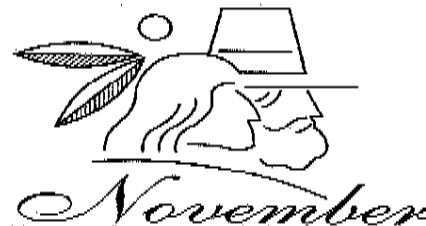


West Charlton United Presbyterian Church
 1381 Sacandaga Road, Amsterdam, NY 12010



The Beacon



WEST CHARLTON UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 882-9874 www.westcharltonupc.org 2014

Pastoral Reflection: Sharing the Word

We, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), have been in a long period of discernment around the issues of inclusion of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) people in the life of the church. The position of the church for many years was that homosexuality was not God's gift for humankind. Yet it was also stressed that homosexuality was not a bar to membership in our congregations. Over the past three decades our discernment moved to three broad areas: civil rights, ordination as a teaching or ruling elder, and civil union and marriage.

The PC(USA) has consistently advocated for civil rights for LGBT people in housing and employment. Many in the church often noted that there was a tension between the church's advocacy for human rights for LGBT people and its limitations on LGBT persons' participation in church leadership and we have faithfully tried to live within that tension. For over two decades the PC(USA) has not prohibited ministers and sessions from approving and participating in civil union ceremonies. It did, however, prohibit teaching elders from conducting same-sex marriage ceremonies. The use of marriage liturgy in civil unions also was prohibited.

But in 1996 an amendment to the Book of Order amendment was approved that expressly allowed only the ordination of persons who lived either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness. In the years following, many people wrestled with the tension between a governing body's responsibility to discern the gifts of persons for ministry and a national standard limiting that responsibility. Brothers and sisters in Christ with very different views put in many hours, days, and weeks trying to find ways to stay together and allow some discretion for individuals. The PC(USA) has had many times of discernment around issues of same-sex civil unions and marriage. In 2010 a proposal was approved to remove all of the previous authoritative interpretations on ordination and LGBT persons. The Book of Order change was adopted and the expressed prohibition was removed and replaced with giving the discernment of individual's gifts for ministry to presbyteries and sessions.

Many states within the U.S. have approved same-sex marriage. The 221st General Assembly (2014) listened to previous guidance of the church, scripture, the Book of Confessions, and stories of teaching elders and sessions who wanted to be able to conduct marriage ceremonies for same-sex couples in their congregations. The discernment of those discussions resulted in the approval of an authoritative interpretation and a Book of Order amendment permitting ministers and sessions to use their own discernment to conduct same-sex marriage ceremonies where allowed by law. That GA also included in those changes clear language that no teaching elder or session can be forced to conduct a same-sex marriage ceremony if they do not believe it is appropriate. General Assembly commissioners are charged with deciding controversies brought before it and advising and instructing in cases submitted to it, in conformity with the PC(USA) constitution and authoritatively interpreting the most recent edition of the Book of Order.

The decisions above were reached after the discernment of teaching elders and ruling elders gathered in thirty-one General Assemblies and Book of Order amendments approved by the presbyteries. These decisions have been welcomed by some and a disappointment to others.

Responding to requests from some of our members here at West Charlton UPC and though out the Presbytery, our session is encouraging all to be a part of the discussions below:

11/17 Worship that includes marriage issues with conversation following fellowship

11/22 Presbytery meeting in Cambridge

Amending the Directory for Worship – Presentation to be followed by an Open Space Discussion

11/23 Continued conversation following fellowship to discuss conversations from Presbytery meeting

(more information will be available at each of these conversations)

Let us pray that we can allow the Spirit to continue to create in us a common call to follow Christ while respecting each other's convictions.

January 24, 2015 Action on 14-F. Marriage—On Amending W-4.9000 to be scheduled for Presbytery meeting location TBD.

Peace in Christ, Pastor Tom

Minute for Mission

What does our church mean to me?

I, like you, am a very busy person. I am a wife, a mother and have a demanding career. These are three jobs that I try my best to juggle. In the midst of the chaos, I often have conflicting priorities, perspectives and goals. I spend a lot of time out of balance, or trying to stay balanced. For me, this church provides that balance. It is, in the truest sense, a sanctuary, a refuge, a place of strength and solace; a beacon in a world that can be dimly lit.

Our church is an amazing gift.

We are blessed to have such a beautiful building in such an idyllic location. We are blessed to be treated to inspiring music each week by individuals whose talent we take for granted, despite our incredible fortune to have them in a community of this size.

We are blessed to still have a full time ministry that many rural congregations have been unable to support and maintain.

We are blessed to have a pastor who is not content with the status quo, who wants to continue to learn and grow in order to be able to help guide us in our journey of faith and to take us to the next level.

I am proud to be part of a church that every month collects food and once a year takes a special Souper Bowl offering for our local food pantry, ever caring and trying to help those in need.

I am proud that we open our doors when the community needs space for Christmas and Easter basket programs.

I am proud to belong to a church that when one person voiced a concern that there was a need for school supplies for local children, this congregation stepped up and generously donated. That giving allowed children to go to school ready to learn and enjoy, and gave their parents relief from the financial stress of how to make that possible.

I am proud to belong to a church whose ministry extends to Maplewood Manor. I am proud to be part of a group that when exposed to the desperate third world conditions faced by children in Cambodia brought to our doorstep by a member of the church, rose to the occasion with heartfelt giving.

I am proud to be part of a church that supports the Presbytery Rainbow, that opens its doors for Alcoholic Anonymous meetings and whose ministry even scales prison walls in an effort to reach all and make sure that no one is forgotten. It is a ministry that celebrates that we are all welcome at God's table.

It is a privilege to be part of a church family that tries to live up to the values taught by Christ. It is the peaceful, loving sanctuary that serves to balance my hectic life. This is what our church means to me and I am most grateful for having been given the opportunity to meet all of you. I am thankful that our paths have crossed here.

Some thoughts on stewardship:

My husband and I often have a conversation about why it's more important to support this church than all the other good causes in the world. To me, it's a matter of the size of the resource pool. Millions of people contribute to the Red Cross, Salvation Army, UNICEF, and the list goes on. Scores of people contribute to the Greater Galway Community Services Association through the food pantry and holiday basket projects. Last year 37 families promised support to the ministry at West Charlton. Granted more people contribute than promise to contribute, yet our pool is still quite limited. The outreach of this church by contrast is significant. The congregation supports the food pantry, the holiday baskets, worship and visitation at Maplewood Manor, a prison ministry, counseling for those in need in and out of our fellowship and use of our building by non-profit groups throughout the community including Alcoholics Anonymous. All this is in addition to providing for Sunday worship every week of the year. That seems rather a lot for 37 families to be responsible for.

What does our church mean to me?

I, like you, am a very busy person. I am a wife, a mother and have a demanding career. These are three jobs that I try my best to juggle. In the midst of the chaos, I often have conflicting priorities, perspectives and goals. I spend a lot of time out of balance, or trying to stay balanced. For me, this church provides that balance. It is, in the truest sense, a sanctuary, a refuge, a place of strength and solace; a beacon in a world that can be dimly lit. Our church is an amazing gift.

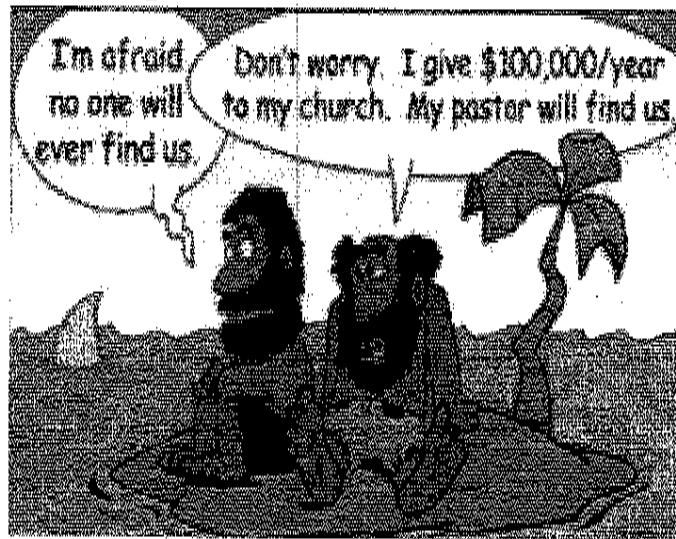
We are blessed to have such a beautiful building in such an idyllic location.

We are blessed to be treated to inspiring music each week by individuals whose talent we take for granted, despite our incredible fortune to have them in a community of this size.

We are blessed to still have a full time ministry that many rural congregations have been unable to support and maintain.

As we approach our celebration of Consecration Sunday on November 2, think of becoming one of those who promise to support our ministry in the community and in the world. We are few, but God's church began with eleven who moved out in faith and commitment. We are God's church in this place. Stewardship is acknowledging our task as caretakers of Christ's ministry.

Helen King



We are blessed to have a pastor who is not content with the status quo, who wants to continue to learn and grow in order to be able to help guide us in our journey of faith and to take us to the next level.

I am proud to be part of a church that every month collects food and once a year takes a special Souper Bowl offering for our local food pantry, ever caring and trying to help those in need.

I am proud that we open our doors when the community needs space for Christmas and Easter basket programs.

I am proud to belong to a church that when one person voiced a concern that there was a need for school supplies for local children, this congregation stepped up and generously donated. That giving allowed children to go to school ready to learn and enjoy, and gave their parents relief from the financial stress of how to make that possible.

I am proud to belong to a church whose ministry extends to Maplewood Manor.

Some thoughts on stewardship: continued from previous page

I am proud to be part of a group that when exposed to the desperate third world conditions faced by children in Cambodia brought to our doorstep by a member of the church, rose to the occasion with heartfelt giving.

I am proud to be part of a church that supports the Presbytery Rainbow, that opens its doors for Alcoholic Anonymous meetings and whose ministry even scales prison walls in an effort to reach all and make sure that no one is forgotten. It is a ministry that celebrates that we are all welcome at God's table.

It is a privilege to be part of a church family that tries to live up to the values taught by Christ. It is the peaceful, loving sanctuary that serves to balance my hectic life. This is what our church means to me and I am most grateful for having been given the opportunity to meet all of you. I am thankful that our paths have crossed here.

AWESOME IDEA FOR A FUNDRAISER...

We would like to put together a WCUPC Recipe Book as a fundraiser for the fall of 2015. This recipe book will be something we hope to make available at the Harvest Auction next year, and then have available for purchase as Christmas gifts for 2015. We will order recipe books and have them available for sale at all of our dinners/events in the years ahead. We don't have the price of the book yet; they may be approximately \$15.00 each; but the first thing we need is RECIPES.

Below are the categories we are looking for. Select some of your favorite recipes and either email them, or see me in church and give them to me. You can give me one or ten, or one in each category. If we receive duplicate recipes, we may not publish both. Your name will be added to the recipe & published in the book. I will be reminding you during the winter/spring months to keep the recipes coming. Thanks once again for your help in supporting our church.

RECIPE BOOK CATEGORIES:

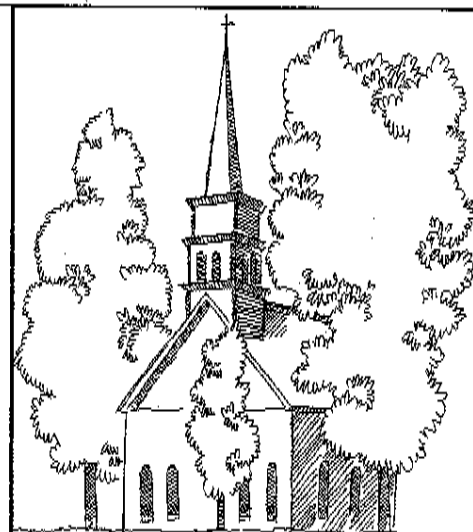
SOUPS, SALADS, APPETIZERS, MAIN DISHES, FISH, CASSEROLES, VEGETABLE SIDEDISHES, BREADS (QUICKBREADS, ROLLS, MUFFINS, ETC.), SALSAS, SAUCES, DIPS & DRESSINGS, DESSERTS (CAKES, COOKIES, PIES, ETC.), BEVERAGES, MISCELLANEOUS

November

Lay Worship Leaders

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|--|
| 2 | Marcie Page | Day light savings ends at 2:00AM, Set your clocks back 1hour. Enjoy the extra hour |
| 9 | Sharon Bellamy | |
| 16 | John M. King | |
| 23 | Bonnie Donnan | Thank Offering |
| 30 | <i>Praise Sunday</i> | |

Greeters: Lolly & Phil Arnold
Ushers: Lolly Arnold
 Mary Jane Armer
 Chris Donnan



Worship With Us

 *
 * **Flowers for the Chancel** *
 * If you are interested in giving flowers to be *
 * placed on the Chancel on a Sunday during the year- *
 * please contact Holly McConchie at 882-6516.. **Please** *
 * **fill out the form found in the Beacon** and give it to *
 * Holly or mail it to her. *
 * Please check with her to make sure no one else has *
 * chosen the Sunday you would like to give. *
 * The flowers can be taken by the person giving them, or *
 * they can be given to a person who is a shut-in or some- *
 * one not feeling well. *
 *
 * The following florists will deliver on Saturdays. You *
 * do not need to be here when they are delivered. The *
 * flowers will be placed in front of the cross in the Sanc- *
 * tuary. *
 *
 * Sweetbriar Florist located on the corner of Lake Road *
 * and Hermance by Galway Lake : 882-5132 or *
 * 882-3676. *
 *
 * Country Florist is located at 225 Kingsley Road in *
 * Burnt Hills: 399-2650 *
 *
 * Bloomfields Florist is located on Rte 30 in Amster- *
 * dam, just past Pizza hut going north: 843-2000 *
 *
 * *****

The Greater Galway Community Services Association Food Pantry has need of these items: sugar, coffee (ground regular), mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, canned meats, Hamburger Helper or the like, and cereals. Personal care items needed include toothbrushes, shaving cream, deodorant, bar soap and shampoo.

Our church collects for the pantry on the third Sunday of each month. Remember to add items to share to your shopping list that week and bring them along to help the less fortunate. The deacons deliver the collected items.

Cut out and use as your shopping list:

Flowers for the Chancel

I, _____

Would like to have flowers placed on the Chancel on _____ (Date).

Any special celebration or memorial for which you are providing these flowers:

Please give to Holly McConchie. Holly can be reached at 882-6516.

SEPTEMBER TREASURY REPORT**INCOME & EXPENSES**

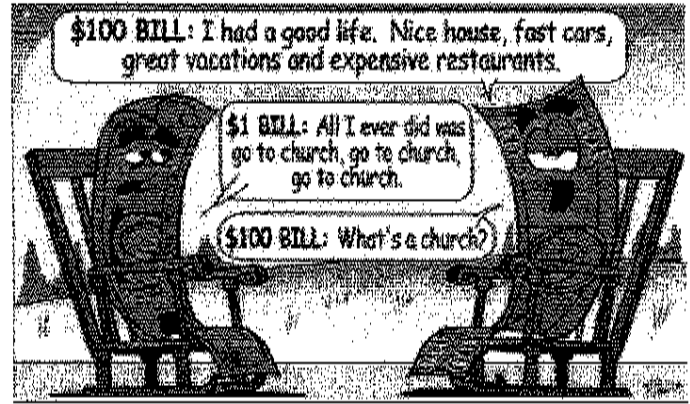
Balance	9/1/14	-4412
Receipts		11,420
Expenses		10,347
Balance	9/30/14	-3339
Deficit from previous years		-5504

SEPARATE PROJECT ACCOUNTS

Balance		16,783
---------	--	--------

LONG-TERM SAVING ACCOUNTS

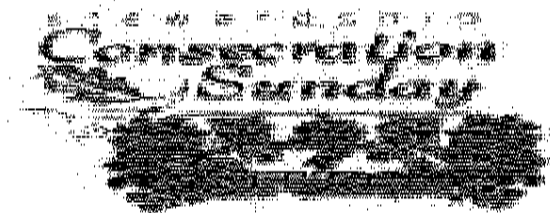
Balance		24,346
---------	--	--------

**Flowers for the Chance**

- November 2 Cornucopia by Women's Association
- November 9 Cornucopia by Women's Association
- November 16 Cornucopia by Women's Association
- November 23 Cornucopia by Women's Association
- November 30 Poinsettias given by Gary & Ann Vanderhorst

Community Basket Project is quickly approaching and we will be in need of copy paper boxes again. Boxes may be given to Holly McConchie for storage until needed in December. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Consecration Sunday Celebration Luncheon & Triennial Visit—11/2/14 noon



Members of West Charlton UPC,

As part of our celebration luncheon and in the hope of strengthening the ties between our congregation and the Presbytery, Rev. Susan Strang and Linda Scheuer have will be visiting with us during lunch to conduct our 2014 Triennial Visit with our whole membership as well as our session.

Questions for reflection—

What experiences, involving representatives of the Presbytery interacting with our congregation, have we had in the last five years that stand out in your mind (positive or negative)?

Describe our church and its people. What makes you proud of our congregation? How is it unique?

Does your church have a current Mission Statement? What does it say and how does your congregation work to fulfill it?

Do you look forward to Sunday Worship? Why or why not? What else in our ministry & mission inspires your participation?

The Triennial Visit Task Force's goals for this visit are to listen to the vision and practice of the mission/ministry of our congregation and to offer help in ensuring that we have all the resources, training and tools we need to carry out our vision.

Do you have any specific question for this Triennial Visit?

At some time during the visit, in order to give both the Pastor and the Congregation an opportunity to speak freely in the absence of the other, one of the team will speak with the Pastor alone regarding their joys and concerns. The other team member will speak to the Congregation.

When everyone attending the meeting is reunited, the joys and concerns will be shared and further discussion will take place.

During desert the Triennial Visit team will meet separately with the Session and Pastor.

Please note that in order to more freely participate in the discussion, the visiting team members will moderate the conversations dedicated to the Triennial Visit.

We value our membership in Albany Presbytery. Our Session and Albany Presbytery, thank you for your positive participation in this Triennial Visit.



Albany
Presbytery

FILM & FAITH MINISTRY—"Invictus"



FREEMAN DAMON
INVICTUS
A Clint Eastwood Production

This movie was not shown in October due to technical difficulties.

Here's the plan—When: Friday, November 7.

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Where: The Manse (Tom & Kathy Gregg's home)

Bring: Yourself and a friend

There will be pizza, beverages and dessert for supper and a basket will be passed to defray expenses. Tom know that you're coming, so we know how much pizza to order.

With time for discussion afterward, we'll be on our way home no later than 9:00. Come and enjoy this evening with your church family.

This 2009 film was directed by Clint Eastwood and stars Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon.

As Nelson Mandela is elected President of South Africa in 1994, he seizes an opportunity to unite the white and black people of his country by encouraging its (mostly white) rugby team to push itself and compete for the World Cup. This is an inspiring true story about the sound instincts of a remarkable man who understood the power of sports. It's hard to imagine anyone playing Mandela better than Freeman, and Damon is completely believable as an Afrikaner rugby star. Based on John Carlin's book, *Playing the Enemy*. If you missed this gem of a film in the theater (or even if you didn't), join us for an evening of fun, food and fellowship in this fourth movie of our film series.

~ November 2014 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 All Saints Day
2 STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY 9AM Choir Practice 10:30 Worship & Children's SS Luncheon following worship Daylight saving time ends Flowers: Cornucopia	3	4 Chariton Freehold Chicken and Biscuit Dinner	5	6	7 Movie Night at the Manse "Invictus" 6PM	8
9 9AM Choir Practice 10:30 Worship & Children's SS Fellowship Time after Worship Flowers: Cornucopia	10	11 Election Day Louise Smith Circle 9:30 AM	12	13	14	15
16 9AM Choir Practice 10:30 Worship & Children's SS Fellowship Time after Worship Flowers: Cornucopia	17	18 Veterans Day	19 Session Meeting 7PM Helen Kilcough Circle	20	21	22 Presbytery Meeting
23 CHRIST THE KING/THANK OFFERING SUNDAY COMMUNION 9AM Choir Practice 10:30 Worship & Children's SS Fellowship Time after Worship Flowers: Cornucopia	24	25	26	27 Thanksgiving Day	28	29 Maplewood Manor Service 2PM
30 PRaise WORSHIP SUNDAY COMMUNION 9AM Choir Practice 10:30 Worship No SS Fellowship Time after Worship Flowers: Poinsettias	Notes:					