate the smiles of strangers for the rest of their lives? Did they learn to smile to strangers?

In regards to this picture and conversation, a colleague asked this question on social media a week or so ago, asking others what they would take away from this pandemic and what they were ready to leave behind. She said most talked about re-aligning their priorities: the importance of family and close friends, the value of self-care practices, the enjoyment of a slower and more contained way of life, a commitment to treasuring moments of joy.

And perhaps that's a question for all of us to take pause on, as things begin to return to "normal," what things are we taking away from this pandemic and what are we ready to leave behind? In what ways will we be forever changed? How will we realign ourselves and our priorities to better match our values?

As we ponder all these questions and what the anticipation of "normal" means in our own lives, I hope that whatever changes, whatever we leave behind brings us closer to one another. I hope whatever we take with us brings us closer to God. I pray that as we navigate the months to come, we are moved first and always by a love that calls us to consider our neighbors, to consider creation, and to consider our actions in relationship to God. I pray, as we anticipate the return to "normal" that we bring about a new normal, a new way of life, the new life of God. Amen.



Good News Gazette

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



Shop with Scrip

We have an opportunity for an easy fundraiser if we have one or two people willing to be “point person.” Shop with Scrip is a similar program to our ShopRite Gift Card program, only it opens up the possibilities of over 100s of stores. Each store donates a certain percentage of each gift card sold through our organization back to our organization. For example, Amazon gives 2.25% back whereas CVS gives 6% back. Gift cards can be ordered online and emailed directly to you or ordered through a point person through the church and mailed out. This is minimal work, even for the point person or two, and could be a very easy fundraiser for our church if one or two people are able to help. Please see Pastor Erin if you are willing to be the point person.

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Congregational Conversations

A committee has been set and is in the process of planning out some specific community conversations and discernment for the future of our congregation in regards to pastoral leadership. More information about congregational conversations will come once this committee finalizes a plan to move forward together.

Pastor Sabbatical

Session is looking for some help during Pastor’s Sabbatical in June and July. We will need help with the bulletin, checking/returning phone & email messages, keeping up with our recycling program, and a few volunteers to help leader a couple worship services. There is a sign-up sheet on the back table. On May 16th following worship, there will be a brief meeting to determine coverage for some of these items.

Fundraising Plans

Thank you to all who helped make our soup fundraiser a success! We were able to raise about \$1000 selling almost 200 pints of soup and chili.

Our next fundraiser endeavors will be our Chicken BBQ on June 12th and, hopefully, another small business raffle. James Peterson is chairing the Chicken BBQ but needs someone to coordinate the coleslaw and macaroni salad prep. We are in need of someone to help with the small business raffle – pulling the tickets/livestreaming for a few weeks in June/July. Please see Pastor Erin if you are willing to help, otherwise this fundraiser may need to be put on hold.

If possible, we hope to have a small yard sale on June 12th, too. Please see the sign up sheet on the back table or contact Pastor Erin if you can help with either so we know if we have enough help.

Recycling, currently collecting: NEWLY UPDATED

- 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, glue sticks, watercolor dispensers, paint sets, and flexible packaging.
- empty toothpaste tubes, mouthwash, old (clean) toothbrushes, empty floss containers, soap packaging, empty deodorant containers

Good News!

We received a \$40,000 Legacy Grant from the Presbytery for our newly formed partnership with VOCA (Village of Chester Arts). This will help with collaboration events and programming. As well as \$25,000 of it will also go towards a new roof for the community room.

Crafters Corner

We are collecting some supplies:

Pallets
Flower pots
Old picture frames
Old flatware
Tea cups
Old spools of thread
Rulers or yardsticks
Wood scraps (nothing too small, please)
Tin cans (no sharp edges please)
Old candles
Neck ties
slate
old jeans
wine glasses, other glasses (needs to have smooth sides, no etching or design)
old wood cutting boards
Old bicycles/bicycle parts
Metal bottle caps
old cabinets
sweaters

Crafters are working on projects both in person and at home. If you'd like to help, there is plenty to do! We are currently seeking help with the following (which can all be done at home):

- Cutting corks in half
- Removing labels from wine bottles
- Making no-sew fleece blankets (a pattern and instructions will be given, just need to be able to cut!)
- Painting corks
- Some small crochet crafts
- Help cleaning so old barn wood

If you are able/willing to help with any of these please see Pastor Erin or Betty Ann Reilly.

Buildings and Grounds Help

B&G work day scheduled for May 1, work to be done:

Get community garden beds ready
Weed garden beds around the church
Trim bushes/trees
Mulch
Check/clean gutters

If you are unable to help at the scheduled work day, you are more than welcome to help with various tasks whenever you have the time. This list will be ongoing and there's plenty of mulch to spread!

Bottles and Cans

Bring your bottles and cans for us to redeem and help support our mission and ministry! 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
Jerry Sutherland
Gene Winters
Janet Writer

Deacons:

Edna Babcock
Jean Barrett-
Helen Braidotti
Joanne Brooks
Catherine DeAngelis
James Peterson—
Moderator & treasurer

Church Office:

(845) 469-4877

E-mail:

info@chespresny.com

Website:

www.chespresny.com

Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/
chespresny](http://www.facebook.com/chespresny)

Community News

Library Book Delivery

The Chester Public Library offers homebound book delivery services for people who are unable to visit the library due to limited mobility, illness, or handicap. Homebound status can be permanent or temporary. Doctor's notes are not required. This is a FREE service. Call for more information: 845-469-4252

NY Project Hope (Coping with COVID)

Feeling uncertain, overwhelmed, anxious during COVID? NY Project Hope is here to talk, to listen, and to support.

They provide:

Information

Education

Emotional support

Links to resources

Speak with one of their experienced counselors: dial 311

It is free, anonymous, and confidential

(A program of the NYS Office of Mental Health Funded by FEMA)

Looking Ahead

May 1 – Church work day 9:30am (weather permitting)

May 2 – Communion Sunday 10am; Deacon's meeting following worship

May 3 – Bible Study 10

May 5 – Crafters meeting 3pm

May 9 – Sunday Worship 10am

May 10 – Bible Study 10am

May 12 – Crafters meeting 3pm; Buildings and Grounds 7pm tentative

May 15 – Church work day 9:30am (weather permitting)

May 16 – Sunday Worship 10am; Session meeting (tentative)

May 17 – Bible Study 10am

May 19 – Crafters meeting at 3pm

May 23 – Pentecost Sunday 10am worship

May 24 – Bible Study 10am; Tentative food pantry truck

May 27 – Food Pantry Distribution 4-7pm

May 30 – Sunday Worship 10am

May 31 – No Bible Study

Pastor Erin will be away May 27-31st. 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 May 23rd.

Second Offering

Our second offering for Sunday, May 23, will be the 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 can be retained by individual congregations wanting to make an impact in the lives of young people within their own community. The remaining 60% is used to support children-at-risk, youth, and young adults through ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Capital Campaign Update:

The total collected for Year 2 of our Capital Campaign is \$10,121 out of our \$20,000 goal.

Total to-date raised is: \$37,234.

This includes the \$6,000 Sacred Sites Grant.

We also recently received a \$25,000 Legacy Grant from the Presbytery to put a new roof on the Community Room.