



That is what has happened to us. We have been broken open as a nation and as the world. Indeed, given the way things were going it was probably inevitable. Short-sightedness with its focus on power and money, combined with neglect of the larger systems of infrastructure, medical and otherwise, made us more vulnerable than we realized.

## **Ideology divided us into angry and anxious camps.**

We no longer saw persons. To a large degree we only saw camps. Those who agreed with us were friends. Those who disagreed were enemies. The divisiveness was cooked in a toxic stew of hubris, thoughtlessness and the lust for power and money. The eye was fixed on the next stock market report while other values were subverted to the gods of mammon. Besides, we were all so busy with our coming and going that we passed one another swiftly and without thought. We were a collection of individuals and individualism, not community, was the mark of the time.

## **Now we see with different eyes.**

The country and the world, in the midst of great pain and loss, are now beginning to recognize our common humanity. We see people making sacrifices large and small on the behalf of others. We now wave when we pass perfect strangers. We now yearn to connect with others. We find ourselves reaching out through technology, no longer taking for granted the proximity and community contact that we had enjoyed. We have been broken open to the reality that when we could no longer continue with business as usual, the planet experienced a major change in the quality of its air. The difference is seen in images taken by satellites.

## **If there were any lingering thoughts that we humans were not a major driver of climate change, then that thought can be put to rest.**

We are not the first people to experience being broken open. The story is laid out for us in the book of Isaiah. Judah had forgotten what made for peace and wholeness and the people ended up in captivity in Babylon for nearly fifty years. In the text from Isaiah 40 we read the word that called the people out of captivity and into a new life. "*Comfort, Comfort, my people says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and cry to her that she has served her term...*" And later, "Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Needless to say, not all the people survived the ordeal. However, a new life for the people of Israel was unfolding.

## **What is God doing today?**

God is one who is hidden and revealed. Therefore the ways and workings of God are always a mystery. Indeed it is an act of hubris to say we know and understand the working of God. However, we do believe that God is at work today and our lives can be strengthened and given direction by lessons past and present. What are the lessons learned?

## **Life is precious and it is fragile. We are not as separate from one another as we once thought.**

Indeed we are all connected all around the earth. Let something happen in China and we will experience it here. If we thought that we had no impact on the health of the environment, we can lay that fallacy to rest. It is clear that what we do impacts the earth and all that is upon it. What is important is not our ideology but rather dialogue. Instead of polarization we realize the strong value of community. Indeed we are made for community. Instead of forgetfulness of God, we now look to God for strength, life and wisdom. Our need for God and a life of meaning and order based on peace and justice is now very clear.

## **We have broken open to our true selves.**

We are painfully aware of the fact that we need each other. We have opened to the realization that we are indeed One World. As we heal, we need to pray and not forget what we have learned from being broken open. We are, of course in many ways, still broken open and that will continue for some time. There is a challenge before us as we move ahead. We are in process of healing and part of that healing is to remember the lessons and values that we have learned. When we feel strong again we must not go back to “business as usual” and engage in behavior that forgets what we have learned, namely the importance of persons, community and care of the earth. We will need to work to make our world strong by supporting the health and well-being of systems that can sustain us. That work involves putting into place working structures for the health and economic well-being of all. Realizing we are one world and one planet means that we cannot do anything less. These lessons need to be incorporated into new responses if we are to learn from the present and move forward into a stronger, safer, saner future.

## **Part of our healing is the realization that we all belong to God.**

To belong to God means that we are all connected to God and that we cannot live full and healthy lives, nor have a healthy planet, without the ethics and practices that flow out of our faith traditions. All of these traditions, functioning at their best, are reminders that we are one people, living in one world, on one planet. Wisdom understands that everyone is connected to everyone and that everything in Creation is connected to everything else. This is the wisdom that was reflected in the words of the psalmist who wrote: “*The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it.*” (Ps. 24:1)

Reprinted from <https://albanypresbytery.org/broken-open/>

## WORSHIP



Our weekly worship service has moved online for the time being. We invite you to join us by visiting our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/Delmar Presbyterian Church](https://www.facebook.com/DelmarPresbyterianChurch).

Also a weekly email with a Zoom link for Sunday fellowship is sent to members and friends. If you would like to be added to the email list, please contact the office at [office@delmarpres.org](mailto:office@delmarpres.org).

If you are still struggling with Zoom and other tech needed to stay in touch with us during the week, please contact the church by email and someone will be dispatched to help you either by phone or in person when needed. On Sundays Jack Gajewski is available to help with zoom support. [jgajewski@mac.com](mailto:jgajewski@mac.com)

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### *Church School*

The Adult Christian Education continues in full swing weekly via Zoom. There are many options for us to consider and study at the end of our current one that supports our commitment as a Climate Care congregation. We are not forgetting our children's education. Our CE committee expects to organize content for the children's school based on next year's lectionary. Meeting as a

committee has been limited, but we have decided to await the guidance from the Bethlehem school system as to their procedural and physical requirements for the schoolchildren, once they open up. These requirements, along with those that will evolve based on the work of our church's Session, Worship and COVID Virus Task Forces, will enable us to complete our plans.

Lynda Spielman, Chairperson, Christian Education

## RPMs

The RPM Youth Group had to make the difficult decision not to travel this year for our annual Mission Trip in April. As you may remember we were scheduled to volunteer in Washington D.C. and had lined up opportunities to serve at seven different organizations; all who focused on supporting individuals who are homeless and food insecure.



It was a very sad decision to make, not just because the mission trips are so fun, but because all of the organizations we were supporting are essential and depend on volunteers. However, as you know, ultimately the risk was too high to travel and we were all on pause across New York.

The week we were supposed to arrive all but most of the organizations had shut down to volunteers to be able to manage who was in

and out, so we would not have been able to volunteer anyway. In an effort to still support these organization we donated financially to each one so please know your donations toward the trip did make an impact. The organizations are: So Others Might Eat, A Wider Circle, D.C. Central Kitchen, Martha’s Table, Food and Friends, Capital Area Food Bank, and Friendship Place. We will also use these funds towards our Rise Against Hunger meal packaging event in October. I am also still hopeful that the group can volunteer locally this summer depending on how the reopening goes.

The RPMs have been meeting on Sunday nights via Zoom, it’s been good to connect with each other. We have just talked and checked in with each other, played trivia, watched a movie, and played Scattergories. As the RPM year comes to an official end, I wanted to take time to recognize the seven seniors that will graduate this year; I’m sad that this cannot be done at Praise and Picnic. The seniors are: Patrick Cavanaugh, Mary Devane, Brian Devaprasad, PJ Gallagher, Marcelle McAdoo, Dylan Paty and Hugh Talmage. We wish them well and know they will accomplish great things as they are clearly a resilient group of young adults.



**On June 14<sup>th</sup> we will meet at the Reformed Church parking lot at 1:00pm to do a parade by each of their homes to show them how much the RPM Family supports them, you are welcome to join us, please email [RPMsYouthGroup@gmail.com](mailto:RPMsYouthGroup@gmail.com) if you are planning to attend.**

Thank you! We miss you all!!!!

Beth and the RPMs Youth Group

## DEACONS

# JUNE BIRTHDAYS

1	Matt Cooper
1	Anna Walthall
2	Ron Tweedie
7	Brendan McGinn
15	Cheryl Gardiner
18	Hannah Lowry
23	Gary Lind
23	Bob Lowry

## OUTREACH

### *Family Promise Meals*

We have been invited to cook for our Family Promise families that have been staying at the Day Center since the COVID-19 quarantining took effect in mid- March. We are looking for volunteer families to cook for the guests and take their meal to the Day Center on New Scotland Ave.

If you are able to prepare a meal the week of June 7<sup>th</sup> – June 13<sup>th</sup> please email your willingness to do so to [office@delmarpres.org](mailto:office@delmarpres.org). Our Family Promise partners B’Nai Shalom will be cooking two meals that week so we need 5 meals cooked. There are no food allergies or preferences. This is a great way to help with the mission of Family Promise and doesn’t require overnight stays at DPC.

First come, first served. Thank you!

Submitted by Dave Rees

## COMMUNICATIONS

### ***Being a Matthew 25 Congregation***

At the beginning of the year Pastor Karen and Session decided DPC should accept the call to the Matthew 25 mission as stated by PC(USA). This mission aims to engage Christians within three main topics: building congregational vitality, eradicating systemic poverty, and dismantling structural racism.

In light of recent events where officials have clashed with people of color in terrifying ways, DPC's leadership has decided to take on a 21 day Racial Justice Challenge set forth by PC(USA). "The challenge invites us to do something every day to raise awareness about the perniciousness of racism and encourage action in response to that awareness."

Link to the Matthew 25 mission:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/>

Link to the 21 day challenge:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/racism/>

We have started, and will continue, to send out daily emails that follow this 21 day challenge. If you want to discuss and hear what others have to say about the daily challenges and more you can join our Facebook group here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/267338124327560/>. If you can't find the group contact Laura Scott ([whisper0784@gmail.com](mailto:whisper0784@gmail.com)) and an invitation can be sent to you as long as you already have a Facebook account.

Some of these topics can be sensitive. Our hope is to have thoughtful discussion on how we, as Christians, can take action in our community and nation to make a difference.

Submitted by Laura Scott, Communications Chair

## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

### ***Earth Care Task Force meeting on Monday June 8 by Zoom***



With everything happening in the US and world, social, economic and environmental justice needs to be center in our faith. It is hard to stay energized but with prayerful thought, we can focus on an earth care vision for our church and in our individual lives. Join us with any thoughts and ideas.

Resources:

Some web sites from our own Presbyterian Church (USA) for education and information:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/>

"...God's work in creation is too wonderful, too ancient, too beautiful, too good to be desecrated...Restoring creation is God's own work in our time, in which God comes both to judge and to restore..."

—PC(USA) Environmental Policy

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/eco-journey/>

Eco-justice means working to heal, defend, and work toward justice for all God's creation *and* all people. This blog from the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) offers environmental and sustainable living education, advocacy, and action opportunities to accompany you on your own journey.

Are you on Facebook?

Check out "Presbyterians for Earth Care"

Submitted by Nancy Braaten, CLC Chair

## BUILDING AND GROUNDS

### Spring Clean Up - Quarantine Style



**Who** - Anyone who needs to get out to the house

**What** - Choose a task from the list or make up your own

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AfHA5lNjhFsSrr1fp\\_FGKvuBL8\\_hE11T-K81pCqCrDo/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AfHA5lNjhFsSrr1fp_FGKvuBL8_hE11T-K81pCqCrDo/edit?usp=sharing)

**When** - At your convenience, just give us a tentative date so we can have supplies and tools ready

Any questions: contact Matt Cooper 734-945-3646 [mattpennycooper@gmail.com](mailto:mattpennycooper@gmail.com)

### Giving at DPC

We appreciate that so many of you are attempting to keep your pledges current. Contributions may be sent by mail, dropped off at the church, or done online at our webpage

[www.delmarpres.org](http://www.delmarpres.org)

Click on the "donate" button and indicate it is for a pledge.

## SESSION

### Highlights of the May 19, 2020

#### Session Meeting via Zoom

**Worship:** Session heard recommendations by the COVID-19 Task Force regarding plans for reopening. Places of worship are scheduled to open in Phase 4. DPC will continue its vibrant online presence for worship, study and ministry while making plans for future in-person worship.

**Environmental Justice:** DPC is currently studying the book, "Climate Church, Climate World," in a weekly online session lead by Rev. Larry Deyss.

**Building and Grounds:** Spring cleaning day is being planned, landscaping is needed in front of the church, a list of people and schedule to mow the woods is being compiled, the purchase and installation of hand sanitizers will be investigated.

**Outreach:** Session was asked to approve a donation of \$2000 from Outreach Designated Mission funds to Unity House in Troy. After discussion, unanimous approval was given to send \$1000 this month and \$1000 in early June.

**Worship:** A worship meeting will be scheduled soon.

**Personnel:** Regular staff payroll will continue through June. A personnel meeting will be scheduled soon.

**Pastor's Report:** The pastor continues to produce online services and is planning a summer program for children. Session approved the use of our fellowship hall as a polling place on June 23, 2020 and November 3, 2020.

**Next Session Meeting:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at 7:00 PM on Zoom.