

Weekly Opportunities

Sundays

9:00 am – Children’s Sunday School
11:00 am – Service of the Lord’s Day

Mondays

7:30 pm – Bible Study in the Parish House

Tuesdays

11:00 am – Bible Study at Berkshire Valley

Meetings & Special Opportunities to participate in church life

**The Fourth Friday of each month, Oak Ridge and Berkshire Valley Presbyterian churches have been providing the labor to serve our brothers and sisters in need at Manna House at First Presbyterian Church, Newton. For information on serving or just how to get involved, please call Carol Mullen who would love to hear from you!
You can call her at 973-697-3409



Pres Notes

*The News and Prayer Letter of
Presbyterian Church*

Oak Ridge

Summer 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in Christ’s most wonderful name! I do pray that this finds you all well and surrounded by baskets of blessings. We’ve had a pretty busy spring and are set to have a busy summer, and if all goes as plans, the renovations in the former paneled room will be complete.

For those who have been by the Parish House and have seen what’s happened so far, they’re amazed by the difference. The wood paneling is no longer the face of the room. What the contractor has done is to cover the paneling with standard sheetrock, and then installed vinyl coverings over the bottom half of the walls so that cleaning can be done very easily. With the plans to use that space for the My School ministry, it will be good to have easily cleanable walls where small hands shall be! The upper half of the walls has been painted a light blue.

There are a number of other project plans being put into place too and within the next year we’ll have a very different looking Parish House! We’re also planning to have a celebratory luncheon to show off the renewed space to folks who won’t have had a chance at a good look-see. We’re planning on doing that after church on Sunday, August 18th, ORPC’s 201st birthday. It will be fun to show off just how much great work has been done in the year since the 200th celebration.

And....I want to put in a good word for the Joint Service that's coming up at the end of the month of June. June 30th is a 5th Sunday and so for the third year in a row,

we'll be having our joint service at Berkshire Valley at 10 am with a church picnic to follow. Now the last two years, we all always automatically gathered in the Ed Building, had the food set-up in the kitchen and had just the grill and a few tables outside for people to sit at, and still called it a picnic. Hhhmmmm..... I also recall that the first time we had the picnic there was the idea floated that we should be able to get a baseball game together from all the folks who were going to be in attendance. The bats, balls and gloves were available, but there just were no takers. It did eventually dawn on us that most folks in the two congregations didn't have the energy to be hitting baseballs and running bases. Hhhmmmm.... So, we've come up with a new idea for this year that I'm sure will be much more appealing.

For this years picnic we going to set-up tables and chairs under the group of trees at the edge of the Berkshire Valley baseball field nearest the manse, as well as the grills, so that we'll be able to enjoy the breeze under the trees – the area will be sprayed the day before to keep away our particularly small flying and crawling friends – and then in the open field area, we're going to be setting up a for a croquet tournament. We figured that that would be a game that not too many folks would be able to walk away from, so mark your calendars! Information will be coming out about that in the coming couple of weeks. Any questions, just ask, and if you have a croquet set to loan to the church for the day, give us a shout out.

So, between the Annual ORPC Golf Outing (not mentioned here already), the 5th Sunday worship and picnic, the renovations and Celebratory Luncheon in August, we've got lots going on and lots to be thrilled and proud of, especially for a small church family. It's very much a blessing to be a part of this community, so let's always work at being a blessing in return.

In Christ's Service,
Pastor Chris



Worship News

Communion dates over the next few months are as follows:

June 2nd, July 7th, August 4th

Each communion being celebrated this summer is in the tradition of the 1st Sunday of the month. There are no special days that we celebrate until we approach Advent.

**Of special note: If anyone would like to try their hand at preaching, have a talk with Pastor Chris, he'll help you through the process to present the message that God has seeded within all of us. Consider how God uses you, and can further use you, for the glory of His church!

Presbyterian Women

To kick off the start of its fourth decade this summer, PW made history again by installing its first Korean moderator, JyungIn "Jenny" Lee, along with Jo Ann Burrell as vice moderator for Mission Relationships and Joy Durrant as vice moderator for Justice and Peace Issues. The three women will serve in their positions for the next three years.

Lee noted that PW has been described as the most adaptable organization in the denomination. She credits the group with being revolutionary in bringing to the forefront such issues as racism, sex trafficking and other critical matters facing communities around the world. In 2005 PW became a member of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and in July 2018 was granted accreditation to the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

Asked what she would like to see accomplished during her term as moderator, Lee said, "The word 'unity' keeps coming up and to my mind. The country is so divided, only unity and reconciliation with our past and with our neighbors will help. We must realize that we are one in Christ and we need to be united in Christ, united in the word, to move the word forward to

make this world better and to move the gospel forward.” Lee believes PW can also change the look of the denomination. “PW has the potential and the ability to be more inclusive and to help the church be more inclusive,” she said. “The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is made up of more than 60 percent women and that’s us. We are Presbyterian Women.”

(To Learn More About PW, Look Them Up On Line At: www.presbyterianwomen.org)

PCUSA Mission

CALLED TO A MOVEMENT BEYOND INSTITUTION

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect." Romans 12:2



Join the movement of Presbyterians in Baltimore for a Big Tent like no other. The theme, *Called to a Movement beyond Institution*, will emphasize our hope of the Gospel and its power to challenge institutional conventions. The goal is to come together and live in this moment, immersed in our current cultural context of racial division, gender inequality, and economic disparity to be renewed, refreshed and reformed, so that we may be sent out to affect change in our own communities. Big Tent will provide a place where our Presbyterian polity and identity is the foothold by which we proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in action and answer the call to discern the will of God together.

Through worship, Bible study, learning opportunities, and active engagement with one another and the community, attendees will encounter the Church participating in God’s mission for the transformation of creation and humanity.

Mission & Nurture Committee

Beside the projects that we reported about in the last newsletter; **Hearts for Honduras (H4H)**, the Presbyterian Church USA **Giving Catalog** projects, and **Samaritan’s Purse: Operation Christmas Child**, the Mission and Nurture Committee also headed up Faith In Action for ORPC this year.

As last year, we went to Strengthen Our Sisters (SOS) in West Milford. We had a team of 15! The day before on May 18th, Pastor Chris, Jeff Elam and Rich Schipper went there and prepared their large front porch for painting the following day. They power washed it in it’s entirety, did some scraping of the loose paint and pulled out a lot of weeds and vines. The next day, Sunday the 19th, the big team was there early and painted the front porch, the well structure near the porch and one of the living quarters units. The team also did a great amount of landscaping work. Afterward about 80 folks from the various participating churches came to our Parish House for a great meal and fellowship. Thanks to that great team of folks who helped out with that effort while others were out working in the community! It was a day filled with lots of hard work that provided for some serious refreshing of our spirits.

Oh, and let’s not forget about our trip out to Sight & Sound! 28 folks from Oak Ridge and Berkshire Valley went out to Sight and Sound Theatre in Lancaster, PA. What a great show it was and what a great way to spend the day with church family. Here’s a picture of the group!



And last but not least, the **Prayer Shawl** ministry continues to bless the knitters and crocheters as well as the recipients. Several are available, so just reach out if you need one for yourself or someone you care about. And if you feel called to join us, we have willing teachers, so come learn a new skill!

A Note On Bible Study

As most all know, we've been journeying through the Book of Acts. In the more recent weeks we've been traveling with Paul as he works to spread the Gospel message, not to mention getting himself into trouble just about everywhere he goes. Paul's constantly pushing everyone's buttons in order to get them to think outside the box when it comes to their relationship with God, as well as with each other.

We'll be completing that series pretty soon, only a few more weeks to go and then we'll be spending a good portion of the summer looking at the mission of the church.

Come and be a part of the conversation! You'd be surprised with how much those who come enjoy the conversations that we have on most any Monday evening at the

Oak Ridge Parish House at 7:30, or Tuesday morning at the Berkshire Valley Ed Building at 11:00am. And for those who attend, it's not just a great time of fellowship and conversation, but it also provides participants with a much greater understanding of the Scripture and Message on Sunday morning. Come and be a part of the learning!

....AND THE CONVERSATION!!! You'll be glad you did....

We've Got The Music In Us

Our choir is now on its summer hiatus, we'll be back in September. If anyone would be interested in providing some special music pieces for worship over these months, please get in touch with Janet, Mike, Dave MacDonald or Pastor Chris.

All musical talents are welcome, it's how we make worship special. In these months, let's work to celebrate the gifts and talents we all share, with each other and with God.

And remember..... "Those who sing, pray twice!!!!!"

Joyfully, Mike

Where do we start? The Practice of Announcing the Kingdom of God

And say to them, 'The Kingdom of God has come near to you' (Luke 10:9)

How many times have I heard those words? The Kingdom of God has come near. In the hundreds of times I've seen those words I have often pondered, what does 'the kingdom of God has come near' look like. How do we know if the Kingdom of God is near?

[The Missional Practice of Announcing the Kingdom of God is the practice of taking notice and announcing the work of God in our midst.](#)

Episcopal Bishop Gordon Scruton told the story of when Desmond Tutu visited his diocese in Western Massachusetts. Many local dignitaries were present for a dinner to help a local school for under-privilege children. When the Archbishop rose, he lauded the community leaders for the work that was being done for the poor in the community. He said, "God sees what you are doing here and smiles because it is very close to his heart". The effect was staggering. Those who were reluctant supporters were now eager participants. They too now could see the presence of God in their midst.

[The Practice of Announcing the Kingdom of God has some very simple steps.](#)

- [Notice where God is at work in the world](#)
- [Point to that God activity](#)
- [Announce this activity is of God so others will notice it also](#)

The practice is both a community practice or habit and individual habit or practice. There are many activities within your work together as a congregation where you can point or look back and see that this is or was the Kingdom of God coming near or even being in the midst.

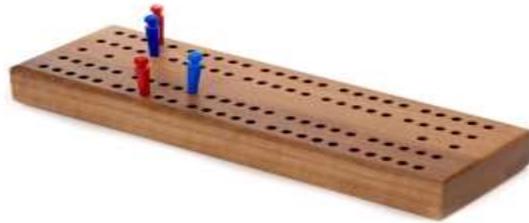
The Coming of God's Kingdom in a Maine Kitchen

I had received a call from my uncle that my grandmother (90 years old) was moving into hospice care for congestive heart failure. A few days later I drove from Philadelphia to Cape Cod on my way to Bangor, Maine. Early the next morning I drove the final hour to my grandmother's house in Dover-Foxcroft, near Bangor, to find a driveway full of cars.

My grandmother had a difficult night and the full strength of the hospice staff was present. Knowing my grandmother, she probably demanded that they all be there. The staff was excited to see me in hopes that I would take their side in convincing her to go to the hospital for symptom management.

My grandfather (91 years old) was visibly distressed about my grandmother's breathing difficulty and was unable to participate fully in the conversation. My grandmother was being stubborn about taking morphine that would provide relief. (We discovered later that she had been removing her morphine patches and sticking them on the tissue boxes next to her bed and chair). The hospice staff was trying to responsibly and patiently convince my grandmother to go to the hospital. Needless to say, this was not a peaceful scene.

After a short while my uncle arrived to provide reinforcements for the hospice staff and my grandmother soon took an ambulance ride to the hospital. At that point, I was able to ascertain that my grandfather was ill and needed to go to the doctor. My uncle and I divided the work – he went with my grandmother and I with my grandfather. I spent the remainder of the morning with my grandfather at the doctor, getting medicine, lunch and a few of his favorite snacks.



We came back to the house, where they had lived for 56 years and the place that I had only known as “Nana and Bumper’s”. My grandmother was not ready to receive visitors and my grandfather needed to relax so we had our lunch and then spent the early afternoon playing several games of cribbage. We broke out my grandfather's favorite snacks of Bismarcks and Moxie

There came a quiet moment as my grandfather was counting out his hand that I knew that this would be the last time I would play cribbage with him. He had taught me to play when I was 10. It was just the two of us sitting at the kitchen table playing cribbage, gossiping about my sisters and cousins, like we had done for so many years.

I knew at that moment that God was in our midst. God was there in the strength, patience and wisdom of the Hospice staff. God was there in the quiet of the moment. God was there as we shared Bismarcks, Moxie and cribbage.

It is not always easy seeing the coming of the Kingdom of God in our midst. Sometimes it takes time to reflect on where God is active in our lives and then to share that story.

We do need to pay attention, to share what we see, to reflect on our experience and give thanks for God's presence in the chaos and in the quiet moments.

The Deacon's of ORpc

Our Deacons are busy at work doing all of the usual things that deacons do. Our Board of Deacons is made up of Carol Flynn, Chuck Flynn, Rich Barry, Tom Stephens, Cindy Riggs, Ruth Breckenridge, Nancy Harm and Nancy Schipper.

AND they can always use our help!!!

As we know, ORPC has been partnering with the Milton Methodist Church, supporting the amazing work of their food pantry. The following items are ones that would really be of great help to those who do receive assistance from the New Hope Food Pantry.

-Canned meals such as Spaghetti's, Beef Stew, Franks & Beans

-Canned meats such as tuna, beef, Spam & sardines

-Cereals cold and hot. Instant oatmeal is always great because the packages can be divided up if need be. They also offer good nutrition.

-Peanut Butter and Jelly is always a needed stock item!

-Crackers are always great because many have a long shelf life and can act as a replacement for bread.

-Soaps and personal hygiene items are always appreciated. Bar soap is great because they can be given out singularly. Shampoo is always great too, and better than conditioner which is not usually as needed as shampoo.

-Toilet paper is always great!

-Dish soap is good too! Often there are smaller bottles of dish soap that can be gotten on sale for a dollar. Those are great and always greatly appreciated!

*****Special Note : Beside working with Milton Methodist's food pantry, we are also looking to partner with the Deacon's at Berkshire Valley to purchase special bags that will help as a reminder to bring needed items for the food**

pantry. AND, we are also looking to support a couple local students to Camp Jefferson, as well as providing scholarship funds to Camp Johnsonburg.

Birthdays

June - August 2019

June

Steve Harm – June 10th
Stephens – June 11th
June 15th
Adeeb Doyle – June 28th

Tom
Nancy Harm –
Jeff Elam – June 16th

July

Ruth Breckenridge – July 10th
Karen Sharp – July 18th

August

Donald Foth – August 14th
Gloria Mikowski – August 24th
26th

Christopher Doyle – August 16th
Martha Scheri – August
Nancy Chamberlain – August 31st

My Pet Project/Parish House Renovations Update

We've gotten off to a great start with our My Pet Project/Capital Campaign! Those who have chosen to invest in their church have provided \$7,000 in upfront donations, \$111,000 in pledges to be paid over time, and then \$100,000 in will bequests that will come to the church at some point in the hopefully distant future. While this is most certainly pretty impressive, we still have a long way to go.

As most know, we've borrowed from the Lakeland Bank \$200,000 to get some of the more desperately needed work done before the building would have fallen into even greater disrepair. So far, we've had the roof over the entire Parish House replaced, have painted and carpeted our large fellowship hall, have replaced one of the four of the Parish House' furnaces, have had an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant restroom installed in the upstairs, have completed the first phase of major renovation in what has always been known as the 'Paneled Room', and are currently completing the job of efficient heating and air conditioning in that same space. And lastly, we will soon have an ADA compliant ramp for our main entrance into the front of the building. We're sure that all of these renovations will not only preserve the Parish House, but be a much more welcoming place that will be perfect for a host of new programs that Pastor Chris would like to put into place once the renovations are done, thus, prayerfully putting onto a path of rejuvenation.

Now, as stated, there's still a ways to go. We have begun our monthly payment back to the bank of just over \$1100 per month, if we're to be able to keep up with that payment plan, we're going to need further pledges to this project of just over \$600 per month. So far, about 30% of the congregation has contributed, leaving about 70% that have yet to commit. Remember, just a \$5000 pledge over ten years would only be about \$10 per week. If we can get a handful of commitments along those lines, we'll have no problem at all meeting with our repay to Lakeland Bank. We certainly should be able to do this pretty easily, so let's get those pledges in!

****News from My school****

Summer time is a great time at My School and our teachers and staff are busily readying for a great summer program! The plan is that each week will have different focus that will keep the kids not only busy, but excited and happy to arrive each day at My School. The following programs are being planned out for each week:

-Stars & Stripes

-Little Cooks Kitchen

-Under The Sea

-Artist's Corner

-The Summer Games

-Let's Go Camping

-Young Scientists (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics)

If you know of any young people that are looking for something exciting to do over the summer, maybe they would like to come and join My School for the Summer Camp program. Call or stop by for more information, the My School number that you can call to speak with Laura Woody, our My School director, is 973-697-3341.

****What's also exciting here at My School is that our Nursery is essentially now full! That's great news because there will now be an ongoing stream into the programs for the older kids as they grow. For this fall we are now working on filling up the pre-school classes taught by Ms. Ashley and Ms. Jeannie. If you know of any families that are looking for a quality pre-school program, which is the most affordable program in the area, tell them about My School and suggest that they come by and take a tour of the newly renovated spaces and newly renovated curriculum. Together we can make My School the ministry and community resource it was always meant to be, and once was!**

To Keep In Your Prayers

Here at ORPC we lift-up in our prayers each Sunday morning a whole host of issues that we are carrying in our hearts. There is power in prayer and the more we lift-up those concerns, the more we can feel confident that the prayers will be answered in a way that God knows will always be best. Keep the following concerns in your prayers as you speak with God, and let us know what to add to our list.

Bob and Lois Wells

Dick and Bernice Greenwood

Val, Karen, Ray, Anita, Sam, Dotty & Robert

Joan DeYoung

Traveling mercies for our families who are traveling over the summer holidays

Safety in our schools and on our streets

Prayers for our country, that we come together

Prayers for the ministry of My School

Peace in the trouble spots of our world, especially for

The Holy Land

Syria

Mozambique

USHERS

June 23rd – Joe & Cindy Riggs, June 30th – Combined service at BVPC,
July 7th – Carol & Chuck Flynn, July 14th – Don & Jane Sommer,
July 21st – Tom & Georgia Stephens, July 28th – Bill & Nancy Walter,
August 4, Chuck & Carol Flynn, August 11th – Jeff & Sue Elam,
August 18th – John & Martha Scheri, August 25th – Steve & Judy Sabatino

The Financial Picture of ORPC

General

Year to date, our operating deficit is \$27,325, primarily driven by reduced pledge income over the last several years. This deficit will be reduced in June by the proceeds of the golf outing.

Pledges are down \$2,323 from last year, but \$3,292 over budget year to date.

Our expenses are \$97,973, 2.7% higher than last year. This year's expenses include mission support to My School mission, which is a new category this year. Previously, these funds were recorded as a loan.

Deducting that expense, our expenses are 2.5% less than 2018.

Pledging

Historically, our congregants who pledge fulfill their pledges. However, as stated already, pledge income has declined over the last several years due to our membership decline.

What can be done? Our non-pledging members need to pledge. And, we need to push ourselves to increase our membership. Ten new families pledging just \$25 per week would increase our income by \$13,000 per year, or about fifteen percent. Not to mention the new energy and involvement they'd bring.

**REPORT OF SESSION
Second Quarter 2019**

Your session continues as always to work hard to advance the ministry of Oak Ridge Presbyterian, working together to insure the future of the church that we all desire.

Right now, much of the energy of the session is focused on the Capital Campaign and upon the renovations that are taking place. Great thanks to our co-chairs of the Operations Committee, Jeff Elam and Rich Schipper, for all of their hard work and efforts.

