

Crosscurrents

November 2010



Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church | 5299 Jamesville Road | DeWitt, NY | 13214 | 315.446.0960 | www.phpchurch.org

From Pastor Pete

Thanks to everyone who made our recent Fig Tree Assembly with Anthony Robinson such a success. There has been more “buzz” about this Fig Tree than almost any we have held since we began this ministry in 1994. I think it had largely to do with Robinson’s clear emphasis on the critical, essential and central marks of the church as key toward the renewal of the “mainline” church in our day. I think people find it refreshing and inspiring to be called to the foundations of the faith, especially in these days when there are so many “alternatives” out there to help us along in our spiritual path. Some of these alternatives are helpful, and we should draw upon them and learn from them – but in the meantime we are in danger of losing our connection with the foundations of our faith.



I think of the Apostle Paul, who writes in 1 Corinthians 11, *“For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, ‘This is my body broken for you . . .’”* We repeat these words each time we celebrate communion, words that have been shared over the central sacrament of the faith for nearly 2000 years, and, God willing, will continue to be said over the bread and cup which feed us with the mysterious and compassionate love of our creator and savior for as long as there is faith to receive it.

What we have received it is our responsibility to share. We can’t receive it only, for if we don’t share it there will soon be nothing to share. We will have forgotten the faith that formed us. I have no doubt that God continues to find ways to get His word across to a stubborn and sinful humanity, which includes ourselves. But those who have an investment in this expression of historic Christian faith, with all its faults and foibles, that has come to be known as “mainline” (and increasingly “sideline”) Protestant Christianity, have to step up to “deliver” to the world what we have received. We can’t deliver in the same ways we used to, but with hearts full of faith, along with our doubts, God will use us as the vehicles to bring the transformation God intends for us and for our world.

Yours in Christ,
Peter

The Church at Worship November 2010

Worship begins Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. All who are interested are invited to gather in the Conference Room at 9:20 a.m. to pray for our church and pastor as we worship together.

November 7

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17

“What’s So Important About Tradition?”

Sacrament of Communion

5:00 pm Jazz Vespers, “Blessings Abound” with national recording artist Tish Oney

November 14

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

“Commitment Sunday”

Luncheon follows

November 21

Christ the King

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Luke 23:33-43

Presentation of the Word:

“Back to Back Christ”

Reception of New Members

4:00 pm Thanksgiving Celebration with Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas

November 28

1st Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2:1-5

Matthew 24:36-44

“The Prince of Peace”

Advent Event to follow

Commitment Sunday November 14 “Giving to Grow, Growing to Give”

Congregations that approach financial stewardship from a biblical perspective do not view the money Christians give to their church merely as a way to pay its bills. Rather, such congregations see financial contributions as a way to help people grow spiritually in their relationship with God by supporting their church’s mission and ministry with a percentage of their incomes.

Our Commitment Sunday program at Pebble Hill emphasizes the biblical and spiritual principles of generous giving. This year we are taking as our theme, “Giving to Grow, Growing to Give,” to emphasize the priority our Session has given to growing and expanding our educational and family ministries.

Financial stewardship at Pebble Hill is based on the biblical philosophy of the need of the giver to give for his or her own spiritual development, rather than on the need for the church to receive. Instead of treating people like members of a social club who should pay dues, we will treat people like followers of Jesus Christ who want to give unselfishly as an act of discipleship. The Commitment Sunday program encourages people toward proportional and systematic giving in response to the question, “What percentage of my income is God

calling me to give?” During morning worship on November 14, we are asking our attendees and members to make their financial commitments to our church’s mission and ministry in this community and around the world.

Every attendee and member who completes an Estimate of Giving Card does so voluntarily by attending morning worship on Commitment Sunday. Those who are opposed to completing a card are encouraged to come, as the procedure is done in such a way that no one feels personal embarrassment if he or she chooses not to fill out a card.

We will do no home solicitation to ask people to complete cards. During morning worship our Commitment Sunday leaders will conduct a brief period of instruction and inspiration, concluding by worshippers making their commitments as a confidential act of worship.

We will encourage participation in “Giving to Grow, Growing to Give” events through the Commitment Sunday team (Amy VanKirk and Dan Radcliffe, co-chairs) and church officers. Since we will make no follow-up visits to ask people to complete their cards, we will make every effort to inform, inspire, and commit everyone to attend Commitment Sunday worship.

Thanks in advance for your enthusiastic participation in “Giving to Grow, Growing to Give.”

November Forums

November 7: “Imagine Syracuse and the West Side Initiative” Presented by Jessie Keating

“**Imagine Syracuse**” is a key component of citywide efforts to strengthen the Near Westside community by creating bridges to opportunity for its most valuable resource – the children. As children prosper and grow, so do families, and so do communities. Our new model brings an army of arts and child-focused organizations together under one roof to share space, staff and resources and become a resource to the neighborhood families, schools, and numerous, struggling after-school daycare programs.” –*Jessie Keating, Executive Director*

November 14: No forum. Stewardship Sunday Luncheon

November 21: Faith Forum: Our Relationship with Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas (Annual Joint Thanksgiving celebration in the afternoon)

November 28: Church-wide Advent crafts event. No forum

Rev. Karen E. Dimon Named to PCUSA General Assembly Commission on Middle Governing Bodies



21-member Commission Given Comprehensive Mandate By 219th Ga

The Rev. **Karen E. Dimon** (Cayuga-Syracuse Presbytery) has been named to the Presbyterian Church USA General Assembly Commission on Governing Bodies. Karen, who is married to our own Rev. Peter Shidemantle, has been pastor of Northminster Presbyterian Church in North Syracuse, NY since 2000. She has served as a synod and General Assembly staff member. She has also served in several capacities at the presbytery level, including moderator and member of the

Committee on Ministry, and currently as chairperson of the transition team that has developed a new staffing plan and is envisioning new vision and purpose. Dimon is her presbytery’s representative, working with three other presbyteries in the Synod of the Northeast, to explore and develop a cooperative staffing and ministry model. She was a commissioner to the 219th General Assembly (2010), where she moderated the Middle East Peacemaking Committee. To read the entire article, go to:

<http://www.pcusa.org/news/2010/10/5/members-named-general-assembly-commission-middle-g/>

October Session Notes

Began the October meeting with a brief study of the first of “The Scripture Texts that Address Church Purpose” provided by Anthony Robinson. In Genesis 12:1-4 God begins God’s reclamation project, calling Abram and Sar’ai as the father and mother of God’s people. Note that God blesses them so that they might be a blessing to others. How might that theme, “blessed to be a blessing,” describe or illuminate the nature and purpose of the church?

The Personnel Team reported that annual staff reviews are in process.

The Newcomers Class is underway, with 12 participants. New members will be received during worship on November 21.

The Property Team has been busy researching and arranging for repairs in the church building and at the manse, cutting down dead trees on the property, etc.

The end-of-month financial report for September shows that we are slightly behind in pledges received (70% received 75% through the year), but that expenditures are slightly behind budget. Budgeting for 2011 is underway.

The Pebble Hill in Mission gathering will be on Wednesday, October 27 from 7:00-8:30 in Fellowship Hall.

Joint Thanksgiving Celebration with Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas November 21, 4 p.m.

Rabbi Rachel Ain and members of Beth Sholom (children and adults) will join with us in celebrating Thanksgiving together at Pebble Hill on Sunday afternoon, November 21 at 4:00 p.m.

We will begin in the sanctuary with readings, reflection and music, with the participation of children (including Scouts) from both congregations, and combined adults choirs. This part of our celebration will last for about one half hour. We will then go to Fellowship Hall where we will engage in a cooperative service project, putting together sandwiches and lunch bags which will be taken to Rescue Mission for their distribution. At the same time we’ll share in Klezmer music (and dancing!) and refreshments.

Following last year’s celebration, the planning team from both congregations thought it would be a nice addition to do a service project together.

We hope you and your family will join with our neighbors for sharing in service in celebration of Thanksgiving.

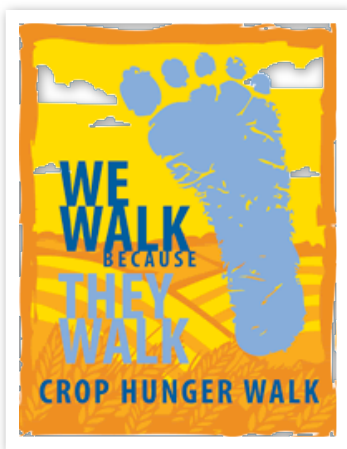
God's Messengers

Elementary kids have been learning about God's Messengers. Starting with Joseph, Moses and Aaron, we've gone on to meet Deborah, Amos, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Micah, Jeremiah and Esther. Last year we began learning the books of the Bible, and this year's lesson series helps us to better know the prophets. Here's a look at one way we worship with children: The story of Elijah's contest, with paper bag costumes and props by teacher Darlene Vinyard. Very creative, Darlene!

Elijah and the Israelites

The Prophets of Baal

Preparing the "fires"



CROP Walk 2010

Thanks to all the walkers, volunteers, and sponsors who helped make this year's CROP Walk a success. We had 201 walkers with 11 dogs, and initial results show we raised at least \$12,000. If you haven't sent in your funds, please do so. Volunteers enjoyed a pizza and salad lunch following our education hour, and our youth got so much done they had a chance to play a little basketball, too! Thank you to everyone who supported this mission.

PHPC Golf Open

A great time was had by all sixteen golfers at the PHPC Open held at The Pompey Hills Golf Club on Sept. 19. Using the captain and crew format, competition was tight with nine hole team scores only ranging from 40 to 44! Captain Don Pair's team with crew Dan Radcliffe, Bob Colvin and Pete Shidemantle emerged victorious! Golf was followed by an eight hole putting contest, a delicious BBQ chicken dinner and prizes. We're considering a spring date for next year and hope that many of you golfers who were unable to join us will be able to play then.
—Carol Ganotis



Be Part of Pebble Hill's Music Ministry!



Our Pebble Hill Choir wants to open up its ranks and receive some new voices to add to the solid core of veteran singers. The holiday season is a good time to try us out, or you may want to give it a try for a few weeks. We rehearse on Thursday evenings from 7:30-9:00, and on Sunday mornings at 8:30 (an hour before worship). As always, basses are paid extra! We welcome youth and adult voices. If you have questions, or for more information, contact Bette Kahler at 677-3518 or bkahler@twcny.rr.com.

We're planning on "mixing up" our worship music offerings in the coming year, involving children, youth and adults in a variety of ways. If you have a musical gift you'd like to share on a one-time or occasional basis – vocal or instrumental – please contact Bette, Pastor Pete, or Rebecca Chaffee or Stephanie Chow (children and youth).

Fig Tree Follow-Up — Thursdays, 6:30-7:30 PM

Those who are interested in continuing to explore the themes that Anthony Robinson raised before us at our recent Fig Tree Assembly are invited to come to our "Fig Tree Follow-Up" sessions on Thursday evenings from 6:30-7:30 (before choir rehearsal) in the church lounge. We will be reading Robinson's book, "What's Theology got to do with it?: Convictions, Vitality, and the Church." We have ordered several copies of the book, which you may purchase from the church. Please call or email the church office to reserve your copy.

Eleanor Frank



Eleanor Frank recently moved to a lovely retirement community in Florida, and folks have asked for her address which is: **421 Mapletree Drive #110**

Altoona, FL 32702

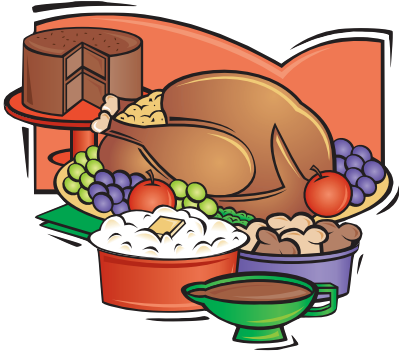
email: eleanorfrank@gmail.com



Helping Hands

Annual Thanksgiving Food Pantry Collection

Throughout the year, our congregation, led by the Board of Deacons, supports the food pantry at New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church. During November, we make an extra effort to provide special Thanksgiving food items along with regular staples for those in need.



To help with this outreach, brown paper bags will be distributed on Sundays, November 6th and 13th. Please take one (or more if you wish), fill it with groceries, and return it to church **no later than Monday, November 14th**.

In addition, the deacons would like to collect at least 25 turkeys. Donations of frozen turkeys or financial contributions for their purchase will be most appreciated. Frozen turkeys can be placed in one of the refrigerators in the church kitchen. Please notify a member of the Deacons' Food Pantry Team if you have done so. Financial contributions may be placed in the offering plate or directed to Bill Byrne, Treasurer of the Board of Deacons (checks

payable to "Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church" with "turkeys" noted on the memo line).

The food will be delivered on **Tuesday morning, November 15th**. This mission is very important as the need continues to grow. We are deeply grateful for your generous support.

Deacons' Food Pantry Team:
Nick Abu-Absi (682-9975)
Bill Byrne (682-7636)
Kate Byrne (682-2268)
Darlene Vinyard (637-5254)

Deacons Christmas Stocking Project

The annual Deacon Christmas Stocking Project is underway. This year the Deacons are providing stockings filled with necessities and toys for children in the pre-K program at Dr. Weeks School. Our need this year is for 36 stockings. Stockings can be sewn or purchased. There are stocking patterns and a list of gift suggestions near the display board in the atrium.



Items needed include hats, mittens, socks, underpants/panties (to fit 3, 4, or 5-year-olds); small stuffed animals (beanie-baby size); small toys; stickers (non seasonal); hair accessories; pencils, crayons, markers; little pads of paper; toothbrushes and toothpaste; small, easy-to-read books; wrapped candy. Please remember that it's important for all items to be sized to fit into a stocking. Items may be left in the bin by the display board. The deacons will fill the stockings.

Stockings and unwrapped fillers will be picked up on December 15, by the pre-K teacher.

Thank you all for supporting this worthwhile project, and have a wonderful holiday season! **Questions?** Contact Deacon Jinny Caswell at 637-3967. *Thank you*

Great Christian Resources

Christian Radio



K LOVE: 101.3 FM and 101.7 FM

“*Positive, encouraging*” K LOVE radio offers contemporary Christian Music, featuring such artists as Amy Grant, TobyMac, Chris Tomlin, Casting Crowns, Chris August, and Natalie Grant.

About K LOVE: It's actually all about you! At K-LOVE, we strive to give you the best music and material that you can find on the radio.

- Because we are listener supported, **we play more music...for you!**
- You're faced with enough bad news. **That's why we share positive and encouraging stories every day.**
- Our hope is to help you better understand your relationship with God **and how that applies to your everyday life.**
- We are there when you need us. **We have Pastors on staff and available to pray with you.**
- We can help you make a difference. **We'll find ways to impact your world and make it easy for you to join in.**



“I love to listen to K-LOVE in the car. I have three kids; an 11-year-old girl and boy/girl twins who are 5. My twin girl has been asking lots of questions about what the songs mean. It has been a great way for me to teach her things about the character of God.”
- Jaime

The Word: 103.5 FM

“The Word” Radio (Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo)



Our city of license is Palmyra, New York. We have been blessed with translators from Buffalo to Syracuse and many places in between that allow us to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ further than just the Rochester area. Programming features *Praise and Worship Music; Our Daily Bread; Insights for Living; Turning Point; Truth for Life; Focus on the Family*; and much more. Click to view **The Word** [Program Schedule](#) and [Ministries](#).

Great Christian Resources

Christian Radio



Mars Hill Network: 102.9 FM

Programming

A magazine format is broadcast consisting of full-length and short-feature Christian programs. The content may be preaching, teaching, devotional, interviews, dialog, drama, or a music/talk mix. National and regional news by satellite and a computer service is also available. Also aired are public affairs features and interviews, particularly on subjects and issues of relevance to the Christian community. Click to view the Mars Hill [Program Schedule](#), and for children's programming check out [Mars Hill Hilltop Kids](#).

Music

Music is used to reinforce, supplement, and connect the spoken word. Music used is clear in melody and inspirational in mood, uplifting hearts in the worship of God. It is high on Biblical message content, and low on sentimental subjective lyrics. Music is chosen in which instrumentation does not overpower the message of the words nor jar the ear in contradiction of the message. The music format is meant to stimulate the audience to respond to the presence of the Lord, in the joy of fellowship with him and fellow believers. At the same time **traditional hymns, anthems, and oratorios, being elements of the rich heritage to be found in historic church music, have a special place in the format.**

History

In February of 1966 a small group of Christians from the Syracuse area met and shared their vision for a Christian radio station in Central New York. They desired to use radio to help fulfill the Great Commission given by our Lord Jesus Christ and recorded in the Bible in Matthew 28:19,20. With much prayer and after many meetings a stock corporation was formed, Mars Hill Broadcasting Co., Inc. The stockholders elected a Board of Directors to lead their ministry. The project was financed through the sale of \$60,000 of stock and the floating of a bond issue in the Christian community.

The name "Mars Hill" was chosen by the Board of Directors because it is the name given in the King James Version of the Bible for the public forum outside of Athens where the apostle Paul preached to the Stoics and the Epicureans.

An application for a construction permit to build a radio station was filed with the Federal Communications Commission. God opened up the way as obstacle after obstacle was removed. In July 1967 construction began. Finally, on Sunday, March 9, 1969 at precisely 3:00 p.m., WMHR-FM went on the air at 102.9 MHz with the song "To God Be The Glory."



Laughing Matters

Kids in Church

A little boy was attending his first wedding.

After the service, his cousin asked him, “How many women can a man marry?”

“Sixteen,” the boy responded.

His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly. “How do you know that?”

“Easy,” the little boy said. “All you have to do is add it up, like the pastor said: 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer.”

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