



## *Serving & Thriving Together*

### **ABCNYS Region Offering 2022**

*<sup>9</sup> Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup> Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*

A vital part of ABCNYS is our care for local churches in times of challenge. During the pandemic, our staff supported local church leaders with conversations (phone, ZOOM and, as able, in person), provided timely updates for COVID related ministry challenges, and our two executive staff preached or brought greetings at 80-plus churches on Sundays in 2021. Along the way, we were delighted to hear of the many ways our churches were serving and thriving even in these times.

For example, Rev. Anne Gardner of the First Baptist Church of Clifton Springs, NY, shares that the pandemic presented her small membership church in the Finger Lakes with its share of challenges.

*The church developed their online ministry by broadcasting worship via Facebook Live, initially to help congregants concerned with health risks to be able to participate. Then the viewership of weekly worship grew.*

*In 2021, First Baptist welcomed six new members who had started as online viewers and became interested in the ministry of their church.*

Rev. Gardner shares about this past year this verse from Romans 8:28: *“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.”* (New Living Translation)

Rev. Gardner shares: *“This past year, we were able to purchase a new soundboard, computer system and a wall mounted camera that could pan zoom and tilt to improve the quality of our online broadcasts. This was possible due to the generosity of our congregation.*

*Prior to the pandemic our weekly attendance was about twelve. We now average about 80 online viewers per week, and our in house worship attendance averages 24. Giving has increased as well, both in the collection plate and through remote viewers mailing in contributions. 2021 was the first year that we did not have a deficit in recent memory.*

*This past year we shifted to a "One Board" system of church leadership. This combines the duties and functions of our Board of Deacons and our Board of Trustees into one Church Council. This actually allows council members to rotate off the council, whereas in a small church like ours, once you were elected to a board, it was more like a life sentence than a term. The council is encouraging members to be more engaged in the life of the church by forming teams as needed to accomplish everything that needs to be done.*

*This little church is thriving, not only in increased membership and donations, but in increased enthusiasm of members to participate in ministry and mission in our local community and beyond. Thanks be to God!”*

*FBC Clifton Springs is a vital part of the Body of Christ but its reach is limited by its size. When we join together in Associations and Regions our reach is greatly expanded and, for this reason, we at First Baptist Church of Clifton Springs gladly participate in supporting the Region offerings so that our ministry and missions are even more impactful.*

**To help ABCNYS in our work of helping churches “serve and thrive together”, give to the 2022 Region Offering through your church’s offering plate or send a check (noting Region Offering) to: ABCNYS, 3218 James Street, Syracuse, NY 13206. You can also give right now through [www.abc-nys.org](http://www.abc-nys.org) and click on the “donate” button!**

**Thank you for supporting the ministry of ABCNYS!**