

2016 Challenge to Change (Ch 2 Ch) Grant



Wappingers Falls Community Dinner Outreach Program

In 2012, The First Presbyterian Church of Wappingers Falls (FPCWF) was one of nine churches within HRP to take part in the New Beginnings program. They learned that they needed to re-think how they defined mission, that they needed to learn more about their local community, and experiment with different ways to reach out. They discovered that feeding people was their greatest passion. They started their new ministry at a soup kitchen in Poughkeepsie but soon realized that there were people in their own community who needed to be fed. So in 2015 FPCWF took on a new ministry: Community Dinners, served on the third Saturday of the month, free to all. They were feeding 30 to 50 guests each month using a committed group of volunteers from their congregation to plan, prepare and serve the meals. By 2016 they decided that could broaden the appeal of their Community Dinners to a larger base of people both within their congregation as well as their community by providing monthly speakers at the events and employing a coordinator for a modest fee. So FPCWF applied for, and received, a \$3,133 grant from Ch 2 Ch in 2016.

All the ambitious goals FPCWF set in their application were met during the year, with change to spare. Many of their monthly speakers would not take an honorarium; both church members and government agencies contributed additional funds to run the program; they received in-kind donations of locally-grown produce; and they made connections with local government agencies and businesses by hosting a Solarize Wappingers program in October. They served 590 dinners this past year, even though the March 2017 dinner was cancelled due to snow. In fact FPCWF has applied for a 2017 Ch 2 Ch grant to help with advertising for their many programs.

Do you or a member of your church have a great idea that reflect the mission and core values of the Hudson River Presbytery but that idea could use some financial assistance? Please visit the HRP web page, click on “Stewardship Ministries,” then “Grants Committee,” then “Overview of HRP Grants.” There you will find information about the various grants our Presbytery offers as well as those offered by our Synod and the General Assembly. And you will also find application forms there.