

# The Barnet Messenger

A Newsletter from the Barnet Presbyterian Church



February 2020

Volume 20, Issue 1

Hope gives wings to our dreams...  
Faith gives them flight

Pastor's Corner  
Pastor Bob Rochelle

## *pb's pen*

It has been some while since I penned a newsletter piece. I trust my “touch” with words has not suffered for it. *Facility at a computer keyboard may be altogether another matter – it has been eight years since I went from computer only to I-pad only. The recall-learning curve is lo-o-o-o-o-ng indeed!* The interim pastoring “touch,” however, feels as sensitive as ever.

That said, allow me to introduce myself. My history as Minister of Word & Sacrament is just north of fifty years and includes: installed pastor with four congregations, assistant pastor with one, pulpit/stated supply pastor with three, and intentional (trained) interim with six – yes, Barnet will be number seven. Woven into the years of pulpit/stated supply was time spent as a caseworker-therapist with Family Services of Chemung County in Elmira, New York. Truly a varied career in the course of which a range of skills have been honed.

Preparing a PIF (*Personal Information Form, our denomination's tag for a professional resume*'), includes a self-descriptive narrative about one's strengths. All but the final five of my narratives are wandering in the distant recesses of aging memory. The “winning” narrative came to this firstborn of a New Jersey carpenter-turned-custom-home-builder, when I reflected on my early years working summers with my Dad. I described how clear plans, both accurately read and skillfully implemented, produce reliable quality results. Much like capable intentional pastoring. Today, I add to that image what I experienced during both those teenage summer hours and a decade rubbing shoulders with committed casework staff: that, the collegial blending of knowledge and talent produces results which exceed our individual efforts.

Our time together will be just such a collegial blending. I have experienced your welcoming spirit and energy the two Sundays I supplied the Barnet pulpit, in the two interviews with Session and in the course of learning about your ministry in the larger Barnet community. This spirit and energy will serve us well as we address the interim tasks:

1 – *Coming to terms with congregational history.*

2 – *Discovering a new identity.*

3 – *Addressing leadership & structural changes.*

4 – *Rethinking wider church linkages (eg., Presbytery, et. al.).*

5 – *Committing to new leadership and a new future.*

More than stepping out of retirement, I see this interim journey as a joyful blending of our varied strengths. As we walk this common path of discipleship, let us be watchful for every touch of God's grace along the way.

*In one peace -  
pb*

Deacon's Message

Thank you to our church family for their generous support of the Angel Tree. There were many gifts placed under the tree and delivered to the Justice Restorative Center in St. Johnsbury. Many people comment that shopping for these gifts make the Christmas season very meaningful as we think about the great gift that we have received.

The Deacons welcome Lana Hale and say thanks to Deb Locke and Irene Cheney.

Thanks also to our Elders who have led weekly services, making sure that our church continues as a vibrant group of worshipers. The Christmas Eve service was outstanding and so appreciated by our members as well as our guests.

We look forward to Rev. Rochelle's leadership during the transition period as the search for a permanent pastor gets underway.

We are seeing more sunlight every day-- Spring must be on the way!

A Special Valentine

For God so loVed the world  
that he gAve  
His onLy  
BegottEn  
SoN  
thaT whoever  
believes In Him  
should Not perish  
but have Eternal life.

John 3:16

Thoughts . . . "Using Tools"  
By Merle Fitzgerald

A long-gone friend, a carpenter, used to say, "Take good care of your tools and they will take good care of you." Metaphorically, he meant that he could make a better life for himself with a sharp saw than with a dull one.

We all have many tools that, if properly sharpened, can make our lives better. One of these is public speaking.

Each of us is unique, not only in appearance but also in thinking, understanding, and problem solving. Each of us has something to offer that can be of tremendous value and benefit to others. The inability to share our thoughts publicly can prevent us from making our fullest contribution to our society.

In a Town Meeting in Chelsea some years ago, a controversial issue was debated, sometimes

heatedly, for a long period of time and was finally resolved in a somewhat inadequate way. The next day as I visited with a local garage mechanic, he described the issue perfectly and stated what seemed to me to be a perfect solution. His position on the issue was unique, and had not been suggested the previous day.

“Clarence,” I asked, “why didn’t you say that at the meeting? It hits the nail squarely on the head.”

“Why, he replied, “I could no more get up and speak at a public meeting than I could cut off my hand.”

Many people share this problem. They have great ideas, original thoughts, intelligent solutions—but a great deal of difficulty in communicating them publicly. For many, speaking in public is nearly as easy as saying hello to a friend. For others, it seems almost impossible.

For those of us who do it easily, it is probably because we have already done it a lot. As a young person, I could not do it at all. In high school and college, it was hard for me to even ask a question in class. Later on, as a teacher, and then as a school administrator, speaking in the classroom and in public meetings became an absolute necessity. It also became increasingly easier, as my confidence grew. I found early on that it requires significant confidence to present and defend an increased school budget to a gymnasium full of relatively hostile taxpayers!

Public speaking is not a “gift.” It is an acquired skill that can be improved through practice, as are all skills. For example, a person who shoots a basketball five hundred times a day tends to become a better shooter than one who shoots none!

We all have the basic tools to speak effectively in public. We can speak, we can think. We have good and original thoughts. How do we sharpen these tools?

Begin by daring to try. Pick your spot. Be prepared. Know what you want to say. Practice, if necessary. Memorize, if necessary. Stand up. Begin. Finish. Sit down.

Remember that the more brief your comments, the more they will be heard and remembered. The first time is the hardest. It gets easier. Good luck!

Giving  
Celina Wright

A few years ago, I made the decision to give every week, whether I attended Sunday Services or not. For me, this connection to and responsibility for my Church has resulted in a deeper relationship with God, and a greater sense of peace. To quote Stewart, “I give to the Church when I’m not there because I want it to be there when I get back”.

I don’t really have the gift to write about giving, so I did what I usually do when I’m searching for words - go online. This is what I found.

(Also, a reminder that you can take a credit for charitable contributions on your Vermont tax return.)

Why Give Back to God?

Giving our tithes and offerings reflects a grateful heart that wants to give back to God a portion of what He has given us; in reality, what is already His. This is our opportunity to show God that He is first in our lives. The Bible says, The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives (Deuteronomy 14:23 TLB). Tithing is a reminder that God is the supplier of everything we have. It is also God’s personal invitation to an outpouring of his blessing in your life.

FOUR REASONS TO GIVE BACK TO GOD

Giving is a Reflection of the Heart:

Matthew 6:20-21 “Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

What’s the most important thing to you? We see the way our culture encourages us to store up treasures

on earth and exalts materialism. We can probably even recognize that truth by looking at our own checkbooks. As Christ-followers, however, we are called to free ourselves so that our resources are available for His purposes.

#### Giving is a Reflection of Priorities:

Long before tithing was a practice of the Israelite people, Cain and Abel, the 2nd generation of the human race, brought an offering to the Lord. Abel brought the “firstborn of his flock,” while Cain brought “some of the fruits of the soil.” The Lord blessed Abel’s offering, but rejected Cain’s. God wants to be first in our lives.

Deuteronomy 26:1-2 “When you have entered the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance and have taken possession of it and settled in it, take some of the firstfruits of all that you produce from the soil of the land and present them to the LORD your God.” (NIV)

#### Giving is a Privilege:

The first Century church modeled for us what it means to give generously and joyfully so that more and more people could find their way back to God. 2 Corinthians 8:2-4 “Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.” (NIV)

#### Giving is a Blessing:

### Joys and Concerns

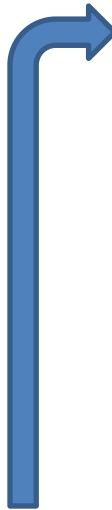
Joys: Interim Pastor Bob, Margaret Strobidge turned 100! Vanessa and Aaron’s new baby girl, Holly, good outcomes on surgery – Tom, David Jewell, feeling the presence of Pat Jones in Church  
Health Concerns: the Browsers, the Baileys, Linda Speer, Alice’s grandson  
Other Concerns: family of Marlisa’s brother, John

### Upcoming Events

March 28, Sat at 6:00 pm Mud Season Concert and Potluck Dinner  
Easter is on April 12: Sunrise Service and breakfast at Barnet Center Church  
Worship at 10:00 am at West Barnet Church  
Maundy Thursday Service on April 9th

God uses the tithe as an investment where everyone involved gets a return. If we are blessed beyond our needs, it is not for the purpose of living more lavishly but to bless others. The church and the kingdom are blessed, and yet God’s nature is to also bless the giver.

Malachi 3:10 “‘Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.’” (NIV)  
<http://communitycc.com/give/whygive/>



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