



Beloved, there are two more weeks remaining that I spend together with you before our sabbatical time begins.

The word sabbatical has its roots in the word sabbath. The creation story reminds us that God relishes in creativity and work, and God also attends to rest – to sabbath. For centuries, communities of faith have designated a day of rest and worship. At Chester Presbyterian Church, we gather on Sundays for exactly that – worship of God through resting from the “work” we do throughout the week. This day of rest and worship offers space for comfort when we are afflicted, encouragement when we feel discouraged, and enlivenment when we feel excited. As people made in the image of God, intentional sabbath taking helps us live into who God has created us to be. Worship reminds us of our relationship to God. Rest gives us space to notice who we are and who God is.

The theme for my sabbatical is Rest in God. The Sabbatical will be a time full of rest with connecting to God in deeper ways that I don't often get to do. Some of these include camping out in creation where I can more fully experience and appreciate the goodness of God's creation, a spiritual retreat including some spiritual direction to help me listen more deeply for the word of God in my own life and the life of the congregation, worshiping at various church services (instead of leading service), traveling to visit family and friends (many I haven't seen in years) those who know me best to help me more deeply connect and rest with who God created me to be, as well as taking the time to delve into both my favorite and trying new spiritual practices. All of this will help me not just truly rest in God but develop more routine of spiritual practices to remain more rooted in God, resting in God upon my return to serving this congregation.

However, this is not just “Pastor Erin's sabbatical.” This is our sabbatical together. So, I invite your reflections, too. Where do you need to find rest? It has been such a weary year and we are finally starting to see more and more open up, even if slowly. But truly, for some, it has been exhausting. Between figuring out safety measures, to caring for kids or grandkids (some while still trying to work fulltime), the weighty decisions many made for themselves or their families as essential employees, the loneliness of being isolated, the stress of the constantly changing guidelines and plans for the future, the many anxieties and fears and grief that has been shared. There is too much to name. But it is not too much to let go of, it is not too much for God. So where do you need rest? How do you experience good rest? How do you rest in God? In what ways over these next 6 weeks could you practice resting in God, too? As the school year ends, more and more opens up, life begins to return to a sense of normalcy and the weight of fear, anxiety and grief continue to be lifted, how might you take some time for intentional rest in God?

Maybe you can visit with friends or family you haven't been able to see for a while. Maybe you get a day or two away for the busyness of life and taking care of kids or grandkids. Maybe you get an few hours free of disruption to read a good book (or the Good book), take a hike to enjoy God's creation, or begin a new spiritual practice. God calls us to a regular time of rest, of sabbath. Unfortunately, it is often the opposite of what the world calls us to – work, work, work – being a busy bee. May you find some time, too, to rest in God.

Continued on page 2



Good News Gazette

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



Prayer for Sabbatical

O God, give us a time of refreshment and peace in the course of our busy lives and the collective life of this congregation. Grant that we may so find rest to rebuild our bodies and renew our minds in you. Grant that we may find peaceful and comfort as we rest in you, O Lord. Give us this time of spiritual, mental, physical, emotional rest that our spirits may be opened to the goodness of you and your creation. May we truly be renewed by the breath of your Spirit during this time so that we may boldly follow Christ our Lord. Amen.

Continued...

During these 6 weeks (which will go faster than we think!), I pray that we will all experience God in new ways. Let us pay attention, notice, and share the new and good things that God is doing. Let us find space for worship and rest. Let us experience sabbatical – sabbath – and let God wash over us, between us, and within us. May God bless us with rest that we might come together again renewed in creativity, hope, and faith.

There are a slew of ministers in our presbytery who have graciously offered to help with pastoral care needs while I'm away, 7 to be exact! All from surrounding Presbyterian Churches. Along with this we have Commission Ruling Elders Lynn Costa and Edgar Hayes as well as honorably retired minister Duncan Nichol aiding in leading worship. We are surrounded by such great colleagues in ministry who won't just be here to aid in worship and in pastoral care need but will also be holding us in prayer during this time.

Session has the contact information for all of our coverage and it is best to contact one of our elders (Vicki Braidotti, Ron Brooks, Jerry Sutherland, Gene Winters, and Janet Writer) if a need arises. Our prayer chain and our Deacons are also available for a prayer concern to be lifted up or a needed phone call to check in. I have no doubts that our congregation will be well taken care of during these 6 weeks of being apart.

I pray that you and I both will experience rejuvenation and joy during this time. May God bless this time and use it for rest and rejuvenation that brings new energy so that we may continue to bear good fruit for years to come!

Possible Summer Bazaar

There have been some conversations about doing something fun for and with our community. The idea of a late Summer Bazaar has been put forth by Session. It would include lawn and carnival games, popcorn, ice cream, possibly some burgers and hot dogs, and just an overall good time. We could potentially ask other groups, like Kiwanis, to join us, but before we get ahead of ourselves we need to see if there is interest within the congregation and what date might work best. We are looking into August, please check your calendar and share your thoughts.

We would also need one or two members to chair/coordinate this event. We will have a meeting June 2nd at 7pm to determine interest.

Crafters Corner

We hope the crafters will keep busy throughout the summer months. There are many opportunities to work on crafts including helping to cut corks, paint corks, cut and paint pine cones, small crochet crafts, fleece crafters, helping to clean and/or paint barnwood. There are numerous supplies in the old nursery if you'd like to take a look and take something home. We are still collecting some items:

Pallets, Clay Flower pots, Picture frames, Flatware, Tea cups
Old spools of thread, Rulers or yardsticks, Wood scraps,
Tin cans (no sharp edges please), Neck ties, slate, Wood cutting boards,
Bicycles/bicycle parts, Metal bottle caps. old cabinets, sweaters

Capital Campaign Update

The end of June marks the close of the second year of our multi-year Capital Campaign. So far the total collected is about \$11,000. Over \$6,000 came from the congregation, \$300 from Women's Council, \$460 from memorial giving, and \$3731 from community giving! We project about another \$500-\$600 in pledges to come in by the end of June, but with that we are a little short of our goal of \$20,000. We knew this would be a possibility with so much unknown throughout the year. It is also unfortunate that the pricing of materials has gone up which has put a few projects on hold, including the manse porch as we discern adjusted funding. More information will come in August in regards to updates to the final numbers, completion of work, as well as information about year 3 for the campaign. However, Pastor Erin will leave you with one final challenge for this campaign year. If we are able to raise \$1000 in the month of June (not including what is already pledged), she and James will match it with a \$1000 donation. If you are unable to give, help spread the word, perhaps neighbors or friends would like to see this challenge met, too!

To date our total raised for both years of the campaign is:

\$31,934 (without any grant funding)

\$62,934 (with grant funding)

Thank you to everyone who has pledged, given, spread the word, and prayed for our Capital Campaign over these past two years, especially this past year. The Pandemic has certainly made things more difficult and with it we give even more thanks for being able to raise what we have for the year. God is good!

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)

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 any-time 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)



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 Popsocet 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

There is a bin in the back of the sanctuary for any of these items

Fundraising Plans

Thank you to all who helped make our ziti fundraiser a success! We were able to raise about \$1000 selling over 100 meals.

Our next fundraiser endeavors will be our Chicken BBQ on June 12th and another small business raffle.

Help is needed as follows:

Coleslaw prep – Thursday, June 10th at 9am.

Mac Salad prep is still being coordinated. Announcements will go out via email and the bulletin. Please let James Peterson or Alan Eckard know if you are willing to help with the Mac Salad.

Depending on when the salads are ready to be packed, we will be packing either Friday or Saturday. Further announcements will be made via email and the bulletin.

Saturday, June 12th, we will need chicken help starting at 8am, so far we have 2 out of 5 people needed for this effort. If you haven't already please see the sign up sheet or talk to James Peterson

The raffle has been finalized. We will sell tickets throughout the month of June and raffle the gift cards off on the Sundays in July. The gift cards are as follows:

July 4: \$50 Sugar Loaf Taphouse; \$25 Bagel Girls

July 11: \$50 Rustic Wheelhouse; \$25 Long Lot Brewery

July 18: \$50 Cancun Inn; \$25 American House Ice Cream

July 25: \$50 Chester Diner; \$25 Main Street Pizza

Tickets are \$5 each and we will have printed copies for you to buy, sell, etc... starting the first Sunday in June.

Our first Partnership with the Village of Chester Arts Association:

We are excited to announce our first event with VOCA: Workshops for Compassion

Our workshops are designed to give you tools to aide and alleviate the emotions of suffering. Our commonality unites us & together through art we gain understanding of our human condition.

June 1st: Workshop 1 - Grief, processing our grief is a common human condition. In this session we will share experiences and focus our energies into creating mandalas, traditional eastern Indian symbols as a vehicle to process our grief.

June 8th: Workshop 2 - Hope, in this session we explore far east prayer flags to create our own set of prayer flags with intentions of hope.

June 15th: Workshop 3 - Healing, we will take this session to reflect on our experiences and emotions using words and visual symbols to create personal visual journals.

If you are interested, please see Pastor Erin as space is limited. Right now, walk ins are welcome for June 1st.

Looking Ahead

June 1 – VOCA workshop (Grief) in the community room 7pm

June 2 – Crafters meeting 3pm; Summer Bazaar interest/ planning meeting 7pm

June 5 – Weather permitting church work day 10am

June 6 - Communion Sunday 10am; Deacon's meeting following worship

June 7 – Bible Study 10am

June 8 – VOCA workshop (Hope) in the community room 7pm

June 9 – Crafters meeting 3pm

June 10 – Coleslaw prep 9am

June 12 – Chicken BBQ

June 13 – Sunday Worship 10am

June 14 – Pastor's Sabbatical begins

June 15 – VOCA workshop (Healing) in the community room 7pm

June 20 – CRE Lynn Costa will be leading worship 10am

June 21 – Food Pantry Truck (tentative time)

June 24 – Food Pantry Distribution 4-7pm

June 27 – Rev Duncan Nichol will be leading worship at 10am

June 30 – Last day to get raffle tickets

July 4 – “American Voices” worship service 10am; first raffle following worship

July 11 – CRE Edgar Hayes will be leading worship at 10am; second raffle following worship

July 18 – CRE Edgar Hayes will be leading worship at 10am; third raffle following worship

July 25 – The Worship Team will be leading worship at 10am; fourth/final raffle following worship

July 26 – Pastor Erin returns from Sabbatical; Bible Study 10am

July 28 – Crafters 3pm; Buildings and Grounds 7pm

August 1 – Communion Sunday; Tentative Deacons meeting following worship

Pastor Erin will be on Sabbatical June 14-July 25. If there is a pastoral emergency, please contact one of the elders.

There will not be a newsletter for July, we will resume with a newsletter in August. If you have any announcements they need to be in to the church office by July 28th to be included in the August newsletter.

Second Offering

Our second offering for Sunday, June 27th will be for the Capital Campaign. It will be the last collection for the 2nd year of our campaign.

Note: There will not be a second offering in July.

Buildings and Grounds Help

Thank you to all who came out on the church work day as well as other days to help clean up our grounds! If you missed out, don't worry, there is still more work to do. If you would like to help please see the items below. You are welcome to come along or coordinate with others to work on these needed tasks:

- Trim bushes/trees
- Get wood chips down around community garden beds
- Check/clean gutters
- Water the beds alongside the sanctuary
- Help with cleaning up the memorial garden