



LISTEN to *The ChurchMouse*

New Scotland Presbyterian Church
June 2022

"Original Landlord Still Offering Sanctuary"



There's Hope in Togetherness *by the Rev. Holly Cameron*

I was blessed in May to have a little time away for study leave. My intention was to have some days to read. I have lots of books, and a never-ending flow of newsletters, invitations to webinars, and other online resources, that ask for my attention. I find it impossible to keep up with them all. So, it was nice to have some time devoted just to them.

One of the items that has popped up on my radar is the Poor People's Campaign. I was first invited to a meeting a few years ago, but could not follow up once the pandemic hit. Now it has resurfaced, and there are several churches and ministers in Albany Presbytery that are taking part in this movement.

According to Wikipedia, the Poor People's Campaign was first launched in 1968 to call attention to the idea that all people should have what they need to live. The 1960 census showed 22-33% of Americans (40 to 60 million people) lived below the poverty line. In spite of President Johnson's declaring "War on Poverty" in 1964, just over 50 years later, in 2017, the Supplemental Poverty Measure calculated 43.3% of Americans (140 million people) were poor or low-income. That's more than double, and maybe triple, in those five decades!

So, in 2018, the Poor People's Campaign was relaunched as "The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival." Their goal is to bring together people of all kinds and all beliefs, noting that none of our faith traditions advocate denying food to hungry children or denying care to those who are ill. I think this



is why so many churches have been getting involved – because we remember the calls made to God's people for thousands of years: to care for the widow, and the orphan, and the foreigner. This, it seems to me, is the basis of our Christian values: to notice those who are struggling, and to reach out with caring and compassion.

The campaign published a 123-page document, "The Souls of Poor Folk," that lists many instances of suffering in our current times. I didn't have to read very far to see these are many of the situations that I hear about on the news every day. There are so many places of brokenness and tragedy that we hear about. At times, it is just overwhelming, and we can be driven to despair.

Someone asked me recently where I find hope in the midst of human suffering. And I said, my hope is in gathering together with other people. If I sit alone in my apartment, then I only hear my own thoughts circling over and over inside my head. If I am isolated, then the only voices coming to me are from my television, where the news stories cycle over and over again. We have had so much enforced isolation in the last two years that our hope may feel lost.

I think that is one reason God called us to be in families, in communities, in churches, in schools, and other groups. When we meet together, we can hear other voices, be challenged in our own thinking, and learn about other people's experiences, so that our own think-

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Book Discussion

Participation Encouraged!

On Tuesday, June 14 at 2:00 pm, we will have in a book discussion: *“Dirt: the Ecstatic Skin of the Earth,”* by William Bryant Logan. We will meet via Zoom for one

session only. The book is available in the Albany Public Library system, or at your favorite bookseller. If interested, please see the Rev. Cameron.



Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Our Mission for June is Neighbors Helping Neighbors, which is a part of Senior Services for the Town of New Scotland. Funds are used to help New Scotland seniors in times of need. Some of the needs met have been emergency house repairs and fuel oil. There will be offering envelopes in your June 5 bulletin, and by the offering plates all month. You can also donate on line at the church website, newscotlandpc.org and note your gift is for Neighbors Helping Neighbors..

~Mardell Steinkamp, Mission Chair

Thank You

Dear New Scotland Presbyterian Church Session and Members,

Thank you so much for all the cards, prayers, lilies and comfort you have extended over the last month and a half.

I have felt loved, protected and blessed by all of your thoughtfulness.

Thank you,
Lisa Allendorph



The Paradise Around Us by Larry A. Deyss, Pastor in the pew.

At first light of morning, as dawn is breaking upon us, while most of us are still in our beds, we hear a singing and calling of birds. It is known as the “Dawn Chorus” and it wakes us up a little before 5:00 A.M. It is quite glorious! And I can say that even if I am not a morning person. I open the window a few inches so I can hear it, and I stretch out in the bed to listen to the morning symphony. It does not last all that long, and to be honest, I fall back to sleep a little more. However, when I awake it is the first thing on my mind and it has a way of shaping my day.

Wanting to learn what the authorities might have to say about this, I looked up “Dawn Chorus” in *The Birdwatchers Companion to North American Birdlife* by Christopher W. Leahy, a noted authority on Natural History and Field Ornithology. I share with you some of what Leahy writes.

Dawn Chorus describes the notable din of birdsong that occurs before and just after first light; though there is a similar, less symphonic effort at the end of the day, no one refers to it as the “dusk chorus.” The phenomenon is characteristic of the breeding season in the temperate zone, but occurs year around in the tropics, where it can be operatic in its intensity and volume.

Different species begin to sing at different times, but — at least in some cases — on a fixed schedule, cued perhaps by light intensity. Why should birds sing more at dawn and dusk has been attributed to simple opportunity (it’s hard to find food this early so might as well defend my territory) and to the fact that the still morning and evening atmosphere makes for better transmission; it also makes sense that activity, including song, should slacken off during the heat of the day, though some species (e.g., Red-eye Vireo) seem to repeat their song ceaselessly during the daylight hours.

Other miscellaneous sources I read suggest that the dawn chorus is also about attracting mates. A bird who sings the loudest, even on



an empty stomach, may be showing that he is strong and hence attractive to a prospective mate.

I am interested in what the ornithologists have to tell us and at the same time I am also interested in what religious thinkers and poets

have to say. Therefore I turn to the writing of Thomas Merton, who in his book, “Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander”, writes in Part Three, *The Night Spirit and the Dawn Air*, (p. 131) the following:

The first chirps of the waking day birds mark the “*point vierge*” of the dawn under a sky as yet without light a moment of awe and inexpressible innocence, when the Father in perfect silence opens their eyes. They begin to speak to Him, not with fluent song, but with an awakening question that is their dawn state, their state at the “*point vierge*.” Their condition asks if it is time for them to “be.” He answers “yes.” Then, they one by one wake up, and become birds. They manifest themselves as birds, beginning to sing. Presently they will be fully themselves, and will even fly. Meanwhile, the most wonderful moment of the day is when creation in its innocence asks permission to “be” once again, as it did on the first morning that ever was.

All wisdom seeks to collect and manifest itself at that blind sweet point. Man’s wisdom does not succeed, for we are fallen into self-mastery and cannot ask permission of anyone....Here is an unspeakable secret: paradise is all around us and we do not understand. It is wide open.

‘Wisdom’ cries the dawn deacon, but we do not attend.

Having shared these texts, I would add a personal word. The Dawn Chorus is the voice of the dawn deacon and when we become mindful, to the point of hearing and rejoicing in it, we become participants in paradise which is all around us.

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PRAYER LIST

The prayer list is maintained by the Deacons. If you have questions about anyone on the list, or would like to add or remove someone from the list, contact Tamara. Call or text 518-573-7736 or email, CliftonRun@gmail.com.

Lisa Allendorph
 Laurel & Mark Beavers
 Family of Cynthia Brickman
 Melanie Thornton Capraro (Karen & Tim Thornton’s daughter)
 Danny Carroll (Chris Gordon’s brother)
 Linda Caruso.....(Tamara Shaw’s friend)
 Amy Chew.....(Holly Cameron’s friend)
 Randy Craft.....(Debbie Craft’s husband)
 Gina Domermuth.....(Alexandra Donovan’s friend)
 Frank Donnelly.....(Kevin Dwyer’s friend)
 Carole Elmendorf
 Carl George (Christine Cameron’s husband)
 Dot Geyer..... (Judy Riopelle’s friend)
 Wendy Hijos (Sharon Hildebrandt’s friend)
 Holly Huth (Joe Huth’s daughter-in-law)
 Family of Bill Kelly (Bill Kerr’s brother-in-law)
 Aidan Lawson (Robin Shufelt’s friend)
 Tony Merritt..... (Tim & Christine Gordon’s in-law)
 Gerald Minor (Joyce Schork’s brother)
 Family of Joan Sickles O’Brien (Debbie Fuglein’s friend)
 Joyce Schork
 Charles Sullivan (Alexandra Donovan’s friend)
 Sandy Vosburgh
 Ted Whitbeck
 Shirley Wright
 Euni Yang (Pastor Charlie Yang’s wife)
 Family of Sam Youmans



Heavenly Father, We lift up all those who are facing various illnesses. Give them the hope and courage they need today and every day. Comfort their pain, calm their fears, and surround them with Your peace.

Please extend your prayers for:

- the people of Ukraine.
- our military personnel and their families.
- doctors, nurses, first responders, police officers, firefighters, and all families dealing with COVID-19.
- students, teachers, staff, administration, parents and children as the school year continues.

Pentecost (June 5) Quiz



1. The word “Pentecost” comes from what language?
2. What does the word “Pentecost” mean and refer to?
3. What Christian holiday does Pentecost follow, and how long afterwards?
4. In what book and chapter of the New Testament do we find the account of the celebration of Pentecost?
5. Where does this celebration of Pentecost take place?
6. How many days after Jesus ascended into Heaven did the disciples celebrate Pentecost?
7. What sound did the disciples hear all around them while they were gathered together in a room to celebrate Pentecost?
8. What rested on each one of the disciples as they heard this sound?
9. What did the sound represent, and what does the day of Pentecost celebrate?
10. What did the disciples do when the Holy Spirit entered them?
11. What does the New Testament word “glossolalia” refer to?
12. What did some witnesses who heard the disciples accuse them of?
13. Which one of Jesus’ disciples spoke to the entire crowd?
14. What Old Testament prophecy did “he” declare was being fulfilled on this day of Pentecost?
15. How many people believed the disciples’ message about Christ and were baptized on this day of Pentecost?
16. Historically, Pentecost is related to what Jewish holiday, and what does it commemorate?
17. What were some other Old Testament names for Pentecost?
18. What is another name for the Christian day of Pentecost in some English-speaking countries?
19. What is the traditional liturgical color for Pentecost?
20. In many Christian traditions, what is the name of the liturgical season following Pentecost?
21. Each year on Pentecost, what items representing tongues of fire of the Holy Spirit fall through the oculus atop the Pantheon in Rome? (Rose petals)
22. In the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist, and some other traditions, what is the first Sunday after Pentecost called? (Trinity Sunday)
23. Pentecost is one of how many Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church? (12)
24. What is the day-of-Pentecost-inspired name of a 1970s Christian musical group? (Second Chapter of Acts)
25. Which Shakespeare play mentions Pentecost?

Answers: 1. Greek; 2. “Fiftieth,” referring the fiftieth day after Passover in the Old Testament; 3. Easter—the seventh Sunday after Easter; 4. Acts 2; 5. Jerusalem; 6. 10; 7. The sound of rushing wind; 8. Flames/tongues as of fire; 9. The giving of the Holy Spirit to the disciples; 10. They spoke in languages that were not their own to the crowd gathered from throughout the Roman world, so that every person could hear them in his or her own language; 11. speaking in tongues, i.e., a language you do not know; 12. Being drunk; 13. Peter; 14. Joel’s prophecy that God would “pour out [the Holy] Spirit on all humankind” in Joel 2:28; 15. about 3,000; 16. Shavuot, which commemorates the giving of the 10 Commandments to Moses on Mt. Sinai; 17. Feast of Harvest, Feast of Weeks, and Feast of Firstfruits; see Exodus 23:16; 18. Whitsun, or Whitsunday; 19. Red; 20. Ordinary Time; 21. Rose petals; 22. Trinity Sunday; 23. 12; 24. Second chapter of Acts; 25. Romeo and Juliet—“What, man, ’tis not so much, ’tis not so much, ’tis since the nuptials of Lucentio. Come Pentecost as quickly as it will . . . ,” spoken by Capulet in Act 1, Scene 5.

Puzzle!

Find the names of these fathers and sons from the Old Testament.

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| ADAM | REUBEN |
| CAIN | DAN |
| ABEL | ASHER |
| SETH | JUDAH |
| NOAH | LEVI |
| HAM | GAD |
| SHEM | NAPHTALI |
| JAPHETH | SIMEON |
| ELKANAH | ISSACHAR |
| SAMUEL | ZEBULUN |
| AARON | BENJAMIN |
| NADAB | JOSEPH |
| HUR | MANASSEH |
| CALEB | EPHRAIM |
| ABRAHAM | SALU |
| ISHMAEL | JONATHAN |
| ISAAC | DAVID |
| ESAU | SOLOMON |
| JACOB | |

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 S A L U J O N A T H A N D A V I D S O L O M O N

Hope in Togetherness

(continued from Page 1)

ing changes and grows. This gives us hope. Of course, our hope is based in God’s Word to us – through reading scripture and daily praying. But the value of community is also in scripture. When we read about Jesus’ life, we see that he gathered up people to go with him. Jesus had times of going off alone to pray, but he did all his work within the context of community. He went with the crowds to be baptized, he gathered disciples, he went to people’s houses for meals, he ministered to thousands. I think that is how their faith in him grew – that they continued to talk about what they had seen and heard and experienced, and learned from one another’s ideas and encounters, and found hope.

The Poor People’s Campaign is gathering people across the country in May and June, and will have a national march in Washington DC on June 19. I know several folks from our presbytery who will make that trip, and it makes me think of the crowds who came to hear Jesus – to consider their beliefs, to wonder what God was calling them to do. I believe God calls us to listen to many voices and reassess our values often. I believe God calls us to act in faith, to bring light into the darkness, to offer compassion to the suffering.

The Poor People’s Campaign seems like an embodiment of God’s call to come together, and listen to one another, and increase our hope, so that we can reach out in caring. So, I’d like to hold those marches in our prayers, and continue to learn more about the campaign to see if we, too, are being called to be part of this movement.

~Faithfully, +Holly



Note: A completed puzzle is in a file called puzzleb_0622 on this month’s CD and on the website, www.NewsletterNewsletter.com.

CROP Walk Success Story

I am thrilled to announce that as of the end of May, we have reached and surpassed our goal of \$100,000! I received an updated on-line and Facebook giving figure from Church World Service on Saturday, and adding that to the checks we have processed at the CACC office and some additional donations over the weekend and today, **our income now stands at \$100,943.77!** Congratulations to all of you who made this possible!

~Kitt Jackson, Albany CROP Walk Committee



God of Love

For, With and In Us

An ancient heresy — that the God of the Old Testament was a God of judgment and wrath, while the God of the New Testament is a God of grace and love — still persists a bit. Yet God is the same God, with the same characteristics, throughout time. Way back in Genesis 3, God graciously sewed garments to clothe humans, although they had disobeyed him. And even in the Gospels, God's anger was evident through Jesus' response to temple moneychangers cheating the poor.

God always works for life and goodness in all things. Sometimes people misunderstand God's ways; sometimes God, like a human parent, uses "tough love." Mick Brooks writes: "The Old Testament is God for us, the time of Christ is God with us, and the age of the Holy Spirit is God in us" (*Every Day With Jesus*, Sept/Oct 2020). That may be a bit simplistic, but it's a good reminder that while God's ways of interacting with us vary, he — the God of Love — does not.

Children's Day

Sunday, June 5 is Children's Day and the last day of Sunday School. Our young people will be recognized and everyone will be part of the program. We are happy to celebrate the end of another year of Sunday School. Students will receive recognition for participating in this Sunday School year.



**Start children off
on the way they should go,
and even when they are old
they will not turn from it.**

Proverbs 22:6

June Birthdays

Stephen Kohler 6/3
 Robert McCormick 6/4
 Albert Miller 6/5
 Corinne Weeks 6/6
 Mark Beavers 6/6
 John Norris 6/7
 Don Wagner 6/8
 Margaret Ewart 6/8
 Barbara Huth 6/11
 Joseph Huth 6/16
 Paul Steinkamp 6/16
 Emma Victoria Fuglein 6/17
 Jeffrey Bode 6/21
 Cody David Roberts 6/22
 Jaime Craft 6/28
 Patricia Huth 6/28



June Anniversaries

Laurel & Mark Beavers 6/5/93
 Alexandra & Mitchell Donovan 6/22/18
 Margaret & Wallace Throop 6/28/60
 Dawn & Jack Scaccia 6/28/85
 Homer & Sandra Warner 6/29/58



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The Paradise Around Us

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Yes, I know, it is not all sweetness and light as we will find when we read the morning paper, however what we receive in the Dawn Chorus reminds us that there is more than folly in the world. There is also sheer delight and faith and by them we are victors in the midst of strife. The Dawn Chorus, a gift of God by the way of birds, strengthens us by giving a piece of paradise which we take with us into the day. That can make all the difference for us, and for those with whom we come into contact.

Editor's Note: According to Thomas Merton, *Le point vierge* is the virgin point: "at the center of our being is a point of nothingness which is untouched by sin or illusion, a point of pure truth, a point or spark which belongs entirely to God."