

PASTOR'S MESSAGE - AUTUMN, 2013

There are several roots for the word Autumn; most relate to harvest or a drying-time. However, I found one which interests me. It is from the ancient Latin “auctumnus,” which means “increase.”

I never thought of Autumn as a time of increase; actually I felt quite the opposite: that it is a time when birds migrate away, flowers die back and the trees become bare. A time of decrease.

I wonder why the people of that time used that term? The exact origin is unknown, but I like that it made me stop and think. Does it suggest a better appreciation of the bounty we already have? A “glass half-full” mentality? Or does it just refer to the filling of our pantries with frozen and preserved food – increasing our security for the winter? A time of storing up our treasures. In our own homes. Oops!

We all know what Jesus said about storing up earthly treasures, right? Does that mean we shouldn't prepare for winter? Even those lilies of the field store energy in the bulb. I sense an either/or argument starting in my head. Maybe it is better to look at the both/and.

Each change of season brings an increased awareness of our surroundings. In the Northeast, we become aware that things are going to get colder (and whiter) before long. That brings an increased appreciation of the warm days we have left.

The abundance of produce available to us here in the country increases my appreciation for the long, exhausting hours worked by our farmers. An increased delight in the taste of fresh food. When I see the produce that is donated to the Food Pantry, I have an increased awareness of people's generosity in sharing their abundance.

Even the storing of food for the winter increases my awareness of not wasting anything, being grateful for all we have by preserving it and – even as I become SICK of eating zucchini! – feeling blessed with all the gifts we are given.

Perhaps we can approach this Autumn by not bemoaning the end of Summer, but rather by increasing our gratitude. Preserve food in order not to waste it and be responsible AND be ready to share that bounty with others. Give thanks AND know that, no matter how hard we worked, it is still all a gift of God.



May this be a season of Increase for you all.

Loving blessings,

Rev. Susan



COUNCIL/SESSION MEETING

Sept 23, 2013 at 6 p.m.

We have quite a lengthy agenda for this meeting. It includes a discussion and plan for Communion for the next year, membership transfers, Pulpit supply and a few other items. We will update you in the next newsletter. Our committee is becoming more active and we really appreciate the people who serve on these committees. We also thank Rev Stark Jones our Moderator for joining us for this meeting.

MONDAY EVENING GROUP

A new Spiritual Support group met on Monday evenings during the Summer. The rich discussions included grief issues and growing spiritually; it was always rewarding.

The group will continue into the Fall, on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month, beginning Sept. 16th.

All meetings begin at 7PM in Pierce Hall.

People are welcome to attend some or all gatherings, as your schedule permits.

SCHEDULE:

Sept. 16

Oct. 7

Oct. 21

Nov. 4

Nov 18

Dec. 9

Dec. 23



NEW LIGHTS FOR THE CHOIR!

There are now new lights installed to help the choir see their music better. We are grateful to the Men's Breakfast Club who paid for the equipment, and to Allen Phelps, Lighting Director at The Theater Barn who installed it. We might need to "tweak" it a bit, but it already makes a huge difference! Our amazing choir deserves the best.

JESSICA ROEMISCHER TO PERFORM AT STEPHENTOWN FEDERATED CHURCH



Jessica is a gifted pianist who provides musical meditations for all people. She recently was interviewed on NPR, and performed a benefit for High Peaks Hospice.

Rev. Susan contacted her, and she will be performing her **IN DUET WITH GOD** as a Sunday Service during Advent! This performance is made up of Jessica playing music while reading from the companion book of the same name. It describes her **Spiritual Journey** and offers contemplations

about recognizing God in our lives. What a perfect gift for Advent!

Watch for further information as to the date. It will be during Worship time.

If you want to see Jessica's web site, go to:

www.pianobeautiful.com

SonShiners

Meeting dates – bring a covered dish to share:

September 15th at 8:00 am

October 20th at 8:00 am

November 17th at 8:00 am

December 15th at 8:00 am

Check out the new runners the SonShiners purchased for the church for the kitchen and porch at the kitchen entrance.

Upcoming Events:

October 5th 3^d Annual Italian Dinner - 6pm

All are invited – It's "all you can eat" to include:
Lazagna, Penne with Marinara sauce, or Fettuccine
Alfredo, Meatballs, Salad, Bread, Beverage and Dessert
FREE WILL OFFERING!



November 5th Election Day Luncheon 11am – 2pm Come celebrate our right to vote with lunch in Pierce Hall.

November 23rd Make your Thanksgiving Floral Centerpiece (if interested please contact Kate or Barb)

December 15th Cookie swap (during morning meeting)



Welcome Back Choir!

It is Wonderful to have the choir back with us again. Our rehearsals are Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. I welcome all previous members and invite new members if you want to give us a try. You don't have to read music to be a part of the choir. We go over everything during our rehearsals.

I also want to acknowledge the many contributions of Audrey and Fran Foody. Even though they have not been able to sing with us in choir the past little while, we still felt their presence until this summer. They will be greatly missed by our group. Our thoughts and prayers continue with their family.

Also we are very appreciative to the Men's Group for purchasing the lights over where the choir sits in the sanctuary. Special thanks to Allen Phelps for his expertise and installation of the lights. It will be wonderful to see again without such a struggle.

Bev Westfall

The Stephentown Federated Church Men's Group

Please join us for breakfast – first Sunday of every month until June. Join us for good food and great fellowship. The remainder of the 2013 schedule is:

October 6, 2013..... First breakfast of the new season of meetings.

Everyone is welcome for the "All Church Breakfast"

November 3, 2013..... Breakfast at 8:00am The end of "Daylight Savings"

December 1, 2013..... Breakfast at 8:00am

The officers for the group are: President-Larry Eckhardt; Secretary- Rich Terpening; Treasurer-Ted Bears; Men's Rep to the General Committee-Malcolm Beal

September, October, November

CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 a.m. choir rehearsal	10:00 a.m. Faith Sharing	9:00 a.m. Heavenly Quilters		10:00 a.m. Yoga		9:00-11:00 a.m. Food Pantry
9:30 a.m. service	7:00 p.m. Spiritual Support Group 1 st & 3 rd week	6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	6:00 p.m. AA			Oct 5 th 6:00 p.m. Italian Dinner SonShiners All Invited
10:30 a.m. coffee hour	7:00 p.m. Gen Com Sept 23 Oct 28 Nov 25 Council/ Session Mtg Sept 23, 6 pm					

Other Dates to Remember

**Men's Breakfast: 8 a.m. October 6th –all church breakfast
November 3
December 1**

**SonShiner's Breakfast: 8 a.m September 15
October 20
November 17**

3rd Annual Italian Dinner October 5 6 p.m.

**Each month: 1st Sunday ---Communion
2nd Sunday---Hymn Sing
3rd Sunday---Healing
2nd and 4th Sunday---Contemporary service
5th Sunday---surprise!**

Council/Session meeting Sept 23, 6 p.m.