# Good News

The Monthly Newsletter of the People of HAMILTON UNION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GUILDERLAND, NEW YORK



July 2020

## Sunday Worship Services are currently held online at 10:00 a.m.

## **Our good God**

For the love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind; and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind. If our love were but more faithful, we should take him at his word; and our life would be thanksgiving for the goodness of the Lord.



-Frederick W. Faber

## LAY READERS

- July 5 Wayne Goodnow
- July 12 Diane Irwin
- July 19 Peter McKinney
- July 26 Mark Hutchinson



"Sometimes when you're in a dark place you think you've been buried, but you've actually been planted. Bloom!"

-Christine Caine

The Deacon on Call for July will be Fred Sirois \* 518.869.7664 \*

The Back-up Deacon on Call is Ann McKinney \* 518.326-0895 \*





## HUPC Session Highlights for June 2,2020

Pastor Janice and Elder Hasselbarth attended the Presbytery meeting via Zoom successfully facilitated by new Stated Clerk, Becca Putman.

The SBEA/PPP loan of \$18,600 was received. Online giving is now available on the new HUPC website and has been successfully accessed. Both revenue and expenses are under budget for this year.

## The motion that the Session approve \$185 from operating funds for the renewal of the HUPC website domain for 5 years was seconded and approved.

Summer worship for the summer will be at 10:00am.

The Session watched the film/discussion "Calling the Pastor You Need, Not the Pastor You Want". The need may be for a pastor who is as much an entrepreneur as a manager of church activities. Elder Messersmith indicated the PNC is meeting weekly with everyone contributing as they progress through each step of the long search process ahead.

A special Session meeting is planned for June 11 at 7:30pm on Zoom to discuss the COVID pandemic and how this impacts returning to worship in the sanctuary.



Loving God, we thank you — the true Father of our country — for the blessings of this land and the gifts of cultures around the world. Prompt us to strive for justice for all, at home and abroad. Remind us, in the words of the hymn, that "this is our Father's world" and that your goodness prevails. Amid tragedies and conflicts, guard us against despair. Help us focus on the kindness evident daily: from generous neighbors to conscientious public servants (because most are). On Independence Day and every day, "O let [us] ne'er forget that though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the Ruler yet." Amen.

-Sandy Hyland

### A Message from the Session on Reopening

This past Thursday evening, June 11, your Session met in special session to discuss returning to worship in our church building. As you may have heard, Governor Cuomo announced on Saturday, June 6, that houses of worship in counties which are in Phase 2 of the state's reopening plan may move to holding services of worship at 25% capacity of the building.

That means according to the government, we can reopen, but the real question is should we and are we ready to reopen? What must we accomplish before we can return to our church building for worship? How do we provide a safe environment for worship? As the Albany Presbytery put it: "Each church has an ethical responsibility to determine its readiness (to reopen for worship) in light of biblical teaching, the movement of the Holy Spirit combined with public health, denominations, and governmental guidance ... your readiness to reopen <u>is not</u> determined by the Governor—it is determined by you."

After much discussion, and after reviewing a number of religious and public health sources, Session has decided that there is too much risk presented by COVID-19 to return to the sanctuary this summer. Discussion is continuing about when and how we might return to worship in our building. Many factors — spiritual, practical and public health-based — are important and factor into these decisions. Here are a few.

In order to open, our worship would be dramatically different. Everyone over the age of 2 would need to wear masks, and masks would need to be made available for those who forget theirs or lack one. Capacity would be limited to 50 people total (25% of our listed capacity of 200 in the sanctuary). Individuals or family groups would need to be 6 feet apart. Singing and praying aloud (these project aerosols into the air, which is believed to be a major way the virus spreads) would not be possible, and pew bibles and hymnals would need to be removed. The Sanctuary would need to be cleaned between services. There can be no physical contact between worshippers (shaking hands, laying on of hands, etc.). Ushers would need to be "trained" in new protocols so they could remind members and visitors alike what is OK and what is not OK. Communal food, such as at Fellowship Hour, could not be served. Communion would be difficult. And there is more.

The music program would be particularly limited. Until there is a cure or vaccine, the choir cannot sing, since all information about how the virus is transmitted indicates that singing in close proximity to others is one of the easiest ways to transmit it. Also, musical instruments (like brass or woodwinds) that require blowing air are not OK.

Cleaning protocols must be ramped up. The church office — at a minimum — will need to be cleaned every day it is open. The sanctuary will need to be cleaned between services. What about the restrooms? The Nursery? The Fellowship Room?

#### **Good News**

All of these new protocols must be documented in a plan developed before we can reopen, and the plan must be made available to public health authorities on our premises. The plan's contents and questions are listed by and required by the state.

Clearly, we have a lot to do before we can safely resume worship in person. In order to begin the process of reopening and to help keep the congregation informed and involved, we have formed a COVID-19 Task Force to review the information available, assess risks involved in reopening, and formulate a possible plan for implementation to share with the congregation. Elder Trudy Hutchinson has agreed to chair this group, which also includes Steve Smith and George Hannett. We would like 1 or 2 more people to participate; if you are interested, please contact Trudy directly or call the church office. We also will be adding a Covid-19 section to our website to keep you informed.

In closing, we ask you to focus on the positive things these challenging times have brought. It is a joy to see so many people at worship each Sunday — especially those who often cannot join us in person. When we are back in our Sanctuary, we plan to look at ways to continue to offer online services as well as in-person services. This pause has also given some of our Ministry Teams an opportunity to come up with new ideas and plans — stay tuned! And, even though as a congregation we skew older, we have discovered that we can learn new technology and make it work for us. As Pastor Janice says, we are resilient!

Through all of the uncharted territory of this pandemic, it's important to recognize that things may change quickly, requiring us to adjust our plans on short notice. We must be attentive to God's voice and direction. Let us be faithful, then—to God and to one another—as we receive the gifts and work through the challenges of this time in the life of our congregation and world. Let us be guided by the Word, responsive to the Spirit, and open to the grace of God. Let us remember that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus. We are all God's Children, and we need to keep each other healthy.

#### The Session:

Bill Hasselbarth Trudy Hutchinson Nancy Messersmith Henry Montgomery Steve Smith Karen Williamson Nina Zanetti

Ron Messersmith, Clerk of Session Rev. Janice West, Moderator

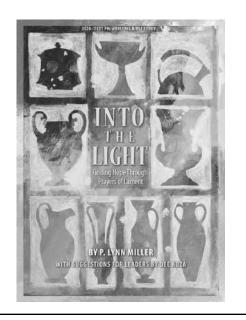


#### *Horizons* Bible Study webinars, *Into the Light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament*

Wed., June 24, 10 am - noon Tues., June 30, 6 - 8 pm

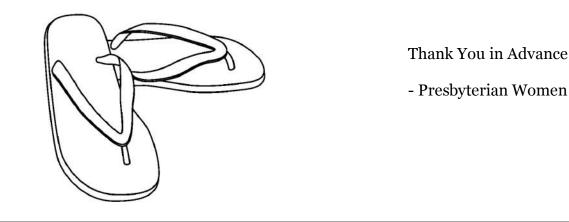
A webinar on a Bible Study, *Into the Light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament* published by Churchwide Presbyterian Women, will be held on Wed., June 24 and Tues., June 30. Author Lynn Miller will host these 2 hours long webinars.

Registration is needed. Register on-line at <u>http://www.presbyterianwomen.org</u>. There is no cost.



## **Men's Flip-Flop Collection**

Men's flip-flops are needed for the *Capital Area Council of Churches Emergency Overflow Shelter*. They can generally only be purchased in the summer. Although, our church building isn't open, yet, now is the time to buy them. There is collection box is in the Multi-Purpose Room at the church. If you do come into the church building, there is a box of gloves on the stairs. This is one of our continuous collections. The flip-flops will be delivered to the shelter in late October



### Presbyterian Women News - All Women are Welcome

All women are invited to participate in any *Presbyterian Women's* activity at any time. There is no need to make a commitment to join the organization. For questions about *Presbyterian Women*, contact Charlotte Hasselbarth at <u>chasselbarth@hotmail.com</u> or 518-356-0637.

Despite our inability to meet in person we have several ongoing projects and will begin a new Bible study.

- *Tea for the Soul to Go* Project
- Church World Service Blanket Project
- Men's flip flop Collection
- We will begin a new Bible study, *Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments* in the evening of Tues. Sept 22.
- More information can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

As a member of the Mission and Social Witness ministry team, and the treasurer of the HUPC Presbyterian Women, I would like to share the outpouring love of HUPC through our offerings beyond our congregation in just over the first 5 months of 2020. Amidst the changes Covid 19 has made necessary, and we "see" each other primarily over Zoom gatherings, we continue to share our hearts with our community, nation and world with our offerings:

OGHS — \$1016 Pentecost — \$420 CWS CROP — \$2455 CWS Blankets — \$1230 PW Birthday Offering — \$330 PW Mission Minded Meal — \$260



May we continue to "be the Church" by "doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with our God". Micah 6:8. Betty Deitz, M&SW.

#### Website Update

Our new website has been up and running for over a month now, and early reviews are very positive. We hope many of you have been able to "click around" and explore the new site.

There is a new menu item and a new item coming. The "Pastor Search" item will include updates from the Pastor Nominating Committee as they become available, as well as additional materials that may interest prospective pastors. Also, as we prepare to reopen our church buildings, we will be adding a new area on our response to Covid 19. As the Covid Task Force gets underway, we expect they will recommend specific information to be posted here.

If you have questions about the website or its content, please contact Karen Williamson. Mark Hutchinson has resumed his role as technical webmaster (many thanks Mark!) and has been keeping the content up to date.



#### PNC Update, June 12, 2020

Your Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) has been meeting weekly, with 2 Presbytery Committee on Missions and Congregations (COMAC) representatives, working on drafting our Ministry Information Form (MIF). This form describes our church, our vision, mission, activities and what we seek in a pastor. It is a first step in our pastor search process. Once completed and approved by Session (and the Albany Presbytery), it is entered into the Presbyterian Church USA's "Church Leadership Connection" job and pastor search system. Then the "matchmaking" begins and the PNC will start receiving and reviewing "Pastor Information Forms" and begin the review and interview process.

The MIF includes some challenging questions for and about our church, where we are, what we believe and value, what we seek in a pastor, and where we hope to go in the future. As you might imagine, drafting this document requires much thought, prayer, discussion and many drafts. We ask for your continued prayers for God's guidance, for our ability to discern and define where God is leading Hamilton Union, and for the person God will inspire to answer our call for a new pastor.

#### A Message from the Administration, Finance, and Stewardship Committees:

The Session received the May, 2020 Treasurer's Report. There was an operating deficit of (\$6,250) for the first five months of the year. The Church's finances have been challenged by the impact of COVID. Rental income has been down since the Nursery School closed in April for COVID. The budgeted garage sale fund raiser was cancelled and the Session decided to cancel the June barbecue fund raiser and will be deciding soon about the August barbecue. Since much of the church's expenses have continued, please keep up with your pledge and other offerings. We appreciate the offerings received through this public

health crisis. We now have the ability to receive on line donations through our website. If anyone is able to make an additional contribution to offset some of the revenue loss, that would be great and much appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Bill Hasselbarth.

Thank you, The Administration, Finance, and Stewardship Committee



Help mend some broken lives and hearts through Church World Service's Blanket Program!

Presbyterian Women at HUPC has taken on the CWS Blanket Project again this year and will **continue to collect monies through August 30**. Last year we "purchased" 65 blankets; this year so far we have "purchased" 89, 25 of those in memory of Mickey Nieman's brother Christopher Noble. You ladies and gents are the BEST!!!!

You may "purchase" lightweight blankets for \$10 apiece and heavyweight blankets for \$15 apiece. **Checks should be made out to PW at HUPC** with *CWS lgtwt (number); hvywt (number)* in the memo line. If you want to contribute in Christopher's memory, squeeze in *Christopher Noble* above or below the CWS notation. Please mail these to Mickey Nieman (896 Pine Hill Dr, Schenectady, NY 12303), who keeps track of the number and kind.

These blankets go to "[f]amilies who have lost their homes to tornadoes, floods, earthquakes and other disasters." They go to those "struggling against crushing poverty" and to "vulnerable children." Let us help where we can to lighten the load for others.

## 

Presbyterian Women at HUPC will continue through the summer to support the Pastoral Care Department at Albany Medical Center with their program *Tea for the Soul to Go*: healthcare professionals receive decorated lunchbags with snacks and notes of encouragement inside. Use stickers, crayons, markers, etc! Use formal thank you notes or make up your own! Imagine the smiles of the recipients!!!

So far, we have sent 13 bags and notes (from 2 people) and \$275 in cash and checks (from 6 people). Our congregation at HUPC is always so creative and generous, and we thank you in advance.

\* If you want to decorate bags and include notes and/or send a financial contribution to help defray the cost of the snacks directly to the hospital, make the **checks payable to AMC Pastoral Care Dept, put** *Tea for the Soul to Go* in the memo line and mail them to

> AMC, Pastoral Care Dept Mail Code 19 43 New Scotland Ave Albany, NY 12208

\* If you'd like to have someone else mail your decorated bags with your encouraging notes inside and/or your financial contributions, drop them off at Mickey Nieman's porch (896 Pine Hill Dr, Schenectady 12303 [really Guilderland]) and she will mail them. She will also convert cash donations into a check. Questions: 518-356-1691

\* Please do not take them to the hospital yourself. The Pastoral Care Department is anticipating using these well into the future so you may want to make this an ongoing project for you and/or your family and friends. 록♥



Carolyn Sarbello (July 2) Shelby Deere (July 7) Karen Williamson (July 7) Bruce Williamson (July 9) Tom Gade (July 14) Katie Williamson (July 15) Mark Hutchinson (July 20)

"Life is like a ten-speed bicycle. Most of us have gears we never use." —Charles M. Schulz

## From Mickey Nieman for the Mission and Social Witness Committee

The Albany CROP Walk sponsored by the Capital Are Council of Churches has reached \$85,411.45. One-quarter of those funds are returned to the Capital Region's food banks and soup kitchens. If you want to edge them closer to \$90K, go online to



www.crophungerwalk.org/albanyny and find Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church's team to make a donation to our church's team or send a check to Betty Deitz made out to CWS-CROP. I keep track of the online donations. Many thanks!!!

### Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program Out of Chaos –Hope

The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program (PDA) responds quickly to natural and man-made disasters. Teams are immediately deployed to disaster sites.

Recent sites are: Nashville Tennessee in response to a tornado and Newburg, N.Y. in response to a church fire. Mainly it offers practical help for clean up, figuring out insurance, general contracting for rebuilding, plus emotional and spiritual support.

This is response is different to COVID-19 pandemic is very different because teams can't travel to the sites where help is needed. Currently PDA has responded by drawing 2.7 million dollars from reserves to seed the COVID-19 ongoing response both in the United States and internationally. Virtual help, such as mental health services, resources for pastors to help minister during this time and programs to provide spiritual support have been arranged.

PDA has a special COVID 19 fund. There are several ways to donate to this fund.

- Phone: call 800-872-3283

- Check, make it out to Presbyterian Church (USA) and on the memo line put <u>DR000148</u> / COVID -19 or PDA, if you wish the donation to go into the general PDA fund. Mail to:

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) P.O. Box 643700 Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700 - Online see: <u>https://pma.pcusa.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/DR000148/</u>

For a full description of what PDA is doing to assist during the pandemic, see

https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/covid-19/

The Mission and Social Witness Ministry Team

## PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

## OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

#### Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments,

#### **Bible Study Books to be Ordered**

#### Appropriate for Both Men and Women Plus Good for Personal or Group Study

Presbyterian Women will be starting a new Bible study, this September, Love *Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments.* The author is Rev. Eugenia Gamble. This study helps us reframe the way we look at and live in the world. It asks us to consider the Ten Commandments not as a harsh list of what not to do but, instead, as a "love letter" from a loving God. The author shows that the Ten Commandments contribute to the restoration of our communities and how we can personally live out the gospel in the world. Rev. Gamble states "Moral behavior matters, not simply because immoral actions can anger or disappoint God, but because principled behavior is how love becomes real, both toward God and in community. She wants us to see the commandments in fresh ways. Each lesson begins with an exploration of one of the Ten Commandments in its Biblical context. We're asked to consider a moment from Jesus' life that shows us how he lived out a specific commandment and then to consider how that commandment can be lived for our own lives.

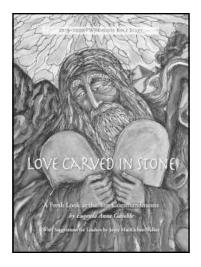
If you would like to purchase this study for you own private use or use in another group, contact Joanne Wagner at 355-1408 or jnnwgnr@yahoo.com. The study books are \$10 and \$15 for large print. Payment is due when they arrive, which will be in mid Sept.

#### Presbyterian Women Begin a New Bible Study

All Women are Invited

Special Evening Meeting – Tues., Sept. 22

Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments



Presbyterian Women will meet to begin this Bible study on Tues. Sept 22 from 7 pm - 8:30 pm. Rev. Janice West will provide an introduction to *Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments* & lead a discussion on Lesson 1, *Words of Love: I Am Your God: You Shall Have No Others.* Future lessons will be covered at our usual time of 10:30 am – 12:30 pm generally on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month

If you are a Christian, and can't hear #BlackLivesMatter without feeling the need to respond with a criticism that "All Lives Matter," then crack open your Bible and hit up Luke 15. Don't have it handy? Let me summa- rize. There are 100 sheep, but one goes missing. Jesus leaves the 99 and goes after the one. The 99: "Butwhat about us? Don't we matter?" Of course the 99 still matter, but they're not the ones in danger. The one is. I'll say it again, #BlackLivesMatter.	Enough (a poem) I asked God for a miracle. She didn't answer. But the sun came up this morning and (for want of better options) I've decided
I'll say it again, #BlackLivesMatter.	T've decided that will do.
Jared Price, on Facebook	Layton E. Williams

### The perks of alone time

"Only those who learn to live with loneliness can come to know themselves and life," said poet Carl Sandburg. He described walking in nature, listening to the "sounds of loneliness" and wondering, "Who are you, Sandburg? Where have you been, and where are you going?"

Jesus also valued alone time with God in nature. He often withdrew to pray after being with crowds of people and his disciples. Spending one-on-one time with God helps us find and focus on his mission for our lives. He also uses it to strengthen us for carrying out his important work.



Capital Area Council of Churches 646 State St. Albany, NY 12203 (518) 462-5450 capareacc@gmail.com www.capareacc.org

Last week, you received a statement from the Capital Area Council of Churches about the death of George Floyd. Hopefully, many of you read the statement and asked what's next?

For seventy-nine years, CACC has helped churches "do together what we cannot do alone". That vision gave rise to the Crop Walk, Interfaith Shelter for the Homeless, area food pantries and more. Ending systemic racism is an issue begging churches to pool their collective knowledge, skills, congregations and other resources to confront this problem.

CACC is looking for clergy and laity interested in addressing racism. We would like to convene a discussion group to explore the possibilities for partnering and action. Contact me know at <u>edcapareacc@gmail.com</u> if you are interested in participating or if there is someone from your church who may be interested in participating.

Thank you for your service and witness to Christ and your commitment to "doing together what we cannot do alone" and loving your neighbor as commanded by the Gospel.

Bruce France Executive Director Capital Area Council of Churches <u>edcapareacc@gmail.com</u> 646 State Street Albany NY 12203 518-462-5450 – office 518-441-9584 - cell

> "Sometimes the most important thing in a whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths."

> > -Etty Hillesum

## FORBEARANCE ~ a Theological Ethic for a Disagreeable Church

James Calvin Davis, author

#### A BOOK and a KOINONIA TEAM workshop!

\*\*\*Saturday, October 3, 2020 10:00 am to 2:30 pm\*\*\* First Presbyterian Church, 22 West High Street, Ballston Spa, New York Or by Zoom

In this book **James Calvin Davis** reclaims the biblical concept of forbearance to develop a theological ethic for faithful disagreement. Pointing to Ephesians and Colossians, in which Paul challenged his readers to "bear with each other" in spite of differences, Davis draws out a theologically grounded practice in which Christians work hard to maintain unity while still taking seriously matters on which they disagree.

The practice of forbearance, Davis argues, offers Christians a dignified, graceful, and constructive way to deal with conflict. Forbearance can also strengthen the church's public witness, offering an antidote to the pervasive divisiveness present in contemporary culture.

James Calvin Davis is professor of religion at Middlebury College and ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA). He is a member of Albany Presbytery and familiar to many Presbytery members.

## JOIN US! LEARN FROM Rev. Dr. James Calvin Davis!

Why be patient? How to listen. Value of humility. Trust = Faith. What is wisdom?

## GROW. EXPLORE. SHARE. PROCESS. THINK. ASK.

## Now your part. Please <u>READ</u> the fine print!

Each church in Presbytery will receive one copy of <u>FORBEARANCE</u> as a gift from the Koinonia Team with the expectation that most churches will be moved to form a book study group. We anticipate you will want to purchase additional copies available at **half price** \$12.50. Individual church members may wish to purchase their own copy - again at **half price** \$12.50. That is all possible - while supplies last!

Books will be delivered to your church. Order today. Don't hesitate. Do it now!

ORDER BOOKS: CALL, EMAIL OR TEXT JUDY HARTLEY 6 Winners Circle #211, Albany, NY 12205 217-840-3316 ~ <u>BREENDRIVE@YAHOO.COM</u> Please make payment by check to Albany Presbytery.

\*\*\*None of us have a crystal ball. We are not able to confirm the type of presentation - in person or virtual. We can promise **you and your church will** benefit from Rev. Dr. Davis's workshop and that **we WILL** keep you informed as plans unfold.\*\*\*

## Save the Date An alternate date and/or format may be scheduled.



## Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Albany Fall Gathering

Tuesday, October 13, 2020 – 11:30 am to 2:30 pm

## Hamilton Union Presbyterian Church Guilderland, NY

## Standing on the Gifts of Empowered Historic Women

Lisa Gray, current Moderator of Presbyterian Women in the Synod of the Northeast and participant in the 2019 USA Mission Experience trip to the Finger Lakes Region will share her experiences and what she learned about the origins of women's empowerment in that region of New York.

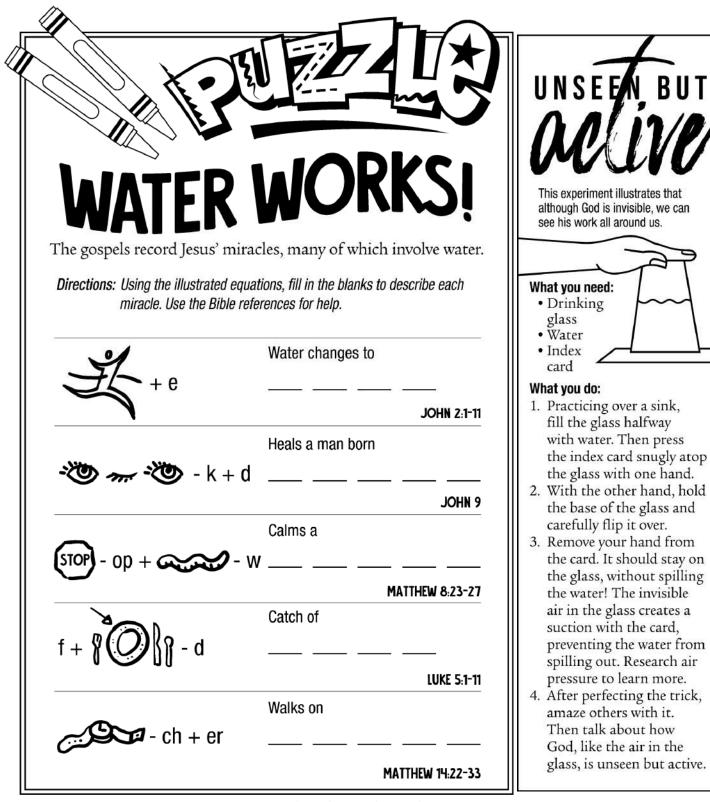
General Information:

- Bring a bag lunch. Beverage and dessert provided.
- Registration fee of \$10.00 will be collected at the door.
- A freewill offering will be received.

For further information contact:

Rosalie Hemingway at 518-758-7886 or silver3213@gmail.com

Charlotte Hasselbarth at 518-356-0637 or chasselbarth@hotmail.com



Answer: wine, blind, storm, fish, water

## Hamilton Union Happenings



## **JULY 2020**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<i>I</i> 12noon Midday Prayers (F) 7pm Evening Prayers (Z)	2 12noon Midday Prayers (F) 7:30pn In His Presence (Z)	3	4
5 Communion 10am Worship Service (Z)	6	7 12noon Midday Prayers (F)	8 12noon Midday Prayers (F) 7pm Evening Prayers (Z)	9 Newsletter Deadline 12noon Midday Prayers (F) 7:30pn In His Presence (Z)	10	11
12 10am Worship Service (Z)	13	14 12noon Midday Prayers (F)	15 12noon Midday Prayers (F) 7pm Evening Prayers (Z)	16 12noon Midday Prayers (F) 7:30pn In His Presence (Z)	17	18
19 10am Worship Service (Z)	20	21 12noon Midday Prayers (F)	22 12noon Midday Prayers (F) 7pm Evening Prayers (Z)	23 12noon Midday Prayers (F) 7:30pn In His Presence (Z)	24	25
26 10am Worship Service (Z)	27	28 12noon Midday Prayers (F)	29 12noon Midday Prayers (F) 7pm Evening Prayers (Z)	30 12noon Midday Prayers (F) 7:30pn In His Presence (Z)	31	

#### HAMILTON UNION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 2291 Western Avenue Guilderland, New York 12084-9747

Change Service Requested

Dated Material – Please Deliver Promptly.

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Ministers: The People of Hamilton Union

#### Our Staff:

Rev. Janice West, Interim Pastor Ann Duncan, Administrative Assistant Charlotte Palmeri, Director of Music Rae Rau, Director of Handbell Choir





GOOD NEWS

Published monthly by the Session, and is available electronically on our website. Copies are also mailed to select church family households, students away from home, and others.

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