

Crosscurrents

September 2011



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

From Pastor Pete

It has been a great summer at Pebble Hill. Our midweek Vacation Bible School for all ages was a lot of fun, with children and adults coming together to share a meal, laugh at silly skits, sing, study and play. Our worship this summer has involved children in meaningful ways, with lots of different music provided by lots of people. Thanks to everyone who has participated and provided leadership throughout the summer months!



As we enter September I am looking forward to another program year at the church – opportunities to share gifts and talents, and take advantage of the many ways we can grow in love and service of God, one another, and our neighbors.

At the same time there is also a bit of dread with the onset of all the “busyness” that accompanies this time of year. I try to be mindful, as scripture counsels, to consider the lilies of the field, and to let each day’s “troubles” be sufficient for the day. But even more than that, I would remind us that it is not our plans and projects that cause God to move among us. God is not impressed with our busyness, and the results we are hoping for are not necessarily what God intends. The best and most faithful thing we can do, in the midst of all the demands and all the responsibilities – as good and important as they may be – is to nurture that still and silent place within us where we can let God be God: “Be still and know that I am God.” From that quiet place we leave room for God to lead us out in compassionate love and righteous work. It’s the place from which rivers of mercy flow.

Let Christ be confessed from the center of our lives, so that who we are together and what we do together might bathe the world in just and holy love. Let others experience what flows from a heart that knows the peace of Christ. My prayer for the months ahead:

Gracious and merciful God, who knows us better than we know ourselves and who loves us more than we can love ourselves – look upon your church in this new season as a people who long to grow in your love. Through all of our plans and projects make your way known among us. Clear a path through our busy lives, and inspire a holy hope in our hearts. May our families be blessed in their life together. Help them to find the times and places to strengthen bonds of love and trust, and be nurtured in practices of Christian life. Be with the elderly who may struggle with the loss of a sense of purpose or usefulness in their lives. Your image in them is not diminished; may their lives be a powerful witness to your redeeming love. Help us all to know the joy of believing hearts, strengthened in our commitment to serve you, and empowered in our ministry to truly demonstrate your kingdom to the world. Through Jesus Christ, our risen, present Lord. Amen.

The Church at Worship September 2011

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.

September 4 – 12th Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 18:15-20

“Fighting for Love”

September 11 – 13th Sunday after Pentecost

A Service of Remembrance on the Tenth Anniversary of 9/11
Sacrament of Communion

September 18 – 14th Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 20:1-16

“Peculiar Generosity”

Kick-off for “Raising the Roof – High Hopes” campaign

September 25 – 15th Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 21:23-32

“The Authority Question”

August Session Notes

Don Pair and Bud Soper presented the recommendations of the ad hoc roof committee for the replacement of the roof over the sanctuary. Unanimously approved (*see article*).

Received a report from Rebecca Chaffee on a very successful summer Vacation Bible School for all ages, which was held on six consecutive Wednesday evenings beginning July 17. More than 60 individuals participated. The “images of God” series during worship involved 14 children in worship leadership over the summer. Plans are in place for our 2011-12 program year on Sunday mornings. Three additional Wednesday evening 6-week series will be added to our program this year, with two adult offerings, a youth offering and a children’s program.

The budget is on track through the end of July, both income and expenditures. Use of facilities by outside groups has increased over prior years.

“Raising the Roof — High Hopes”

As is obvious to anyone passing by or looking up as you enter the church parking lots, we have a lot of shingles missing from the roof over the sanctuary. We have been told for some time that it is impractical to continue to repair and replace. A special “Ad Hoc Roof Committee” appointed by the Session has been studying the issue

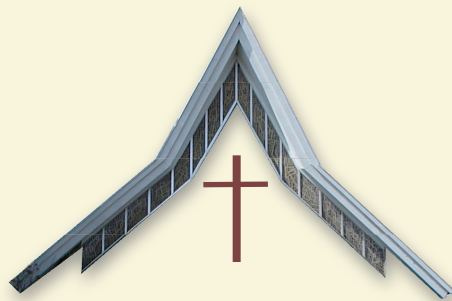
and presented a proposal to the Session at its August meeting, which was unanimously approved. The proposal is to install a GAF system, which will be warranted for forty years. We have a local contractor and are obtaining additional bids. The system allows for the installation of solar panels when they become economically viable. The same system is on the new firehouse in Fayetteville.

We have \$25,000 already contributed toward the project from the children of Jack Brown, in his memory. In addition we have received a challenge gift from another member, which will match dollar for dollar all contributions toward the new roof up to the amount of \$50,000. The present budget price is \$138,000 which will likely be adjusted downward.

We can accomplish this project by the end of October. *When we succeed we will have a new roof and not added a single dollar to the remaining debt of the church.* This brief “Raising the Roof – High Hopes” campaign will be kicked off with a special announcement at worship on September 18. A letter will be going to the congregation prior to September 18, explaining the different ways in which you can participate in “raising the roof.” Every dollar you commit will be doubled by the challenge gift.

We have “high hopes” that our “Raising the Roof” campaign will be a great success!

Thanks to members of the ad hoc committee – Don Pair, Bud Soper, Aminy Audi, John Fayos, and Peter Shidemantle (*ex officio*).



“Raising the Roof – High Hopes”

*Please help us “Raise the Roof”
at Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church
Sunday, October 2, 2011*

With

Jamcrackers

In Concert



Featuring Peggy Lynn, Dan Berggren & Dan Duggan

What: Fundraiser for new roof over our Sanctuary

Where: Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church

When: Sunday, October 2, 2011, 2:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$8 Advanced \$10 At the Door

Baked goods (including pie) at intermission

It's Back to Church School Time!

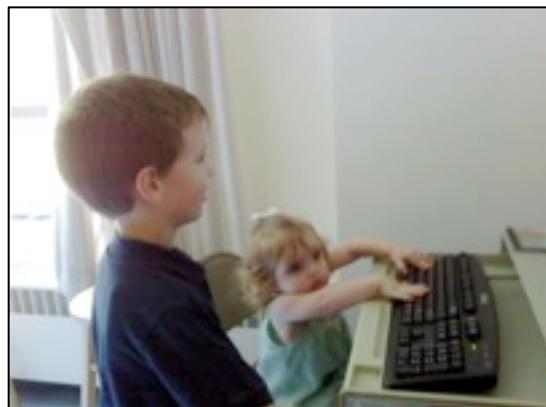
Come worship, learn, and explore with us! Classes begin 9/11/11 for all ages, nursery through adult, at 11:00 every Sunday morning. Children's worship continues at 9:45 for K-5th graders. Questions? Contact Rebecca Chaffee at kidsphpc@twcnny.rr.com.

Christian Education for All Ages 9:30-10:30 Sunday Mornings

- **Nursery—PreK**
God Loves Me storybooks, prayers, and songs are part of the short worship time in the nursery each week. 2s, 3s, and 4s will also enjoy structured play time around the story.
- **Children's Worship**
Children in grades K-5 leave the Sanctuary around 9:45 to continue worship in our Children's Worship space. This year we will follow Faith Alive's "Walk With Me" curriculum exploring Old Testament stories. Children's worship involves prayers, songs, Bible stories, and active responses to them.

11:00 Sunday Morning Programs

- **Children's Workshop**
After fellowship time, children in **grades K-4** continue to explore the lesson through games, crafts, movies, music and activities.
- **The Bible—The Story of God's Faithfulness**
5th graders will study the PC(USA) Old Testament survey class this year as preparation for Confirmation in a few years. This study of the Old Testament helps kids make connections and see the whole picture through a sequential, systematic approach to Bible Study.
- **I Know My Bible & Confirmation**
6th and 7th graders continue to explore the Bible through the PC(USA) I Know My Bible curriculum as preparation for Confirmation. This study helps participants know where the major Bible stories are and see how the Bible flows from book to book. Each section is followed by a review. A 12-week Confirmation class follows this course in the Winter.
- **Youth Class: So Great a Cloud of Witnesses**
Teens will follow the PC(USA) church history survey this year. This course explores stories of Christians trying to be faithful to God's call, beginning with the early church and moving through Roman and medieval times, the Crusades, the Reformation, Protestantism, revival, mission, the church in the 20th century and the church today.
- **Adult Small Groups and Forums**
A variety of small group studies will be offered throughout the year in 6-week blocks. Each 6-week study will be followed by a few weeks of whole-church Forum presentations or workshops.



Small Group Studies—September 11, 18, 25, and October 2, 9, and 16

- **Surprised by Meaning: Science, Faith, and How We Make Sense of Things**
Dan Radcliffe leads this study based on a book by Alistair McGrath, a nontechnical discussion of science and faith. Are belief in science and the Christian faith compatible? Does the structure of the universe point toward the existence of God? Both science and faith help with the overriding human desire to make sense of things. Books are available for \$12.

- **What's the Least I Can Believe and Still Be a Christian?: A Guide to What Matters Most**

Pastor Pete Shidemantle leads the first of two studies of a book by Martin Thielen. Thielen's Top Ten lists of what we don't and what we do need to believe in order to qualify as "Christians" shows that while we must always take the Bible seriously, we don't always have to take it literally. This study articulates centrist, mainline Christianity in a way that helps newcomers and others sort out the basics of faith. Books are available for \$11.

- **Ephesians Group**

Our Ephesians Group continues to gather for intensive Bible study led by members of the group. Contact Bill Byrne or Kathy Fanella for more information.

Forum Presentations

- **Living the Mission Forums—October 23, 30, and November 6**

Join together with the Living the Mission group to explore tangible ways we as a church and as individuals can live into our Mission Statement. This interactive and relevant series of workshops for all adults offers new insights into what matters most in our congregation and in our lives.

- **Stewardship & Our Spiritual Gifts Workshops—November 13**

On Stewardship Sunday, explore our spiritual gifts and our commitment wall as we find practical ways to live out our mission in the life of our congregation. The Stewardship Luncheon follows.

- **The Advent Project Forum—November 20**

Churches have lost the Advent season to the culture of Christmas. Decorations appear in stores as early as September, and even churches that do observe Advent see it as a time to prepare for Jesus' birth. Jill Burnett Comings joins us for a Forum presentation on The Advent Project, a proposal to revitalize Advent and reclaim the season from the Christmas culture.

Communion Event

As we approach World Communion this year, we offer a new Communion Event to teach, explore, and affirm the Sacrament and what it means for us personally and in the life of our church. Join us on Wednesday night, September 28th, at 5:30 and experience bread baking for World Communion, a soup and bread supper, and a Last Supper reenactment, along with Communion training for children.

Save the Date For: CROP Walk-World Food Day

35th Annual Syracuse/East CROP Hunger Walk

October 16, 2011

Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church

Check-in time: 1:30 p.m.



Join our TEAM as a CROP Hunger Walker or Spirit Walker.



You can register or donate online:

http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/TR/2011FallCROPHungerWalk/TR-Fall2011?pg=entry&fr_id=12980

Please contact Karen Low Radcliffe at kplow@syr.edu or 656-4201.

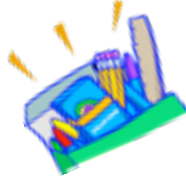
Health Kits and School Kits Needed

Church World Service and our commitment to this mission outreach is always ongoing. With the school supplies that were on hand I was able to assemble 16 school kits, but now both school items and health items have been depleted. With the help of our church family, we need to replenish our supply.

The following items will be needed:

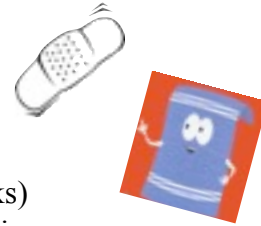
For School Kits:

- 1 - 12 inch ruler
- 1 - hand held pencil sharpener
- 1 - large eraser
- 1 - pair of **blunt** scissors
- 1 - box of crayons - 24 count only
- 3 - 70 page spiral notebooks
- 6 - new pencils with erasers
- 3 - wide-rule spiral notebooks (70 pages)



For Health Kits:

- 1 - wash cloth
 - 1 - hand towel
 - 1 - nail clipper
 - 1 - large comb (no picks)
 - 6 - band-aids, regular size
- Collect items separately or put all items in large zip-lock bags
We have soap bars and toothbrushes in stock



Blankets may also be purchased for \$5, and would be greatly appreciated. If you would like to help, donations can be made to buy items to make or complete a kit, or to cover shipping costs. You may leave any donated items in the large plastic containers located on the shelves to the right of the church entrance.

We have always opened our hands and hearts to those in need. Thank you for your help!

Questions? Call Shirley Weimar at 682-6586. –Shirley Weimar *Mission Women's Association*

PHPC Golf Open

Save the date for the next PHPC Open set for September 18 at Pompey Golf Club! Only limited golf ability required, as it is a TEAM event and we only play 9 holes! Plan to join in the fun with dinner and prizes following golf! Watch for details, as the date gets closer. *Co-chairs Ruth Colvin and Carol Ganotis*



Presbyterian Women's Fall Tea

Please save Wed., Sept. 14th, for the PW Fall Tea. We are looking for childcare (paid) for that afternoon. If you know someone who would be willing, please contact Doris, 446-2891.

Also, the 2011-2012 study guide, *Confessing the Beatitudes*, is available now in the Commons on Sundays, after worship.

Doris Gorman



Something Old and Something New in ACTS

Since 2006, the Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse (ACTS) has had teams working in five areas that people in the member congregations are concerned about:

- Criminal Justice
- Health Care
- Economic Development/Jobs
- Youth
- Food Access

In some of these areas, substantial changes have been achieved that benefit families here in central New York.

But times have changed, new congregations have joined ACTS, and different people are involved in its activities. So ACTS is looking again at its priorities, to discern what areas its members would like to address in the coming years. It's doing this by encouraging each member congregation to have a "listening campaign, to identify what our priorities are for this community.

Here at Pebble Hill, we began that campaign when a dozen church members gathered after the Sunday service at the end of July, to hear about ACTS and share their ideas about its future direction. Through September, there will be individual conversations with our members and friends, to refine our church's ideas about our community's needs and our interests and concerns. If you haven't been contacted, but would like to share the concerns you would like to address in company with people in other churches and groups in the Syracuse area, speak with Rev. Pete Shidemantle, Earl Arnold or Gloria Hooper-Raspberry to schedule a conversation.

God is doing new things here in Central New York; which ones do we want to be partners in?

Submitted by Earl Arnold

Birth Announcement

The Ryans have another grandchild! Margaret Marie Ryan (aka Maggie) joined big sister Caitlin, and Mom & Dad, Chip and Sarah on June 9. She weighed in at 7 lb. 15 oz., 19 ³/₄" and is another cutie!

Ed and Pam Ryan



Session Report August 2011

VBS

This summer our congregation “Lived in the Light” during our Wednesday night Vacation Bible School series. Our program brought a total of 63 members and guests for supper and workshops over 6 Wednesday nights in July and August. Six Bible stories woven together through images of light provided the framework, an intergenerational time of worship, music and drama kicked off each program, and four workshop series gave kids, teens, and adults a chance to explore and engage.



Summer Images of God

Summer Sundays were enhanced by our “Images of God” Psalm series, featuring words and illustrations from Marie-Helene Delval’s book of the same name, visual displays each Sunday, and lots of worship leadership by lay people, children and teens. Six adults led Time with Children, and 14 children led the Responsive Psalm. We enjoyed music and dance, origami, and sign language as part of these moments in worship.



Welcome New Members!



LarScenia Thomas

Behealed12@hotmail.com

First Friend – Ethan Gilbert

LarScenia is a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She has served the human community as a Family Therapist in the area of Prevention, with Steinway Child and Family Mental Health and Preventive Services, Queens NY, and as a Teacher of Special Education, Bronx NY for many years. She is a graduate of The New York Theological Seminary NY, class of 1990. She is an Ordained Elder. She has served as a teacher of in-depth Bible Study and Practical Theology, with a focus on Leadership Development and Nurture, and church missions in several Presbyterian Churches within the Presbyterian Church U.S.A for many years.

LarScenia's greatest passion is “the Glory of God, hanging out with her family and grands, and gazing up at the beautiful seamless sky!” Her hobbies are: music in all forms (with the exception of *hard rock*); reading classical autobiographies of the history of men and women of the Christian Faith; and hearing the faith stories of the multicultural community.



Karen Low Radcliffe 656-4201

7111 Copenhagen Circle, East Syracuse, NY 13057

kplow@syr.edu

First Friends -Dan Radcliffe and Cindi Ferguson

“I began attending Pebble Hill three years ago with Dan, and I am very pleased now to have made it my—and our—spiritual home. A Syracuse native, I graduated from SUNY-Brockport and lived in Pennsylvania and Long Island before returning to Central New York some years ago. I am blessed to have my children, Brian and Michelle, my parents, and my sister (and her family) living in the Syracuse area.

I work at Syracuse University, where I have responsibility for administration and finance in the Syracuse Biomaterials Institute. Although the pace can be frenetic, I enjoy the engagement with students and faculty at our new research facility in Bowne Hall.

Dan and I enjoy spending time with friends and family, especially having them share meals with us at our home. We just celebrated our 2nd anniversary in June (having been married by Pastor Pete) and have decided to be permanent newlyweds.

Thank you, Dan, Cindi, and everyone at PHPC for welcoming me into the Pebble Hill family.”



Laughing Matters

Great Church Signs

God answers Knee-Mail.

Honk if you love Jesus. Text while you're driving if you want to meet him.

Free coffee. Everlasting life. Yes, membership has its privileges.

Be as good a person as your pet believes you are.

God is Perfect. Only man makes mistakes.

Let's meet at my house before the game Sunday. Love, God.

Prayer is wireless access to God with no roaming fees.

Forgive your enemies. It messes with their heads.

There are some questions that can't be answered by Google.

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

Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Peter Shidemantle ~ *E-mail:* petephpc@twcny.rr.com

Music Director/Choirmaster: Bette Kahler ~ *E-mail:* bkahler@twcny.rr.com

Director of Family & Educational Ministries: Rebecca Chaffee ~ *E-mail:* kidsphpc@twcny.rr.com

Office Administrators: Patricia Carroll, Carla Kinney ~ *E-mail:* patphpc@twcny.rr.com

Bookkeeper: Cindy Wakeman ~ *E-mail:* cindyphp@twcny.rr.com

Sexton: Bob Wolff ~ *E-mail:* bewolff@msn.com

Coordinator, New Member Ministries: Nancy Byrne ~ *E-mail:* nancyphippbyrne@gmail.com

Clerk of Session: Doris Gorman ~ *E-mail:* dorisgorman@verizon.net

Moderator of Deacons: Janet Rider ~ *E-mail:* laughonu2@aol.com

Crosscurrents Editor & Webmaster: Kathy Monaco ~ *E-mail:* kcmcreative@aol.com