
~FOR

HEAVEN'S

SAKE~

Volume 18 Issue 5

May 2025

The Pastor's Pen – May 2025

Dear Church Family,

I can't tell you how happy I am that I write this letter after having completed the first mowing of the manse lawn! In some respects, it's forced exercise, but in other ways it's a great time to ponder. I started the habit of lawn mowing time being my thinking time when our sons were younger. I often said that I guarded and cherished that time because it was the only time that I had a set period of about an hour and a half when I wouldn't be able to hear my name being called. But, I truly am thankful that the days are back when getting outside is a treat to look forward to. And remember, when out and about and seeing the glory of nature rebirthing itself, or when working in the garden, keep in mind that it's all a gift to be cherished, as well as a great reminder of what Christ has done for us individually and communally. New life!

But, with this season, we're also getting into the insanity of Rummage Sale 2025. As I've said to many a person in the last two years, the rummage sale is 'a thing to behold'. The amounts of items donated, the number of attics and garages that have been gone through in order to purge. Purging is a good thing, we should all do it really, and of course, the benefit to the church is tremendous...but then, so is the work that's needed to get done in order for it to be a success. I know that in the coming weeks, we'll all be hearing the calls of 'all hands-on deck'. And I know that a lot of folks will think that they wouldn't be able to help do much of anything, but HONESTLY, if you have a couple spare hours in your day, see what's happening at the church for the rummage sale, any amount of time you can give is greatly appreciated!!!!, and just ask me, you need no special skill to do the jobs that need doing...

Also, during this season, we're going to be hearing from folks who have volunteered to share about what makes West Milford Presbyterian special to them. If you would like to share, by all means, speak to me. For some, you've raised your families in the church and so it's a long-standing loving relationship; even when moments of disappointment or upheaval have occurred. But, it's still like family, the actual church building is simply the family house, like our grandparent's house always was. And then for others, the church will mean something very different. You know that I grew up in the church and couldn't wait to get away from it, somehow, I got dragged back though, but I can tell you honestly that I've met lots of folks that for them, the church saved their lives, and sometimes very literally. For them, the church has become a safe place when the world outside can have a tendency to be not so kind. And then for others, it might be very much for spiritual reasons; like a hunger for some type of understanding that's being missed, they want to know how to get closer to God. And of course, there can be combinations of reasonings.

But the reason for some who have volunteered to share about what the church means to them, is because we'd like folks to be thinking about these questions for themselves. Like I said, I kind of

ran away from church when I went to college; I hadn't seen how it could be important for me at that point in my life. Plus, I think I needed time away to be able to see the church in a different light after having grown to adulthood. But what drew me back in was meeting and working with people who really lived what it meant to be a follower of Christ. And it wasn't that their lives were all roses and gardenias, but they didn't let things get them down or fill them with anxiety, they knew that God works in mysterious ways. And then of course, working for the church in overseas missions, and seeing how the church stewards its resources, and how PCUSA has been a literal life-line to some who had nothing but the clothes on their backs and nowhere else to turn to. Seeing that reality, and that the Roman Catholic Church wasn't the 'church universal', and that there were far more brilliant ways to approach ones' faith, I found myself in seminary, and subsequently, here with you all.

If we know what the church means to us, and to others, and see how important it truly is to our lives, I'm sure, that that attitude that folks will wear, will be a magnet to others who are out there looking for the answers, just as we are. And remember, we're all mandated to be farmers of faith, planting the seeds of faith in what we say and in what we do. True Christianity is an impressive thing!

And of course, I'm looking forward to the warm weather months and what they bring beside the rummage sale. We'll be once again hosting Oak Ridge through the month of July, and then we'll go over to Oak Ridge in August. There will also be the church picnic with Oak Ridge, we'll be having VBS again this year - thanks to Kathi & Dale who are already hard at work for that, another movie night scheduled for August, and I'm sure lots of other celebrations and occasions in which we'll gather as a family at our family house.

And I'll end on a note about bible study. Each Wednesday about a dozen, sometimes more, gather in the fellowship hall to take a look at the Scripture that will be preached on the following Sunday. We have a great time, always learn something new, we often laugh, but then also have serious conversations about serious things. And I will tell you, that most Sundays, one or two who have been to bible study always come up to me after service and tell me how much they understood the overall message of the sermon so much better because of bible study.

That's the purpose of bible study!

I know that it's not going to be for everyone, but I still invite you to come on Wednesday mornings and see what you're missing. And if Wednesday mornings at 11:00 are hard, we meet every Monday virtually at 7:30 pm. All are always welcome!!

See ya at church!

Pastor Chris

Joys & Concerns

- * Joy for the lovely turnout for Ian's Memorial service. Nice to hear from different people who knew him.
- * Greg now belongs to us! He signed his contract to be our Minister of Music-Yeah!
- * Jonathan is looking at a church in Nyack as a possible job.
- * Happy prayers for Karen who had her kidney transplant and is doing GREAT.
- * Joy for the coming of Spring.
- * Kathy praises Bible Study, which is very meaningful to her.
- * Marty had a birthday yesterday, and Gene will be 90 later this week.
- * Myrtle had a few days of pain but is feeling better.
- * Ken and Gladys are happy to have their West Virginia family visiting.
- * We celebrated our fantastic Senior Saints. We want to thank them for all they do for us to keep our old buildings in shape
- * Myrtle stopped in to the tea party and she looks wonderful after having open heart surgery. Karen had all her tubing removed on Wednesday- she is now empty! Both these women are strong and tough so they should heal well.
- * Carol and Bill are here from Florida to see her Aunt Lynn on her 95th birthday and also spend time with their adorable grandson.



- * Prayers for Marc Syvertsen's aunt Linda who had a stroke.
- * Dan is asking for prayers for Gordon Rhinesmith after his wife Nancy died. He will be traveling to PA for the funeral.
- * Walter Mattson a long time member of our church has died in WV. He was a good friend of Red's.
- * Continued prayers for Phyllis.
- * Ruth- Thanks for prayers for daughter, Jackie.
- * Mary- Her sister Jill and her husband Kevin mourning his mother Barbara's unexpected death.
- * Riley is concerned for people in West Virginia getting 70 mph winds.
- * Sandy Smidt is heading to China on Thursday, please pray for a safe trip. Erin is due on May 18th. Praying all will be well.
- * Betsy-Claire Mandeville is now in an assisted living facility in Budd Lake. It would be nice for her to hear from old friends. Pray for her.
- * Caryl grandson, Gary is marrying Nancy. Nancy is a former student of Caryl's.
- * Kit's daughter lost her friend Laurie.
- * Matt's friend Rich had a stroke.
- * Don hurt his back working in the garage on Thursday. Also hope everyone stays well during rummage sale. It would be great to have some younger folks come and help.
- * Kathy's mom, Aedoa is suffering with arthritis in her hands.
- * Prayers for Mary Macheska on the loss of her brother Joseph, please keep the family in your prayers.



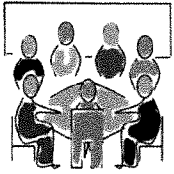
Address Information For Claire Mandeville

Bentley Commons at Paragon Village
Claire Mandeville
427 Route 46 East,
Apt# 255
Hackettstown, NJ 07480

Her direct Room Line is: 908-498-0501. (She should have voicemail set-up for her line, now)

Her Cell is: 862-221-6171

The Front Desk number is: 908-498-0100



SESSION'S REFLECTIONS

MAY 2025

SUBMITTED BY BETSY ENGELHARDT, CLERK OF SESSION

We are hopeful everyone enjoyed all the events offered during the holy week of Easter. We not only celebrated Palm Sunday but also had the pleasure of baptizing Danica Humerick during this service. Pastor Chris worked hard to prepare a Maundy Thursday service at Oak Ridge, a Good Friday service including a meager meal at West Milford, and Easter Sunday worship followed by a delicious pancake breakfast. Much preparation is required with many hands hard at work to make this all happen. We were thrilled to see many new faces fill our pews on Easter Sunday.

Thanks to the creative talents of Carol Stanhope, we are actively looking for ways to advertise all our church has to offer. An ad appears in the West Milford messenger that is updated weekly to hi-lite our many events. We make sure to appear in special ads listing holy week services offered by the paper and get blurbs published in the What's Happening this Week section of the paper. For our large fundraisers we utilize the town's community message board and the library's message board. Please let Carol know if special attention needs to be drawn to our church for future activities.

Rich Hepp volunteered to take a vacation week off from work to complete the lighting and ceiling work of Fellowship Hall the week of May 5th. He has coordinated a volunteer work team to help with this project. Painting of Fellowship Hall will be completed later in the year. Rich was also happy to announce an Eagle Scout Court of Honor for a girl in our troop that will take place May 18 at 1 PM.

We have officially hired Greg Knapp as our Music Director effective April 1st. He is excited about getting the hand bells back into action. He has a beautiful voice and has already done some creative planning with the choir anthems during Sunday services.

The congregation will be hearing special Moments for Mission in the next few weeks. We began a legacy campaign in February. Pastor Chris asked that testimonials be offered to hi-lite what this church has meant to members on a personal basis and the importance that it remains vibrant and active in years to come. I for one will look forward to hearing how our church has impacted people's lives.

DEACON HAPPENINGS

MAY 2025

I am beginning with the really happy news of April!

Palm Sunday began with the blessing of the palms by Pastor Chirs. They would be given to the congregation after the service. A few members created palm crosses. I took one to Phyllis who is in rehab. Church is very much a part of her life.

Palm Sunday is a day of joy! A triumphant day! A day to celebrate the baptism of a new baby! Pastor Chris baptized Danica Star and sprinkled her with water blessed with water from the River Jordan. He then carried her up the aisle and introduced her to us. When they reached the Sunday School children, he told her that someday she would join them.

Danica's grandparents were very moved by the baptismal service.

Danica joins Lorelei as our newest congregation members.

We held a Deacon's meeting and made a list of those whom we would send Easter cards to and tell them that we missed them and hope that they would join us in worship. Linda sent the cards. She has beautiful handwriting.

Blessings are certainly raining upon our members. Karen has a new kidney. Life does begin after 70. Myrtle successfully came through her heart surgery. Phyllis is gaining strength and hopes to return soon to her apartment.

The sanctuary was set for the Easter service. The windows were set with spring flowers. Tulips, daffodils and hyacinths surrounded the pulpit.

We are fortunate to have such a lively, busy, caring congregation. Easter season is over. We look forward to May and the beautification of the church grounds and a refurbished of Fellowship Hall.

Marty Tappan

Deacon Mocerator



WA May Newsletter

The old saying April showers bring May flowers might just be a little off this year since April has been wet, cold and SNOWY! Hopefully all our daffodils and hyacinths have survived.

So after we celebrate Easter we start concentrating on our fabulous tea party on 4/26. We never expected our chairwomen, Karen to get her new kidney so quickly and miss her favorite activity. We also didn't expect Myrtle to be having cardiac surgery. Hoping that both of them will be well enough to come and sit with us but we will not allow them to work. Others have been wonderful with offers of help since they are out of commission.

We have started packing up Aunt Jenny's Attic so we can start sorting clothes for the rummage sale. The garages will be emptied on May 24th and help with this big job would be appreciated. After that we will be working every day and love when we see new and old faces. We do have fun when we all work together.

The dates for the sale are 6/20,21,22. Sunday we need to pack up the soft goods for Monday pick up.

Come one come all and join the fun!

Stay well and enjoy your blessings.

Linda and Pam



SUNDAY SCHOOL DOINGS

Our Sunday School is planning a special opportunity for all to contribute to the Darlene Witham Scholarship. On Sunday, April 27, which is Levite Sunday, both classes will be preparing bagged bagels. The bag will include 1 bagel choice of plain, whole wheat, everything or cinnamon raisin, choice of an apple or orange and large chocolate cookie and a bottled water. All for only \$5! All proceeds going to the Darlene Witham Scholarship. Thank-you for your support.

Both classes experienced the excitement of Palm Sunday, the grief of Holy Week and the joy of Easter Sunday. On April 13, we celebrated Easter Sunday. Miss Dale's class used Resurrection Eggs and Miss Kathi's class used the "Real Easter Bunny" to convey the importance of the Easter story. Both classes then attended the baptism of Danica Star. This was followed by a fulfilled Easter egg hunt!

Levite Sunday we will be exploring how Jesus appeared to the disciples and Doubting Thomas' reaction. We will then go to Fellowship Hall to prepare the Bagel Bags.

May 4, we will be hearing of Peter bringing Dorcas back to life. Miss Kathi's class will be joining in Communion.

May 11, our lesson will be Jesus is taken to Heaven. As this is Mother's Day we have something special planned involving a craft and hosting Coffee Hour.

IMPORTANT DATES:

April 27, Levite Sunday-Bagel Bags \$5 with proceeds going to the Darlene Witham Scholarship

May 4, Miss Kathi's class attending Communion

May 11, Both classes hosting Coffee Hour



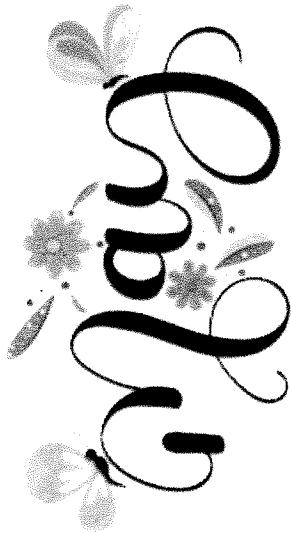
Miss Kathi and Miss Dale are grateful for your support and the opportunity to spread God's Love to the children of our Church. Thank-you!



Food Pantry News May 2025

Many of us are getting into the Spring Swing by getting our yards in shape, our homes cleaned, the windows sparkling. Last year I had mentioned that many of the families using the pantry received SNAP which is a card from the Government that helps them pay for food at the grocery store. This doesn't allow the purchase of things other than food such as paper products, toiletries, or cleaning products to name a few. Maybe this month would be the perfect time for all of us to think about donating general spray cleaners, cleaners with bleach, toilet bowl and bathroom cleansers, dish detergent, laundry detergent, sponges, window cleaners to families who don't have the means to buy these products but would love to spruce up their home during this season. Please just leave the item in the pantry or in the bin outside the kitchen door. Thank you in advance for the kindness you have shown to the folks who come to the pantry by donating in the past and for your willingness to help in the future. In gratitude, the pantry team.





2025

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	1	2	3
9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints			
30	7	8	9
11am - Bible Study @ WMPC	9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints		9am - Community Food Pantry
30	13	14	15
9am - Community Food Pantry 7pm - Session	11am - Bible Study @ WMPC	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	10am - Session & Deacons Joint
30	19	20	21
7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	9am - Community Food Pantry	11am - Bible Study @ WMPC	
30	25	26	27
9am - Worship Service 10am - Confirmation Sunday 6pm - Scouts	7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	9am - Community Food Pantry	11am - Bible Study @ WMPC
30	31	1	2
9am - Worship Service 6pm - Scouts		9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	