



# Steeple Chimes

## November, 2020

### From the Pastor's Desk...

There is so much going on all around us and so many things that I could write about this month, but at the front of my mind are the elections that are underway. For the past several weeks, the Sunday scripture texts have focused our attention on the reality that we are citizens of the kingdom of God. Our first allegiance is to God and God's desires. The values and commitments that shape our daily living are the values and commitments of God. The commonwealth of God is characterized by reconciliation and peacemaking; by caring for the poor, for children, for "the least" and powerless; by treating workers fairly; by healing the sick; by seeking justice; by welcoming the stranger—in short, by grace, compassion, gentleness, mercy, and most of all, love. We see these values and commitments most fully lived out in the person of Jesus the Christ.

Of course, we aren't only citizens of God's commonwealth. We are citizens of nations as well. We are dual citizens. As individuals, we have obligations to the nations we live in. Jesus instructed that we should "render to Caesar what is Caesar's and render to God what is God's." We pay our taxes. Elect our government officials. Vote on public referenda. Serve on municipal boards and councils. In the U.S. we have the freedom to speak up, to protest, to support, and to influence public policies and practices.

We do all of this as individuals and followers of Jesus. But there are some who think that the church should not be engaged in political processes and conversations. It is true that churches are prevented, by law, from publicly endorsing any one political candidate. But in the Reformed tradition, which is our heritage, our Christian faith does not make us separatists. It is just the opposite. We believe that individuals and churches have a God-given, prophetic role to fulfill in society and the political arena. We offer critique, call for reform, and vote with consciousness of God's will for the world. No human government is fully aligned with the values and commitments that characterize God's will and governance. No one political candidate is able fully to enact God's will and governance—there is always compromise in the political process.

But, if we have pledged our first allegiance to God and God's reign, then we have committed to bring God's intentions to bear on the whole life of our communities and nation. When we vote, we will ask which individual candidates and which groups are more committed to policies, programs, attitudes, and characteristics that reflect the values and commitments of God's kingdom. This is not a simple process. It requires us unflinchingly to seek the truth, and to curb our own self-interest for the sake of our neighbors. It requires us to discern together, in, with and through the Holy Spirit. In the end, no matter who is elected, we will pray for Holy Spirit to govern these individuals, and we will support or protest as Holy Spirit directs us as individuals and as a congregation.

Praying with you that God's will be done in us, and through us, on earth as in heaven,

Pastor Renée

## An Addition to Our Ministry Staff....



On September 13, Rob Sweeney began his full-time ministry at Old Dutch as a Commissioned Pastor candidate. Since then Pastor Rob has completed his course work, been examined and sustained with commendation by the Classis, and is now ready to be fully commissioned by the Mid-Hudson Classis. Thanks be to God! Pastor Rob's primary responsibilities will be in property stewardship, hospitality, partnerships, and community outreach, and in the stewardship of our history, museum, and archive. He will also share in pastoral care, preaching and worship, and provide support for publicity and the Church's social media presence. **On Sunday, December 6, at 3:30 p.m., the Classis will formally commission Rob in a special worship service at Old Dutch Church. You can join us in person or by live-stream from the Church's Facebook page.**



### **"Playing with the Word" Bible Study & ODC "Reading" Group**

Bible Study happens Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. The text(s) that we will play with are printed in the bulletin the prior Sunday (the bulletin is posted every week on the Old Dutch Church Facebook page). During the month of October the "Reading" Group discussed Timothy Snyder's *On Tyranny* and had very helpful discussions about how, as citizens and residents of this nation, we seek the common good using all of our agency—reading, voting, serving, talking, protesting, and supporting agencies and institutions that share the values we live by. On Thursday, November 5, 12, and 19 at 7:00 p.m., via Zoom, the "Reading" Group will view and discuss a film series about gratitude. If you wish to participate in "Playing With the Word" and/or the "Reading" Group, please contact Pastor Renee: [pastorrenee@olddutchchurch.org](mailto:pastorrenee@olddutchchurch.org).



### **Kingston Interfaith Council "Gathering in Gratitude"**

The Kingston Interfaith Council, in which the Old Dutch Church is a member, will hold its annual thanks-giving service on Tuesday, November 17 at 7:00 p.m. The event will be offered on-line at the Council's website (<https://www.kingstoninterfaithcouncil.org/>). The theme of this year's event will be "Home" and will include teaching on housing needs, homelessness, and new housing initiatives in Ulster County, along with readings and musical offerings from all of our congregations. Those who are interested and able can gather at the Old Dutch Church where we will make the on-line service available.



## Gatherings for Newcomers

This past March we had planned a dinner gathering for newcomers to the Church. Unfortunately, COVID-19 forced us to shut-down. For months, we have been waiting for the day we could gather for a meal and conversation. Well, we are finished waiting. Although we cannot be at table together, we are moving ahead to have those of you who are relatively new to the Church gather with some of our Deacons and Elders via ZOOM to share our stories and talk about the history, values and mission of Old Dutch, and the possibility of your moving more deeply into the life of the congregation. So, we have planned **two gatherings to take place via ZOOM: Wednesday, November 18 and Friday, November 27, 7:00-9:00 p.m. If you wish to join one of these meetings, please contact Pastor Renee: [pastorrenee@olddutchchurch.org](mailto:pastorrenee@olddutchchurch.org) (please put "newcomer" in the subject line)**



### Enneagram Workshop @ Old Dutch Church

You could say the Enneagram (any-a-gram) is a shortcut to deepened understanding of yourself and others. The Enneagram is a centuries old tradition that describes 9 personality-based approaches to life. Focusing on motivation, rather than behavior, the Enneagram helps us discern both our brokenness and our path toward healing. Hunter Mobley, of the Life in the Trinity Ministry, will lead the Workshop, assisting participants in identifying their Enneagram number and providing tools, tips, and spiritual practices for each number. Hunter's teaching style is winsome, conversational, and based in the narrative tradition of storytelling.

You can participate in the workshop via Zoom or in person. It begins **Friday, November 20, from 7-9 p.m.** and continues **Saturday, November 21, from 10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. with an hour lunch break (lunch provided).** Participants will receive a complimentary best-selling book, *The Road Back to You: An Enneagram Journey to Self-Discovery* by Ian Morgan Cron and Suzanne Stabile. The book can be mailed to you or is available to pick up from the Old Dutch Church office. **The Workshop is FREE for folks from the Old Dutch Church. The cost is \$35.00 for all others. If you wish to register, please e-mail Pat Hall: [info@olddutchchurch.org](mailto:info@olddutchchurch.org) (please put "Enneagram" in the subject line)**

### Bethany Pietroniro & Hailey McAvoy in Concert



We are thrilled to announce that mezzo-soprano Hailey McAvoy and pianist Bethany Pietroniro will present a concert of songs for voice and piano, with compositions written from the 1600s, up to the present day. The program, which reflects on nature, love, and the passage of time, includes the works of Bach, Debussy, Brahms, George Crumb, and favorites by little-known American song composer George Hubbard Miller. Bethany and Hailey are two extraordinarily gifted musicians. The concert will be live-streamed from the sanctuary at Old Dutch, and we look forward to sharing the music with you, either in person or online, Saturday, November 21 at 4:00 p.m.; to join on-line, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/OldDutchChurch>.





## Sunday, November 22 Native American Thanksgiving Worship

Native Americans living in the Hudson Valley will lead this special Thanksgiving Service at the **Old Dutch Church at 10:30 a.m.** Since 2013, members of the Association of Native Americans of the Hudson Valley and the Old Dutch Church have been walking the road to reconciliation together and envisioning ways to partner in seeking the common good of our community. The Thanksgiving Service is one of the ways that we share life together. The Service is enlivened by drumming, the Church's Handbell choir, songs of healing and blessing, a "Green Corn Ceremony" in celebration of the goodness of the Creator, and the celebration of thanks for God's work of reconciling a divided humanity. A simple boxed lunch will be shared following the service. As always, all are welcome to share in this beautiful, spirited time.



....for you for your generous in support of the Church's daily ministries. Special thanks for gifts made to keep our pantry stocked and to support our brothers and sisters who depend on the Ulster Immigrant Defense (UIDN) Network for food, clothing, housing, legal aid—all this concrete, visible love. We welcome your financial gifts; you can also donate these items for our pantry and the UIDN:

UIDN: Diapers, sizes 5-6; Formula—Enfamil; Baby Wipes

PANTRY: Mac & Cheese, Spaghetti and Sauce with Meat, "Complete" Dinners, Condiments, Soups/Stews, Fruit Cups & Cereal.

## ODC Calendar at a Glance...

<b>Wednesday, November 4 6:30 pm</b>	Old Dutch Church Consistory Meeting
<b>Tuesday, November 17 7:00 pm</b>	Kingston Interfaith Council "Gratitude Gathering"
<b>Friday-Saturday, November 20-21</b>	Enneagram Workshop (Fri. 7-9 pm; Sat. 10 am-3:30 pm)
<b>Saturday, November 21 4:00 pm</b>	Hailey McAvoy & Bethany Pietroniro Concert
<b>Sunday, November 22 10:30 pm</b>	Native American Thanksgiving Worship
<b>Sunday, December 6 3:30 p.m.</b>	Classis Commissioning Service for Robert Sweeney

**PRAYER CORNER**

Hospitalized - **Yolanda Gitman** (or home; Jeanne Rakowski's aunt being treated for brain cancer)

Nursing Homes/Assisted Living - **Galen Kelly** (Syracuse area for rehab), **Bill Ford**(Ed's brother), **Joan Alsdorf**(Halls),  
**Victoria Piasecki, Su Saban**

At Home - **Nancy Sweeney, Gilbert Plantinga** (restore health), **Luci Windsong-Rain, Carol Werner, Pat Allen, Dee Milczarzyk, Arlene Carlson, Gene Hall, Tom Pape, Anna-Marie O'Brien, Betty Myers, Joel Brink, Theron Haskins, Ed Ford, Howard Hopkins, Liam Lezniak**(Matt Hall), **Lynda Thaisz**(Pat Allen), **Jessica & Solon De Usoz**(Deirdre Ourso's sister & nephew), **Sahar Chifici**(Deirdre O.), **Thelma Lucas, Nancy Guido**(Betty Williams), **Frankie Knowles**(Betsy Arlantino), **Barry Mitchell, baby Wyatt Krueger**(Elizabeth Wikane), **Kathy Vitale**(Jim Fitzmorris' sister), **Peter Rosier**(Henk & Barbara's son), **Steve Asche**(Pat Hall), **Linda Ferraro, Joanne Flynn & Family; 4/y.o. w/ stage 4 cancer (Dr. Melissa Nord), Steve Dudley**(Lisa's f-l-l), **Mary Riesig** (Fay Gervais' sister), **Adam Coss** (Gene Hall's nephew), **Karen Gorst's father, Lynda Henry** (by Luci; health issues), **John Webster**(Ron Rifenburg's son-in-law; cancer treatments), **Chester Van Wagenen**

*(Names will remain on our At Home Prayer List for one month, unless otherwise requested)*

Missionaries - **Rev. Aaro Rytkonen/Al Amana Center**(Oman), **Josh & Erica Bode**(Oman)

Military Service - **James Bonestell**(son of Ken & Rebecca Rosier), **Taylor Schenck**(granddaughter of Marilyn Smith),  
**Liam White**(Halls)

Incarcerated - **Jeremiah**

**Please also keep in prayer** the thousands of folks on the front-lines in the struggle to halt the spread of Coronavirus while doing their jobs - healthcare workers, first responders, cleaning crews, etc. - as well as those working to provide for the needs of others - food, supplies, medicines, housing.

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Happy Thanksgiving!

