



June 2022



From the Pastor's Pen

~ Pastor Sarah Flack

Dear River Community Church,

When was the last time you wrote a letter to someone? Or received a handwritten letter? For the early Christians receiving a letter was a big event, and a letter addressed to a church would be read to the believers in that city as well as shared with other churches. These letters were used to instruct and encourage the early followers of Jesus.

Imagine what it must have been like for the believers in Corinth to first hear the words of Paul, inspired by God, in 2 Corinthians 3:

1 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? 2 You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. 3 You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. 4 Such confidence we have through Christ before God.

Paul told them that they were living letters, letters from Christ, that testified to the truth of what Paul and his coworkers were teaching them. What Paul wanted them to understand is that followers of Jesus are changed when we trust in Jesus for salvation. We, just as those in Corinth, become new creations through Christ Jesus, and our lives begin to reflect that as we follow Him. Notice that Paul was not boasting about his teaching ability or charisma or ability to make them believers; rather he pointed to the work of the Holy Spirit through Christ before God in the lives of believers.

It's exciting and sobering to think that our lives testify about Jesus to those around us. During these months when we find ourselves out and about more than usual as we enjoy warmer weather, keep this in mind. Is what is written on the tablet of your heart apparent to those around you? Are you living as someone who is saved by the gracious work of Jesus, who is deeply loved by Father God, and who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit?

We are letters from Christ to a world that needs what He offers. Go forth with confidence in Him, love for one another, and a desire to offer others the hope that can only be found in Jesus.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Sarah



Grief Ministry
~ Laura Schafer

Encouraging One Another

Have you ever received encouragement from a friend that gave you much needed strength to go on? Encouragement is one of the best gifts we can give. Encouragement is important for both individuals and the church. Encouragement fills our hearts and inspires us to serve and help others. God tells us in His Word to encourage others.

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 10:24-25

Sometimes we all feel unsure on how we can encourage others. Here are some ideas that have helped me.

- Pray for God to make you an encourager. Ask God to give you a heart to love others as He does.
- Take a look at Barnabas in Scripture. The apostles nicknamed him the “son of encouragement.” (Acts)
- Make encouragement a daily practice. Encouragement doesn’t come naturally to everyone. Set an alarm on your phone or write yourself a note to send a short email, text or call to encourage someone. *“But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.”* Hebrews 3:13
- Pray for God to bring someone to mind that needs encouragement.
- Use Scripture, nothing is more encouraging than God’s Word. Make a list of scriptures you want to use. The Psalms are full of encouragement.
- It is okay to be specific with your encouragement if someone has done something that has meant a lot to you. God can use you to remind others that He can use and work through them.
- Pray that God will grow our culture of encouragement in our church. Ask God to grow the love we have for each other with our encouragement. Ask God to help YOU fan the flame. *“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”* Ephesians 4:15-16

Let’s get started. Who can you encourage right now? Who has blessed you recently that you can thank? What verse can you share with them? How might God use it?

May the Lord use our little bit of encouragement to do more than we can imagine.

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” Ephesians 3:20-21



Women's Ministry

Wendy Falzano and Charlotte Frese



Yay! Summer is here!

A welcome to our summer friends! We hope you have the opportunity to join us while you are here.

When we met in April, we collected the finished pillow case dresses. They are being made by “assembly” process. Various women are doing a particular part of the making. Some are cutting the elastic or the pillow cases, some may be pinning and others are sewing. To date, the women have given of their time and skills to complete 54 dresses. We have another 30-40 to go. Many hands make light work. Thank you ladies! We will be donating the dresses to a charitable organization which will distribute them to those in need,

We also were able to see the finished “Comfort” quilts. At our fall gathering we wrote up some scripture verses on pieces to be included. Thank you Char and Lauren Whitney for putting all the pieces together and completing the quilting process. Pastor Sarah invited the congregation to come forward and pray for those who would receive them at the Sunday Service.

Our project in April was to learn how to make palm crosses which were given out to those who attended the Palm Sunday service. Thank you Michelle Estelle for the great idea!

At May's gathering, we discussed why God created us and What is Our Purpose in Life.

During the second part of the gathering, we learned various different ways to tie and wear scarves. Thank you Xia for demonstrating for us! What laughs and fun we had

We are inviting the women of the church to join us on June 18th to assist in a “secret” project. Shhh!!!

The more hands the merrier. Won't you come join us for some fellowship. What a great opportunity it will be to catch up with some of our summer sisters.

Remember, the Circle is for you, the women of the church. We meet monthly on the 3rd Saturday of the month for fellowship, prayer, encouragement and service. Please bring us any of your ideas or passions for the purpose of planning future gatherings.

Remember, you are always welcome to bring a friend, daughter or granddaughter. All women are welcome!

If you have any questions or want to be added to our Circle Facebook Group, you can contact Char Frese (315-221-1303), Wendy Falzano (518-526-6149) or Angela Taylor (315-766-6542).





Breaking The Chains Biblical Recovery Ministry *~ Ken & Michelle Kavanagh*

APatience in the Waiting on the Lord

7 Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord's return. Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. 8 You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Don't grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look—the Judge is standing at the door! 10 For examples of patience in suffering, dear brothers and sisters, look at the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 We give great honor to those who endure under suffering. For instance, you know about Job, a man of great endurance. You can see how the Lord was kind to him at the end, for the Lord is full of tenderness and mercy. (James 5:7-11)

In this specific portion of James' letter, he addresses any frustrations and outright misery that Christians not only will experience, but are to actually endure. I encourage you to read verses 1-6 where James also points out that those who are the "elite" are just one source of oppression or even persecution upon both the poor and the righteous. God assures us that He will deal with their treachery against fellow mankind. How He deals with them, may be in this lifetime where justice is served or after this lifetime where Jesus will hand down His judgment. We must never forget that God is patient and desires that none should (eternally) perish (2 Peter 3:9). I look at it in the following way, this is just one of the reasons the Body of Christ is exhorted to be patient and to endure. So that we "also" can experience and express the compassion that magnifies Christ's light when we speak to our oppressors about salvation through Christ.

James provides examples for us to meditate about. Imagine being any of the prophets sent to either a sinful person or to speak over an entire sinful nation? How many of us would trade off our personal trouble in the present moment for the troubles any prophet of old had to endure for the remainder of their lifetime, while being obedient to God? How many of us would trade off any persecution we're dealing with now, with the persecution the Apostles experienced and endured for the remainder of their lives? Or Job as James points out, imagine all he lost, all the pain of infirmity, all the accusations and persecution by a wife and close friends? At least his misery did not last the remainder of his lifetime however, the point is that "while" Job was suffering, he is an example of enduring through the misery even when no end is in sight.

What helped them to hold on and endure? The very assurance they held to is the same assurance we're reminded of in this letter by James. We cannot forget the promises of God. For those in the New Covenant, the promise and assurance that Christ Jesus will return is above all and is thus, our HOPE in Christ Jesus. Be strong in your faith and when times are tough to the point of agonizing in misery, be strengthened to hold on in knowing all of God's promises are faithful and true. James stresses the need for patience because impatience leads to grumbling (murmuring) and what we say through our frustrations will most likely be unrighteous in nature. God is producing a maturity within us to be more like Christ. Just like the farmers, they cannot reap mature and plentiful crops, if due to impatience, they harvest before that final maturing. The "latter" rain signaled the timing for harvest. We are to wait on God's timing. By complaining and grumbling in the meantime, we are failing in growing the way God desires for us to mature. Ultimately, God is to produce the Fruit of the Holy Spirit "in" us (Galatians 5:22-23). This cannot be accomplished when we fail in surrendering to the manner or means in which He has chosen to mold us.

Impatience is fruit of our flesh and its purpose is to hinder or worse, stop the work God is doing in us. The impatience also causes us to doubt any and all promises God has faithfully expressed to all of mankind and more specifically, to YOU! Why, the grumbling and complaining is evidence of our heart hardening against God's will.

Ask yourself, am I finding God in the midst of my trouble? The answer will always be, "yes!" In the moment, we may not be able to see His movement or even "feel" His presence, but be assured, in time you will find He is always with you. Through the patience in enduring any and all hardship, you will ALWAYS find that God was truly with you. Also, you will find a greater hope in patiently waiting for the glorious return of His Son, Jesus Christ.



Getting To Know You... *Jerry & Mary Anne McGreevy*

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:

A time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot,

A time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build,

A time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance,

*A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a
time to refrain from embracing,*

A time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away,

A time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak,

A time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.”

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Mary Anne (Pratté) and Jerry McGreevy have shared 18 seasons of life, have been married for 16 years, and became members of The River Community Church in 2018.

Mary Anne began serving on the Audio Visual Team in 2019 and joined the Worship Team in 2021. Jerry began serving the church in 2019 on the Building Maintenance Team.

Mary Anne came to Alexandria Bay with her family in 1973 and graduated from Alexandria Central School in 1976. She served with the New York State Police (NYSP) and worked in Jefferson County from 1981-1987. After 32 years of service, she retired in 2013.

Jerry served our country in the US Air Force for four-years in Europe. He also served with the New York State Police and was stationed in the North Country at Gouverneur, NY from 1981 and 1982. Jerry retired twice. After 30-years of service with the NYSP, Jerry retired in 2004 and after serving 10-years with the TSA at the Albany International Airport, he retired again in 2014.

Three months after Mary Anne retired, our son/step-son Michael died of an undiagnosed heart arrhythmia and experienced sudden death at the age of 22. He was working on his Masters Degree at Norwich University (NU) after graduating with his Bachelors Degree from NU in 2012. At the time of his passing, he was an Orange County Sheriff's Deputy and was a part-time police officer in the Northfield Police Department in Vermont. He also previously served with the Barre City Police Department in VT. Michael is survived by his parents and three siblings.

Our Lord said:

“I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

We are living proof that Jesus never fails, never falters, and always keeps his promises. We have learned that many of our brothers and sisters, in our church-body, have seen their children go home to the loving arms of our Savior, long before we believed it was their time. We have been taught:

Getting To Know You continued...

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:9

Jesus has carried us through the storms of life and has walked through the fire on our behalf. We are grateful:

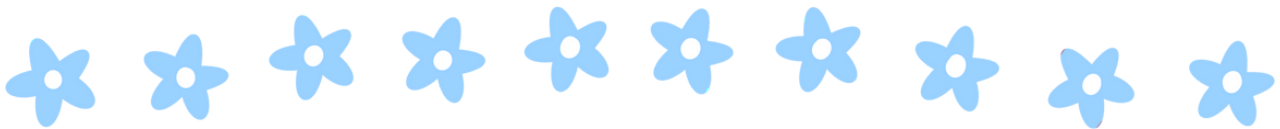
“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.” Psalm 34:18

Our Savior, our Redeemer, our King, took our place on the cross and conquered death! He, the spotless lamb of God, willingly gave his life for us. For all who believe that Jesus is the Son of God and who repent of their sins, Jesus promises:

“My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. 4 “And you know the way where I am going.” 5 Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?” 6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. John 14: 3 - 6

Our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us to overflowing. Jesus is our Good Shepard and has brought us to green pastures and still waters. He is restoring our souls each and every day. He brought us to The River Community Church to love and serve His church-body. We are grateful for Pastor Sarah, for the all the elders, and each and every member of our church.

Your servants in Christ,
Mary Anne and Jerry



At River Church





RCC would like to thank everyone for their generosity in donating to those in need in Ukraine.



Free Items!

Office for the Aging has given us reusable shopping bags and Covid kits which include a mask, hand sanitizer and two Covid test kits. If anyone is interested in either a shopping bag or Covid kit please let the church office know.

Flower Beds

Thank you to those who have worked diligently to make our flower beds pretty. There are still flower beds left to be adopted. If you would like to give some TLC to a flower bed, let the church office know.



06/24 Bob and Fran King



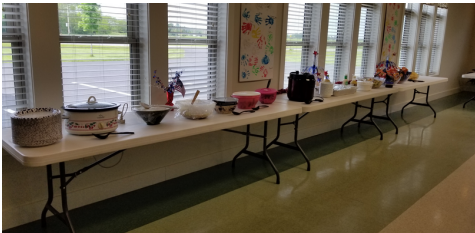
*06/02 Douglas Patterson Sr
06/07 Patsy Kidwell
06/13 Janelle Matthews
06/14 Fran King*

If you would like your Birthday or Anniversary to be a part of the newsletter, please email the church office at lschafer@riverchurchnny.com or Michelle Kavanagh at michellekavanagh@riverchurchnny.com .

Please provide the name of each person and their birthday or anniversary date.

Memorial Day Weekend Picnic

RCC would thank everyone who helped make the Memorial Day weekend picnic a success! We'd especially like to thank the Falzano's for donating the beef for the burgers, Ken Kavanagh for organizing the grilling, and all who provided grills and helped with the grilling. It took many hands to set up, prepare the food and clean up. Thank you!



Returning Members

Have you returned to the area for the summer season? Welcome back! Be sure to let us know in the church office at 315-686-3194 so we can update your address for the summer season.

Need a Bible?

We have free Bibles available for those who need one (including children and teens). Just let one of our greeters know you need a Bible; we would love to give you one!

Things to Do

There is plenty of things to do in Clayton and the surrounding area. Below are some events to take advantage of!

Farmer's Market - From June 2 – October 13, 2022 (10am – 4pm) on Mary Street at the Village Park Circle.

Cape Village Wide Yard Sales - Saturday, June 11th, Cape Vincent.

Flea Market in the Vineyards - Sundays from 10:00am - 4:00pm. Coyote Moon Vineyards, 17371 County Rd 3, Clayton, NY,

Summer Concert Series - Sundays from 6:00pm - 8:00pm at Frink Park.



Taking A Look Back...
First Baptist Church

