

The Pioneer

'Preparing for others to follow'

Preble Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
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As I sit at my computer and look out my window, I find myself surrounded by God's creation. There are so many different shades of green as the grass comes forth for another year. As the leaves begin to pop on the various varieties of trees we can see the hillsides coming alive in several shades of green, each popping at their own special time. The birds are all busy collecting materials to build their nests. We have been watching as the blue birds have come to their house, built their nest and now we have 3 little eggs. Just another thing to watch and wait for. The farmers are all busy preparing the fields and planting crops. All this happens every year but each year we eagerly await it all. God has created a beautiful world for us to live in. It is up to us to appreciate it in all its beauty and take care of it and all of God's creatures. We recently celebrated Earth Day. Let every day be Earth Day to help preserve all God created for us.

“For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth, over and around us lies;
Lord of all to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

We have been so blessed with all the beauty that surrounds us we should never take any of it for granted.

“In every bulb there is a flower, in the seed, an apple tree;
In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

These lines from hymns say it all for me.

New York Conference United Church of Christ

My Thoughts

Last week Marsha, Gary, Ryan, and I travelled to Pennsylvania to meet with the Conference Ministers and ACMs from the five other conferences in our Mid-Atlantic Region of the UCC. We had not gathered since 2018, and there was a shared sense that conversation and collaboration were now essential. So, we talked and talked about what's working in our conferences and where the gaps or sticking points are; we contemplated the impact of the pandemic upon churches and ministers; we discussed diversity, equity, and inclusion issues; we explored where we can work together; we offered best practices and listened for new ideas. These six conferences are not uniform, but the judicatory ministry in which we are engaged (providing guidance and support for Committees on Ministry, Associations, churches in transition, MIDs and ministers, etc., etc.) is the same. As I listened to other ways of doing this work, I'd translate it into our context and wonder if it could be helpful in New York.

One conference is working hard to create a culture of call. How might we do that here? The leadership crisis is real throughout the wider church. The pandemic has led to a mass retirement of clergy and to the realigning of priorities of lay leaders, leaving pulpits emptier longer and leadership structures dotted with open slots. In this moment, though, however high the anxiety may be, let's take the long view. Let's lean into God's presence, trusting in the power and guidance of the Spirit, as we gather in prayerful discernment. Let's notice and nurture the gifts we see in one another, helping each other to hear that still, small voice that calls us all to ministries in the church and in the world. That call and our responses will transform how we are church and how we live into our mission. I know that this is already happening. We're just not talking about it. So, let's be in conversation. I know that one way does not fit all, but I believe that we can learn from each other and translate what we need into our own contexts. How is your congregation creating a culture of call? Can you share what is working and where the gaps or sticking points are? Please, let me know.

With blessings,

Marjorie



May 2023 Worship Schedule

- May 7th: Brianna Darling
- 14th: Brianna Darling
Mothers' Day
- 21st: Nancy Simister
- 27th: Memorial Service for
Lois Waffner 1PM
- 28th: Brianna Darling
- 29th: Pie Sale

On May 14th, Mothers' Day share a picture or memory of your mother.
Program:
Fellowship each Sunday after worship.

?? Graduates ??



The Diaconate are looking for the names of graduates to recognize in June. If you have of a graduate in your family or know of some in the community please contact Pat Twentyman, chairperson o the Diaconate. (1-315-696-8741)



**Activities for Preble Seniors
May 2023**

- May 3rd: Potluck Luncheon **Noon**
Program: Syrup Making by
Dutch Hill Maple
- May 13th: Bingo with Pizza **6 PM**
- May 17th: Potluck Dinner **6PM**
Program: Hospice by Kimmy
Jones of Hospicare
- May 24th: Painting by Jill Kraft **1PM**
All events are at the Preble Fire
Station.



*Join in the Fun
Annual Preble Garage Sales
June 3rd (only)
8am to 3 pm*

*Do you have someone else's treasures in your closet? There will be an ad placed in the newspaper. If you would like your address listed as a participating member of this sale we would be happy to include it. If you have something special you would like advertised please contact Donna Wheelock at 749-4805 by **May 29th**. Help make this the **BIGGEST** sale yet. Clean out those closets.*



COMMUNITY GARDEN/ FOOD PANTRY

Spring is here! Soon the community garden will get compost, be tilled and be ready for planting. Volunteers welcome. Come join in the fun! Potatoes will probably get planted in early May. Other veggies as well as the 'vegetables in pots' will probably be planted in late May and early June. For information about planting dates and times join the Community Garden e-mail group or the Preble Community Food Pantry e-mail group. To join send your e-mail address to lcscs@hotmail.com and lou scott will put you on the mailing list(s). Also, look for exact dates and times on Facebook and signs near the garden.

The "Sharing Produce Stand" will be brought out near the end of May or early June. At that time the new "24/7 Sharing Pantry"

will be brought out and put near the produce stand. Both the produce stand and the 24/7 pantry are, "Give what you can, Take what you need". And both are wonderful blessings to everyone involved in them. Join in. Feel the blessing.

May Mission

When difficult times happen, a kind and loving response can make all the difference. That's why the CWS Blankets program was created—to give a kind, loving and tangible response to someone facing a difficult time, reminding them that they are not alone. Through the generosity of CWS partner organizations, congregations and individual supporters, our most vulnerable neighbors around the world can feel safe and keep warm with fresh linens and clean sleeping quarters. When our neighbors are in need, even \$10 for a single blanket goes a long way.





May Celebrations

- May 2: Leslie Smith
Laurna Henderson
3: Michael Simister
9: Mothers' Day
John Steger
10: Nathan Limmer
Robert Lieber
Nate Shirley
11: Donna Miller
13: Eric Miller
19: Bill Coffin
21: Virginia Earnshaw
22: Wes Swayze
28: Amber Twentyman
Leon Whalen
29: Millie Briggs



Joy in the Morning By Joy Niswender

I recently read a line that went, "I'm afraid to tell you who I am because you may not like who I am and it is all I've got." Isn't that a treasure of truth! We hide our real selves from others lest we are hurt, or rejected, or not understood. Only the bravest of us can step out and declare without embarrassment or apology just who we are, warts and all.

How wonderful to know we are accepted by God for just what we are, no need to hide any of it. And if the God that created us can love us, maybe others can unconditionally care about us, in spite of ourselves.

Hymn: "Just as I am, and waiting not, To rid my soul of one dark blot. To him whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

Holy Humor for Memorial Day

One day a pastor noticed seven-year old Alex staring at the large plaque that hung in the foyer of the church. It was covered with names and small UC flags mounted on either side.

Alex had been staring for a long time, so the pastor walked up beside and said, "Good Morning, Alex."

"Good morning, Pastor," replied the youngster, still focused on the plaque. "What is this for?"

Well son, it is for all the young men and women who have died in the service."

Soberly, they stood together staring at the plaque. Little Alex's voice was barely audible as he asked,

"Which service, Pastor? The 9 o'clock or the 11 o'clock?"

Thank you Marilyn Stoker for sharing.



Bible Study

There is always room for one more chair around the circle. We gather each Tuesday night at 6:30 in the Fellowship Room. Rev. Jim Hicks is leading us in our study of the Gospel of John.



Some of you may not know but we have had the floors replaced in the pantry room, the upstairs kitchen and the front men's bathroom. The floors in the pantry and kitchen were the original floors from when the addition was added. They have had years of use by the children from the Sunday School classes and from the Day Care. It was no easy task to prepare for the new floors as everything had to be removed from the rooms. That meant all the pantry shelving and the food on those shelves had to be moved out. Appliances had to be removed from the kitchen.

Thank you to everyone who helped in any way. The new floors look great!

All three floors required a total of 675 tiles at a cost of \$7.00 per tile. That includes removal of old tile and installation of new tile. If you would like to buy a tile at \$7.00

to cover this cost, please send a check to PUCG, designating flooring.

School Bags are Packed!

Thanks to everyone who contributed in any way!
90 Church World Service School Bags have been completed and shipped.



Just a reminder to mark these dates on your calendar.

May 29th: Pie Sale

There is more information about the Flag and Pie Sale on a separate page.

June 3rd: JazzHappensBand

More information about this fun time is also located on a separate page.

We hope you can join us for both of these events.



Have you visited the Church Website??

If you have not checked out the website all you have to do is type in:

preblechurch.org



JazzHappensBand

*Coming to Preble Congregational Church
1953 Preble Road*

June 3rd 6:30 to 8:30

*No Admission Charge
A free-will offering will be accepted.*

Just a Little About JazzHappens Band

The JazzHappensBand used to be one of the Cortland area's best-kept cultural secrets, but not any more. After having played more than 100 performances (we "jazz guys" call them "gigs") in central and western New York, we're continuing to raise our profile. For more than 17 years, we seven (six outstanding musicians and I), led by trumpet virtuoso Jeff Dovi, have developed a unique style of playing Dixieland music, singing, and telling musical jokes.

The Band members are Jeff Dovi, trumpet; Mike Poole, trombone; Nick Pauldine, clarinet; Robbert van Rennasse, banjo; Jim Overhiser, tuba; Dave Alexander,

drums; and some guy on the piano who doesn't seem to have been in a good mood when the picture (below) was taken!