



PAL PRES

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION

PALISADES
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH



— REFLECTIONS —

“What we need is here.”

-Wendell Berry

“I’m spiritual but not religious” is a phrase I hear often from people who do not go to church. I would imagine, however, that if asked, most people who do attend religious services would respond the same way. The idea that we find God in a church building or within a particular denomination or even in particular sacred texts or creeds is no longer the driving force behind a person’s spiritual journey or quest. More and more people are searching outside institutions for the “Transcendent More” that some call the Divine and are asking the question: “Where is God in my life?”

Lent comes early this year, I’ve barely put away my Christmas decorations, and during this time of sacred reflection I plan to think about this question in a sermon series inspired by Diana Butler Bass’ new book *Grounded: Finding God in the World – A Spiritual Revolution*. In her book, Ms. Bass argues that what appears to be a decline in religion is actually a major transformation in how people understand and experience God. A leading commentator on religion, politics and culture, Ms. Bass observes how this shift, from a vertical understanding of God to a God found on the horizons of nature and human community, is at the heart of a spiritual revolution that surrounds us and is challenging our institutions: religious, political and social. Hitting the nail on the head, Ms. Bass writes: “Now, however the personal, mystical, immediate, and intimate is emerging as the dominant way of engaging the divine. What was once reserved for a few saints has now become the quest of millions around the planet—to be able to touch, feel and know God for one’s self.”

Does this make the church obsolete? I don’t think so. In fact I think Christianity, in particular, has much to offer those on this path. At the heart of the Incarnation is precisely this understanding: God who is with us. Jesus preached about a reign of God present to us in the here and now.

But this does not mean the church will not have to go through its own transformation. We need to hear the voice of the Spirit calling us to venture outside the beloved walls of our buildings. We need to make our sanctuary a place for exploration, conversation and dialogue. There is no better place to start than from where we are. Throughout the season of Lent there will be opportunities to enter into the conversation here at Palisades Church. I plan to join the Spiritual Revolution. Hope to see you there.

Blessings,
Angela

Session Committee Chairs for 2016

Nominating: Lois Collura

Operations: John Cuccia

Personnel: Lori Hylton

Stewardship: Nina Von Eckardt

Worship: Michael Shapiro

Mission: Roger Buck

Please think of ways you would like to be more involved in the work of the congregation this year. February is the time our newly elected leaders begin planning with their committees for the year to come and welcome new ideas and energy. Speak to Angela, one of the Elders or Kim to learn about how your gifts and interests can help support the work and mission of our church.



Stained Glass Restoration

A project to raise funds to restore, clean, re-lead and install protective coverings to 18 stained glass windows in the sanctuary was begun shortly after the church’s 150th anniversary. Willet-Hauser Studios, creator of the Helene Stansbury window, provided a comprehensive plan (approved by the operations committee) to do the restoration as well as to install hardware so that the sanctuary windows could be opened, properly sealed and latched. The year-end appeal letter, written by John Guzewich and Carol Knudson and coordinated by Stewardship Chair Nina Von Eckardt, raised more than \$9,100 to date. Along with funds raised from the 150th anniversary, we have almost reached our goal to start this project. Thanks to all who have supported the restoration of our beautiful sanctuary windows! Additional contributions are welcome.

Confirmation For Adults

Ever wonder about the basics of our faith in the Reformed Tradition? Or, more specifically, what it means to be a Presbyterian? Or, maybe you are just curious about what it means to be a part of a faith community. If so, join us for a potluck dinner and conversation on Sunday afternoon February 7 at 4:00 p.m. The “confirmation class” for adults is for old members, new members, or anyone who is curious and wants to join the conversation. The afternoon will be led by Rev. Dr. Susan DeGeorge, the *Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Hudson River. Susan is a great speaker and it is sure to be a fun afternoon. There will be a sign-up sheet for food and dessert in the Parish House.

(*If you don’t know what a Stated Clerk or a Presbytery is, this class is especially for you.)

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sunday Worship 10:00 am
Bible Study Wednesdays 12:15 pm

February 7 Communion
4:00 pm Potluck and Confirmation
for Adults with Susan DeGeorge
February 9 7:30 pm Session
February 10 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service
February 25 6:45 pm Prayer Group

DEACONS' CORNER

John Guzewich, Margaret Allen, and Joanne Conde joined the board of Deacons in January. Denise Cae Tiberis was elected moderator for the upcoming year. Stephen Van Dyk will be the Joys and Concerns Deacon and will get prayer requests to the prayer chain. Please let Stephen know if you want to be on the prayer chain. Contact Jim Rubenstone if you need a ride to worship and Margaret Allen if you or someone you know needs food brought to their home. Deacons continue to be busy with coffee hours and communion preparation.

The Parkinson's Disease support group

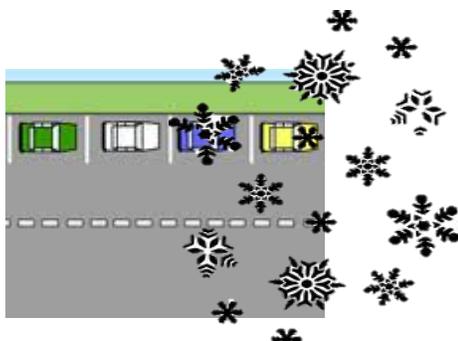
sponsored by the Nyack Hospital Foundation meets every Wednesday from 10:00 am to 11:00 am in the Palisades Mall. A licensed physical therapist provides an exercise class, in chairs, for members who have Parkinson's, and caregivers meet separately. Participation is free and all are welcome. For more information contact Ann McGill at 845-634-0729 or amcgill1@optonline.net.

Prayer Group

Have you ever longed for a place to share your prayer needs with others? A place to be supported and cared for spiritually? If so, come to our new prayer group. Prayer connects us to God and to each other in a unique way and lifts our spirits, literally. We will be meeting at the church on the fourth Thursday of the month from 6:45 to 8:00 pm. **Our next meeting is Thursday, February 25.**

Parking Reminder

During the snow season, everyone must park on the south side of the street (the church side) so that traffic can pass when the snow piles up.



Weather Alert

In the event of an extreme weather event, please call the church and listen to the message or check the church website to find out if worship is canceled. Notice will be given by 8:00 am on the day of the service.
www.palpresny.org



One Great Hour of Sharing

“Serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received” (1 Peter 4:10). Through our gifts to OGHS we can serve people in our community and around the world by alleviating hunger, rebuilding after crisis or catastrophe, and working with communities to overcome oppression. Presbyterians have a history of working to build a more just, resilient, and sustainable future. When you give to One Great Hour of Sharing, you are supporting the gifts and talents of people and communities all over the world. Below are some examples of work done with previous gifts:

- 220,000 people received food, water, shelter, and medical care in the aftermath of the Nepal earthquakes (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance).
- Over 308,000 people in over 30 countries now have increased food security and livelihoods through international development work (Presbyterian Hunger Program).
- More than 10,000 children and their families in the Dominican Republic have access to clean water, helping to prevent water-related diseases (Self-Development of People).

At Palisades, we have our OGHS campaign during the season of Lent. For several Sundays in February we will learn about various OGHS programs. You may use the special OGHS envelopes in the pews or simply write OGHS in the memo portion of a check written out to the Palisades Presbyterian Church. All gifts are tax deductible- and 100% of your donation goes to the OGHS programs.