

The Barnet Messenger

A Newsletter from the Barnet Presbyterian Church



August 2020

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

Pastor's Corner
Pastor Bob Rochelle

pb's pen

The further we live into this pandemic, with what 'feels' like no end in sight, it sometimes seems our prayers and praying them is having little effect. Beyond frustrating, it can easily appear pointless, this praying business. And yes, I have my own despairing moments of wondering what good *are* the prayers? Logic has no foothold in the face of despair and frustration. So, today I remembered to sit still and 'listen' . . . not with my head, rather with no thinking, just being still. Some while later, one of the wise folk I've learned to trust and respect, came into my head. So I went to the bookshelf and took one of his works down. The following piece is a peace I again 'learned', and am pleased to share for whatever it may offer you. From his book **The Prophet**, here are Kahlil Gibran's words on prayer –

Then a priestess said, Speak to us of Prayer.

And he answered, saying:

*You pray in your distress and in your need;
would that you might pray also in the fullness of
your joy and in your days of abundance.*

*For what is prayer but the expansion of yourself into
the living ether?*

*And if it is for your comfort to pour your
darkness into space, it is also for your delight to
pour forth the dawning of your heart.*

*And if you cannot but weep when your soul
summons you to prayer, she should spur you again,
though weeping, until you shall come laughing.*

*When you pray you rise to meet in the air
those who are praying at that very hour, and whom
save in prayer you may not meet.*

*Therefore let your visit to that temple
invisible be for naught but ecstasy and sweet
communion.*

*For if you should enter the temple for no
other purpose than asking you shall not receive:*

*And if you should enter into it to humble
yourself you shall not be lifted:*

*Or even if you should enter into it to beg
for the good of others you shall not be heard.*

*It is enough that you enter the temple
invisible.*

I cannot teach you how to pray in words.

*God listens not to your words save when
He Himself utters them through your lips.*

*And I cannot teach you the prayer of the
seas and the forests and the mountains.*

*But you who are born of the mountains
and the forests and the seas can find their prayer
in your hearts,*

*And if you but listen in the stillness of the
night you shall hear them saying in silence,*

*“Our God, who art our winged self, it is
thy will in us that willeth.*

It is thy desire in us that desireth.

*It is thy urge in us that would turn our
nights, which are thine, into days which are
thine also.*

*We cannot ask thee for aught, for thou
knowest our needs before they are born in us:*

*Thou art our need; and in giving us more
of thyself thou givest us all.”*

Trusting that Gibran’s wording
may ‘find’ a helpful place in head and heart, I
close with another poet’s line – “A poem should
not mean but be.”

In one peace – pb

Update on Pastor Search

At their 7/29 meeting, Presbytery’s COM
(Commission On Ministry) approved the
Presbyterian Church of Barnet’s Mission Study
& Statement. This approval gives Session the
OK to form a PNC (Pastor Nominating
Committee). This work got underway

Wednesday 8/5. It is a prayer-full, prayer-guided
process and will take a few weeks to
complete. The prayers of every member and
friend of the congregation for this work are both
asked for and much appreciated. Once a PNC
chairperson and members are nominated, a special
meeting of the congregation will be called, at
which members will be asked to vote to elect those
nominated. Center Church worked well this past
Sunday, our worship seeing extra attendance as we
remembered the life of Marvin Bailey. This venue
can work for holding this special meeting and
maintaining appropriate physical distancing while
masking.

I anticipate taking opportunity at that
meeting to host a conversation around the
collective memory of the past two long-term
ministries here in Barnet (7 years and longer area
recognized as ‘long term’). Your ‘collective
memory’ will be most helpful to the newly-elected
PNC as they get oriented to and begin their task of
seeking the best candidate to bring before you for
election as the next installed pastor. It will also
help Session and myself as we give time to 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.*

Our journey together has been anything but
‘typical,’ for sure! The COVID-19 pandemic
landing shortly after Howard Gaston’s leaving and
right on the heels of my arriving, has made for a
more-than-memorable moment. I had barely
begun making pastoral visits to get acquainted
when a shift to phone ‘visits’ became necessary.
Session struggled through two “Zoom” meetings
before returning to the church undercroft with
masks and physical spacing; worship moved to my
living room for one week with a FB post, then for
15 weeks with Amanda, John and me “hanging
out” in the sanctuary before going live-feed on FB.
Session worked out a plan for returning to the
sanctuary at the end of June, under careful safe

parameters. Church school teachers met and organized a “Staycation” Bible School curriculum, complete with its *Flat Jesus* signature piece (keep watching for where my own *Flat Jesus* has been each week this month).

Through it all, the spirit of Barnet Presbyterians and friends has been refreshing, strong and a distinct pleasure to be both working with and serving as interim pastor! Any further challenges from this pandemic will be squarely met and appropriately managed with the same faithful confidence. All thanks be to God! Stay safe, well and ever in one peace –

pb

Deacon’s Message

Dealing with Covid-19 and all that entails makes for some major changes in our lifestyle and social activities. Appreciating the positive—our area has been spared the large number of cases that other areas have endured. And where better to spend a summer than in the green hills of Vermont, the surrounding area with beautiful fields and lovely small villages, sunny days and cooler nights? On the other hand, there is the social distancing that doesn’t come naturally when we see our friends and neighbors, wearing masks, and all the changes for our school children.

We are so fortunate that our church services have been aired weekly on Facebook, and Pastor Bob’s Tuesday and Thursday 10-Minute Meditations also; that we have been checking on our church family via the Elders telephone “tree” and that all precautions are being used now when we do gather for Sunday services.

We look forward to life returning to “normal” and will have a greater awareness of all that good in our lives.

Until then we will continue to follow healthy habits and look forward to when we can gather together in a more normal way. With God’s help we will get through this. Thanks be to God.

Message from Session
Dennis Kauppila

We had several guest ministers in January and

February: Rev Jay Sprout; and guest moderators: Rev Amanda Lape-Freeberg, and Rev Harvey Bartlett, Ryegate, for our annual meeting.

The Session interviewed Rev Bob Rochelle, Jr, for a second time in January. In February he accepted our offer of a 6-month interim position.

In March, the ‘Covid era’ began, and we stopped worshipping as a group in the sanctuary on March 22. Luckily we had started ‘broadcasting’ on Facebook in 2019, so we were able to just continue with that. But with only Rev Rochelle, Amanda Cashin (our now full-time organist) and John Heartson at the control panel.

We have been celebrating Communion via Facebook. Bob began his Tuesday and Thursday Facebook meditations in March.

We did allow John Gaston and a friend, Kristian Baird, to stay at the Manse this summer, and work on painting the outside in exchange for rent.

We celebrated Easter with a sunrise service, drive-in style, at Gate’s field just north of McIndoe Falls.

There were 20 cars and 41 people.

We decided to NOT rent the Center Vestry this year due to Covid.

We tried Zoom video conference for our April Session meeting. In May we moved back to tables in the West Church, with masks and distancing.

In May, Pastor Rochelle conducted a graveside service for Marvin Bailey that was limited to 10 mourners. A couple of dozen cars drove by and honked in memory of Marvin afterwards.

We have been working on finding a new minister.

A big step was to complete our Mission Statement, and submit it to our Presbytery’s Commission on Ministry, they accepted it at the end of July.

We decided to have the Fourth of July Chicken BBQ if the cooks said yes. They did a fine job, we sold \$3,800 of chicken and sold out in 2 hours. Last year we sold \$800 less than this and had to sell chicken at a discount at the end. Thanks to Celina Wright for organizing this.

Ann Pesaturo conducted our One Great Hour of Sharing this year, and even though it was interrupted by Covid, we donated \$1,175.84. Thanks Ann.

On June 28, we began worshipping in the West Church again, with masks and distance. We decided to not move to the Center Church this summer because we

could not share our worship on Facebook or on conference call.

So, even though this year is much different than other years, we are continuing to be a lively Christian community here in Barnet (and beyond.)

Barnet Food Drive


Claudia Heisholt has been working with others on the Barnet Food Drive. This past week, they have responded to about 9 requests for food. Most are from senior citizens who do not have enough food. They expect that requests for food would increase in the fall. Requests for food have gone way up in the past couple of weeks.

They accept food, mainly non-perishable items, at the McIndoes Academy on Sunday afternoons from 2-4 pm. If you can bring food then, it would be great.

She has asked for a donation jar to be placed in our church. It is there now, on the offering tables by the double doors. Cash is welcomed. Or a check. Since they do not have a bank account, please make a check out to West Barnet Quick Stop, with a memo 'Barnet Food Drive.' We will also be having Noisy Offering from time to time, starting on Sunday, August 16. Thanks.

Update From the Treasurer:

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	Jan--June 2020	Jan--June 2019
Offering	\$38,216	\$41,761
Total income	44,475	57,615
Total expense	33,633	55,390
Income less expense	\$10,841	\$2,224
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Joys and Concerns

Our Prayer Chain was activated requesting prayers for Dave Jewell, Tom Flanagan, Marvin Bailey, then his family after his death, Sandy and Nick Perrine, and Ray Locke. Also, please keep in prayers John Sanderson. Joys for the marriage of Chandra Locke!

Trustees update

The Trustees are focusing on the Manse. We plan to upgrade the electrical system and the upstairs bathroom, and improve the drainage around the foundation. John and Kristian are painting the outside, and Ben Adams is replacing clapboards. He discovered the sills may need some work. The Session has approved spending of \$5,000 so far. We also would like to replace all the windows. There is an option of using capital funds for some of this work. It makes sense to do this work now, in preparation for showing the house to a new pastor. We have also contracted the replacement of the boxes under the columns on the West Church, and painting of the entire front side.

Income that we had last year, but not this year: Auction was \$5,100 in 2019. Center Vestry rent at end of June '19 was \$1,700. We received a bequest last year.

We are expecting about \$3,500 of improvements to front of West Church.

We deeply appreciate your generous support of the church during this interim period. In addition to supporting our mission and ministry, it is enabling us to make needed improvements to our facilities.

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