

The Bell Ringer

Of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

No matter who you are or where you are on your life journey, you are welcome here.

December 2025



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From the Pastor's Nook:

Grateful Hearts and Hopeful Waiting

As we turn the page from Thanksgiving toward the holy seasons ahead, I find myself deeply grateful—for you, for our life together as a congregation, and for the many ways God continues to move in and through our church. Thanksgiving reminds us to pause and notice the blessings that surround us, both large and small. In a world that often urges us to rush ahead, gratitude invites us to slow down and see God's faithfulness right where we are.

And yet, even as we give thanks, we are also people who look forward with hope. Advent begins this sacred rhythm of watching and waiting. We light candles not because everything is perfect, but because we trust that God's light is still breaking into our world. *"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5). That single verse carries us from Advent to Christmas and even into the promise of a new year. It reminds us that no matter what we carry—joys or burdens, certainty or questions—God's light is stronger.*

Christmas will soon call us again to the manger, where God meets us in surprising humility and boundless love. And as the calendar turns to a new year, we are invited to step forward with renewed purpose, gratitude, and courage. We don't know everything the coming year will hold, but we know the One who walks with us.

Continued on page 19...



Building Relationships

Getting Together

Exciting brainstorming ideas and lively conversation came about from the initial parlor meeting which happened on Sunday, November 9, 2025.

Attendees were as follows: Jean Cavanagh, Laura Fallon, Donna Farahat, and Barbara Shapiro

A short questionnaire is included with the Bellringer on the following page. Print & use this form for submission for anyone who would like to add any suggestions or you may contact Laura directly at llfallon12@gmail.com or text to 631-838-8490. Here are some of the awesome ideas that were shared and submitted:

- A luncheon or dinner out preferably with some jazz or piano music that is not loud.
Know of anyplace? Please share!
- Attending a movie at a local theater or the Cinema Arts Center
- A local library concert or event or movie!
- The Winery in Northport
- Hiking - preferably a paved path - Camsett, Bethpage trails, Sunken Meadow boardwalk for example
- Old Westbury Gardens
- Bayard Cutting Arboretum- great place for a luncheon.
- Bowling

Online Book Club - starting January - what genre do you like? Any suggestions?

Slated for the month of December

Fantasy Winter Fairyland By Lumino City - Great for Families or anyone who enjoys Christmas displays and walking outdoors! Flyers will be available at the back of the sanctuary

Saturday, December 6 at 4:30 pm.

Location: Eisenhower Park - we will meet at the entrance

Please RSVP to Laura Fallon ASAP

General Admission - \$41.12 per ticket

Children (ages 4-12) - \$33.04 per ticket

VIP - \$69.93 per ticket.

Ticket prices includes taxes and fees



Building Relationships

Welcome to Let's Get Together!

I'm looking forward to brainstorming ideas with you and getting together!

Please fill out the following:

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

What day/time is best for you to get together? Weekdays/weekends/both

Circle one: daytime / late afternoon / early evening / evening / anytime

Are you willing/able to be a driver? Yes / no / depends

Would you prefer staying local? Yes / no / doesn't matter

Write down 2 or 3 suggestions: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Some suggestions

- Local libraries have wonderful offerings of events both daytime and evening hours
- Bethpage Restoration Village
- Old Westbury Gardens
- Bowling
- Movies – Cinema Arts Center or local movie theaters
- Bayard Cutting Arboretum
- Walk on the Boardwalk at Sunken Meadow
- Overnight retreat
- Book Club

These outings are all inclusive. There is no age or gender restriction.

All are welcome!

FAITH FORMATION

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR
THE NEXT FAITH & FILM NIGHT.**



**WHAT DOES THE MOVIE STRANGER THAN FICTION
HAVE TO DO WITH FAITH IN FILM?
COME AND SEE HOW GOD CAN SPEAK,
EVEN THROUGH HOLLYWOOD.**

FILM: STRANGER THAN FICTION

WHERE: PCSH CEB HALL

WHEN: FEBRUARY 7TH @ 6:00 PM

WHO: COME ONE, COME ALL!



WORSHIP NOTES

Poinsettia Sponsorship

This Christmas season, you are invited to sponsor a poinsettia to help decorate our sanctuary in celebration of Christ's birth. Sponsoring a poinsettia is a meaningful way to honor or remember a loved one.

After the Christmas services, you may take your poinsettia home or allow it to be delivered to someone in need of encouragement.

Sponsorship Details:

Large Poinsettia: \$25 each (4 red & 2 white available)

Small Poinsettia: \$15 each (18 red available)

Order Information:

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number of Large Poinsettias: _____ X \$25.00 = \$ _____

Number of Small Poinsettias: _____ X \$15.00 = \$ _____

In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

(Please print names clearly so we can correctly list them in the Christmas bulletin)

Payment Options:

Cash

Check

Venmo: @pcshsecretary95

Online giving/Venmo (Please note "Poinsettia" in memo line.)

Thank you for helping to beautify our worship space

WORSHIP NOTES

Waiting in Hope: An Advent Reflection

As we turn the corner from Thanksgiving toward December, the church enters one of the most beautiful seasons of the year—**Advent**, a time of holy anticipation. While the world around us rushes ahead to the festivities of Christmas, Advent invites us to slow down, breathe deeply, and make room in our hearts for the Christ who is always coming to us in new ways.

Advent is a season of **watching and waiting**, not with impatience, but with hope. We light candles each week—Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love—not because the world is already full of these things, but because we believe God is still bringing them to life among us. With each candle, we declare that even in a weary world, the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it.

We are also reminded of the liturgical color of the season, the color purple, that is the color of royalty as we await the arrival of our king.

This year, may Advent be for you a sacred pause. In the midst of errands and events, take time to notice where God is stirring. Reach out in kindness. Sit with Scripture. Say a simple prayer each day: *“Come, Lord Jesus.” And as we journey toward Bethlehem together, may we discover again the quiet miracle of God choosing to dwell with us—Emmanuel, God-with-us—now and always.*

Blessings on your Advent waiting and your Christmas becoming.



December

Deacon Sanctuary Prep

7... **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**

14... **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**

21... Jessica & Children

28... **VOLUNTEER NEEDED**

Liturgist

7... Sheri Myers

14... Lynn Burke

21... Niaja Mowatt

28... Sisi Weaver

December 28... SMORGASBORD SUNDAY

WORSHIP NOTES

Service of Lessons & Carols

December 24, 9:00 PM

*Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow
95 Old Country Rd, Melville, NY 11747*

*A service of telling the birth narrative
of Jesus Christ through scripture & song.*

*A Lessons & Carols service is a reverent, joyful
and Scripture-centered act of worship held on
Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of Jesus
Christ. The service unfolds as a series of readings
from both the Old and New Testaments, each
followed by a carol, anthem, or musical selection
that reflects the theme of the reading.*

Please join us on Christmas Eve at 9:00 PM



WORSHIP NOTES

Merry Christmas

Family Christmas Service
Sunday, December 28
10:00 AM

A lively service shaped with families and children in mind. It includes hands-on activities, opportunities for kids to participate, and an easy-to-follow retelling of the Christmas story. The atmosphere is relaxed and joyful—perfect for worshipers of every age.

Smorgasbord following worship!

WORSHIP NOTES

**From the Message for the Young at Heart
November 16, 2025**



**Peace
By
April Fallon**



**Peace is Gentle, It will not Hurt You
Peace is Compassion
A Tickling Waterfall in the Breeze
Very Quiet and Still like a Standing Statue
Peace Lives in Me
Peace is Colorful Field of Flowers
Serene like You and Me
Peace Lives in Me
Peace is Loving like Everyone**

Stewardship & Giving

“Rooted in Hope, Growing in Mission” — Preparing for Commitment Sunday

As we approach the close of the year, the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow is entering a season filled with hope, gratitude, and possibility. Throughout 2026, we will carry forward the theme **“Rooted in Hope, Growing in Mission,”** a reminder that God is not finished shaping, strengthening, and blessing this congregation.

This year’s narrative budget (which is currently being composed) tells a powerful story: a church with deep roots and a renewed openness to growth. With the blessing of the one-time property sale, Sweet Hollow is not merely “getting by”—we are building a strong foundation for the future. We are expanding ministry, launching a new children and family initiative, strengthening mission outreach, caring for one another with compassion, and investing in leadership to guide us into our next chapter.

Every gift, every pledge, and every act of generosity helps nurture the ministries that shape our life together:

- The worship that centers us
- The mission that sends us out
- The care that binds us together
- The new ministries that will welcome families and children
- The long-term financial stability that will sustain Sweet Hollow for years to come

As always, our mission commitment is not simply about funding a budget—it is about participating in God’s vision for this church. It is about saying, “Yes, I believe in what God is doing here, and I want to be part of the story.”

Commitment Sunday — December 21st

On Sunday, December 21st, we invite you to bring your pledge card and join us in a joyful and prayerful dedication of our 2025 commitments. Together, we will celebrate the hope that has brought us this far and the mission that lies ahead.

May this season remind us that we are a people rooted deeply in God’s love—and together, we are growing in faith, generosity, and mission.



Stewardship & Giving

Giving Tuesday: A Chance to Strengthen Our Ministry Together

Dear Sweet Hollow Family,

Each year, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving invites people across the world to pause, reflect, and give generously. Known as **Giving Tuesday**, it is a global moment centered on gratitude and the joy of supporting the organizations that shape our lives and strengthen our communities. Here at the **Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow**, Giving Tuesday offers us a beautiful opportunity to reaffirm our shared commitment to ministry, compassion, and spiritual growth.

This year has been a season of both movement and possibility for our congregation. We continue to worship with heartfelt gratitude, support one another with deep care, and serve our neighbors with love. We have seen renewed energy in our mission initiatives, creativity in our worship, and a growing sense that God is preparing us for what comes next. As we look toward the coming year, we are excited about expanding ministries, especially in areas that nurture **children, families, and community engagement**.

Your participation in Giving Tuesday helps make all of this possible.

Every gift—large or small—helps sustain the ministries we treasure:

- **Meaningful worship** that offers comfort, challenge, and hope
- **Community outreach** that shares Christ's love beyond our walls
- **Pastoral care** for the hurting, grieving, or struggling
- **Emerging children and family ministries** that will build a foundation for the next generation
- **Visioning and discernment work** as we continue to pray about our future together

Giving Tuesday is not simply about raising funds. It is about **strengthening the mission God has entrusted to us**. It is an invitation to participate in the life-changing work of this congregation—a way of saying, “Yes, I believe in what God is doing here.”

If Sweet Hollow has been a source of faith, hope, comfort, or inspiration to you, we invite you to make a Giving Tuesday gift. You may give online, by mail, or in person. Every dollar helps us continue to shine Christ's light into our community.

Thank you for your generosity, your faithfulness, and your love for this church. Together, we are building something beautiful.

With gratitude and hope,

Pastor Wade



Stewardship & Giving



The Christmas Joy Offering celebrates God's gift of Jesus Christ by supporting current and retired church workers in need, as well as providing scholarships for students at Presbyterian-related racial-ethnic schools & colleges.

Together, these four offerings remind us that we are connected to a larger body of Christ. Each gift—large or small—helps the church live out our calling to “do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God” (Micah 6:8).

As we receive these offerings throughout the year, may we give joyfully and generously, knowing that our combined gifts extend God's love and hope to places we may never see but where the Spirit is already at work.



Stewardship & Giving

Spread the word! Invite your friends!

Host a Table! Make sandwiches! Bake cookies!

The Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow
cordially invites you to our

4th Annual Christmas Tea

December 13, 2025
3:00pm – 6:00pm

95 Old Country Road
Melville, New York 11747

\$35 per person

Please R.S.V.P by December 6, 2025 to
Call: 631-367-9249
Email: pcshsecretary@hotmail.com
Venmo ID: @pcshsecretary95

Pre-Registration & Pre-Payment Required

Stewardship & Giving

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4th Annual Christmas Basket Raffle

Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow
95 Old Country Road
Melville, New York 11747

Contact the church office for tickets.

Call: (631) 367-9249

Email: pcshsecretary95@hotmail.com

Venmo ID: @pcshsecretary95



Ticket prices:

25 Tickets - \$25

12 Tickets - \$15

6 Tickets - \$8

3 Tickets - \$5



All proceeds support the ministry and mission of the Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow including: veterans, children, animals and first responders

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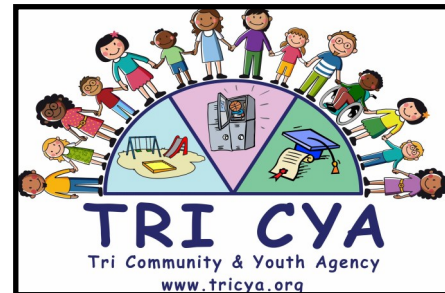


MISSION and MORE



“TOYS FOR JOY”

Toy Drive



The Mission Team is continuing to collect new, unwrapped toys up through Sunday, 12/14/25, for the children of Tri-CYA. The toys will be blessed on that Sunday and will be delivered on Monday, December 15, 2025.

For a child to be able to open his or her own toy means the world and is something they will always remember.

Thank you for your generosity.



MISSION and MORE

Your Mission Team met the goal to help “Take a Bite Out of Holiday Hunger”



SUCCESS, SUCCESS, SUCCESS!

That describes your efforts to produce three boxes from the congregation and two more from independent givers. Thanksgiving fixings for local families were abundant.

Days before Thanksgiving, our boxes were dropped off to be distributed days later. We should all be very proud of the impact our five boxes made. Hopefully they created more than 1,100 boxes from last year's drive at the Helping Hand Rescue Mission. The need to fight food insecurity is real.

Our boxes gave families the opportunity to have a day of food to celebrate our annual holiday of Giving Thanks. The Mission Team thanks you once again for coming through in one of our monthly goals.



MISSION and MORE



HUNTINGTON FOOD PANTRY



The ongoing need of support for those with food insecurities is still extremely great. Our local food banks are struggling to keep up with demand. Please prayerfully consider to continue giving to the Huntington Food Pantry weekly. This is in addition to our other ministries. Any possible help is greatly appreciated. Every little bit helps and many hands working together help us to do big things.

Canned Proteins... Tuna, Chicken, salmon, spam, Vienna sausages, beef stew and chili.

Nut Butters... Peanut, Almond, Sunflower seed butters.

Canned Beans... Black, pinto, kidney, chickpeas, baked beans.

Dry Beans & Lentils

Shelf-stable milks... Regular or non-dairy (almond, oat, soy)

Canned Fruits, Apple Sauce Pouches

Canned soups... Especially hearty varieties (beef, chicken, vegetable)

Breakfast items... Cereal, Oatmeal, Cream of Wheat, granola

Shelf stable items... Mac & Cheese, Instant Mashed Potatoes, Rice, flavored Rice/Noodle packs, boxed Stuffing.



Prayer Corner

Praying Our Way to the Manger: An Advent Invitation

As the Advent season begins, many of us feel pulled in different directions—holiday events, family gatherings, travel plans, shopping lists, and the general rush of December. In the midst of it all, Advent whispers a gentle invitation: **slow down, breathe, and pray.**

Prayer is at the heart of Advent. It's how we tune our spirits to the quiet work of God happening beneath all the noise. Advent prayer isn't about having the perfect words—it's about making space, even small space, for God to meet us. In Luke's gospel, we hear the promise: *"Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). Advent invites us into that stillness, not as escape, but as preparation.*

This season, I encourage you to adopt a simple pattern of Advent prayer:

1. A Prayer of Waiting

Each day, pause to name what you are waiting for—hope, healing, clarity, peace. Advent teaches us that waiting is not wasted time when we place it in God's hands.

2. A Prayer of Light

As you see Christmas lights or light your Advent candles, offer a short prayer: *"Lord, shine your light into my life and into this world." We pray not only for ourselves, but for those who walk through darkness.*

3. A Prayer of Welcoming Christ

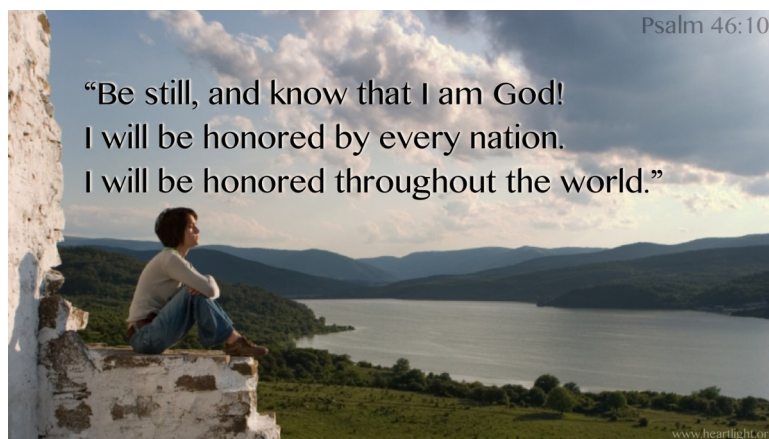
Throughout Advent, ask God to open your heart: *"Jesus, help me make room for you." This simple prayer can transform even the busiest moments.*

4. A Prayer of Hope for the World

Hold our community, our nation, and all who suffer in prayer. Advent reminds us that Christ comes not just for us, but for the healing of the world.

As we pray our way toward Christmas, may our hearts become more attentive, our spirits more open, and our lives more rooted in the hope that Christ brings. May this Advent be a season of holy pause—a time when prayer becomes the quiet thread that holds us close to God and to one another.

Blessings to you as we journey toward the manger with faith, hope, and prayer



Special Days



December 2025

7... Rebecca Van Houten
 17... Brian Schiffmacher
 20... Nicole Schiffmacher
 22... Brianna Conroy
 26... Laura Fallon
 26... Barbara Martin



December 2025

6... Paul & Monica Van Houten

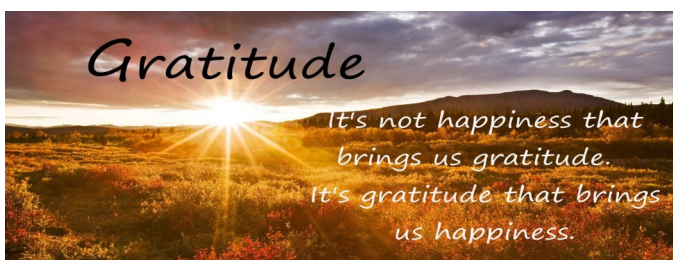


From the Pastor's Nook:

Continued from page 1

As your pastor, I am thankful for your faithfulness, your generosity, and your willingness to dream alongside one another. May this season be filled with moments of reflection, expectation, and joy. And may the God who has carried us thus far continue to guide us into a future bright with hope.

Grace and peace to you in this season of gratitude and anticipation.



Dec 1... Rosa Parks Day
 Dec 1... National Pie Day
 Dec 2... National Day of Giving #GivingTuesday
 Dec 4... National Cookie Day
 Dec 6... Saint Nicholas Day
 Dec 7... National Pearl Harbor Day
 Dec 9... Christmas Card Day
 Dec 12... National Poinsettia Day
 Dec 12... Gingerbread House Day
 Dec 13... National Cocoa Day
 Dec 18... National Twin Day
 Dec 19... National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day
 Dec 20-23... Winter Solstice
 Dec 21... Humbug Day
 Dec 23... Festivus
 Dec 24... National Eggnog Day/Christmas Eve
 Dec 25... Christmas
 Dec 26... National Candy Cane Day
 Dec 28... Holy Innocents Day
 Dec 31... National Champagne Day
 Dec 31... New Year's Eve

Website/Social Media



Presbyterian Church of Sweet Hollow

(631) 367 - 9249

www.sweethollowpresby.org

Rev. Wade Pond, Pastor

Jason Black, Director of Music Ministries

Lori Kevelos, Church Administrator

Jill Conroy, Treasurer

Beatrice Reiser, Clerk of Session

Elders: Ed Conroy

Melissa D'Angelo

Niaja Mowatt

Frank Sansone

SESSION MEETING!

The session meets monthly, typically on the third Monday of each month at 8 PM. Most meetings occur via Zoom. In person meetings occur February/May/September/November. The next meeting is Dec 15. Any member of the church is welcome to attend.

Find our website and social media links!

www.sweethollowpresby.org

Facebook/YouTube/Instagram

<https://www.facebook.com/sweethollowpresby>

<https://youtube.com/>

@presbyterianchurchofsweeth1401

<https://www.instagram.com/presbysweethollow>

Bell Ringer Delivery: Would you like a paper copy of the Bell Ringer not digital?

please call the office at (631)367-9249 or

e-mail the office: pcshsecretary@hotmail.com or

e-mail Pastor Wade: revwadepond@outlook.com.

JAN Bell Ringer Submissions: Due by DEC 20

Email to Jessica Pond: 8kidscallmemom@gmail.com