

Steeple Chimes ♦ September 2019



From the Pastor's Study....

Sitting on the porch of the parsonage this morning wrapped in a colorful hand-crocheted blanket and the slight chill of the August air I felt a familiar sadness as the summer ends and the seasons turn. I love the Fall. In many ways it is my favorite season of the year. What I don't love is to feel the steady, speedy march of time. Yesterday someone said to me, "Only sixteen weeks 'til Christmas," and my stomach clenched. Someone else said (and I paraphrase), "I am always focused on the what is coming next, what I have to do in the future. I need to get better at being present in the "now," this day, this moment, this engagement with the person who is with me."

The writer of Ecclesiastes says: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." In this same reflection on time, s/he writes that God puts a "sense of past and future in our minds" Our present time is sandwiched between what has been and what will be. We can become too focused on what is behind us that we can't let go of, or what is before us that makes us feel anxious, that we are barely able to be present to the present. And I suppose our greatest, underlying anxiety about the future and the rapid passage of time is that our days are numbered, our time on earth will run out, we will die.

This is no small anxiety. It is real and persistent even when we are not explicitly conscious of it. This anxiety often drives us to make the most of the time that we have. I am obsessed about not wasting time and about getting things done. But this morning, praying and sitting on the porch with the sun rising before my eyes, I realize that this fleeting moment is where time touches eternity. And that God is present in every second of every day. And that all of our days, all of our lives are wrapped secure within the life of God which never ends.

So I begin today, resting in this knowledge, this mystery, this gift of divine love. I begin today feeling a little less anxious about the hurried passage of time, determined to be more fully present to the gift of this day, and of all that happens within it, even while I think about and plan for the future. God is the eternity of life and love that embraces all time and all being without end. Nothing is lost. Together we can breathe deeply and embrace the gift of today as we anticipate and prepare for what is yet to come. Flip this page over to see what lies ahead....

In peace and thanksgiving,

Pastor Renee

Sunday Table Fellowship for the Fall

Every Sunday following worship, we gather in Bethany Hall to share a meal and share our lives with each other and our neighbors. We are in need of people to provide for weekly Table Fellowship in September, October, November and December. Members of the Table Fellowship Committee see to all the set up. If you are able to provide a simple meal (bagels and cream cheese, or sandwiches, or a pot of soup, or a salad) please sign up on the sheet provided in the hallway across from the kitchen, or call Pat in the Church office (845-338-6759). If you can't do it alone, find a partner. If you can't provide food, consider providing money for someone else to prepare the meal. You are strongly invited to share in the nourishment of our community!

Looking Ahead—Plans & Opportunities



Wednesday, September 4	Worship Committee meeting to plan for the fall and Advent seasons.
Tuesday, September 10	Playing with the Word Bible study 7:00 p.m. You are welcome to come as you are able (just one week or more). The texts we are “playing with” are in the bulletin the Sunday before.
Thursday, September 12	Choir rehearsals begin again at 7:00 p.m. and all the Thursdays following! If you can sing, you are welcome to join in the music-making. If you are not able to commit to weekly rehearsals, consider singing for just our Christmas Eve service. If you play an instrument, offer your gifts. However you might be able to participate, see Dewi.
Sunday, September 15	Sunday School for children and youth resumes during the second half of our worship time. We are in need of teachers to be with the younger children one Sunday a month. If you are feeling called to share God’s story and love with them, see Pastor Renee.
Sunday, September 15	Consistory “Retreat Meeting.” Every fall the Consistory gathers to reflect on the life and ministry of our congregation and plan for our future—we are open, vibrant, hopeful, and changing in the Spirit.
Thursday, September 19	Fall Concert Series begins and continues every Thursday at 12:15 p.m. through November 14. Piano and organ players, singers and instrumentalists. Join us for a half hour of musical refreshment in the middle of the day. Free.
Saturday, September 21	International Peace Day Concert & Call for Climate Action 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Concert by the Yuval Ron Ensemble, a musical group that endeavors end national, racial, religious, and cultural divides through mystical and spiritual music and dance. Free will offering.
Friday, September 27	Gathering for Newcomers 6:00 p.m. at the Parsonage (109 Pearl Street). A meal and a time to meet others who are new to our community, to talk about life, your gifts, and your hopes. If you plan to be present, e-mail Pastor Renee (pastorrenee@olddutchchurch.org)

Save these dates, details to come...

Sunday, October 6 The Kingston Food Support Fund-Raising Walk, 1 p.m.

Friday-Saturday, October 18 & 19 The Burning of Kingston co-sponsored by Old Dutch Church