

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.

April 2026



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From the Pastor's Nook:

LEAN INTO HOPE

If Easter were a person, it would absolutely burst into the room unannounced, throw open the windows, and shout, "GOOD NEWS, EVERYONE!" while handing out jellybeans like a slightly chaotic game show host.

And honestly... we need that energy.

April is the season where the church dares to be almost *recklessly joyful*. Not polite-smile-in-the-breezeway joyful. I mean *Christ-is-risen-and-I-might-do-a-little-dance-in-the-parking-lot joyful*. Because Easter isn't just a day—it's a whole season of leaning into hope like it's the last slice of pie at coffee hour (and yes, we are absolutely taking it).

Hope, in Easter terms, is not quiet or reserved. It's bold. It rolls the stone away. It laughs in the face of despair. It shows up where we thought nothing good could possibly happen and says, "Surprise!"

So this April, here's your spiritual assignment (don't worry, it's open book and includes snacks):

Lean into hope.

Lean like you mean it.

Lean like the tomb is empty—because it is.

Tell someone something good.

Expect grace in inconvenient places.

Laugh a little louder than necessary.

And if you find yourself smiling for no clear reason, just go with it—that's basically Easter doing its thing.

Christ is risen... and apparently, so is our capacity for joy.

Alleluia—and pass the chocolate.

Building Relationships

Guided by the Spirit, Our Presbytery follows Christ by partnering with congregations, communities, and individuals to embody God's inclusive love and justice in an ever-changing world.



Stay Connected with our Presbytery of Long Island!

Did you know that our presbytery:

- meets four times a year to connect our congregations in ministry
- offers a preaching and communion class for elders, as well as support for clerks of session, treasurers, elders, deacons, and other leaders of the congregation
- provides a weekly gathering on Zoom to pray for our nation, congregations, and members
- shares announcements from Presbyterian churches across Long Island
- sends out resources to help churches with Christian Education, finances, property, leadership development, and more
- connects us with what's happening in the PC(USA), as well as with local ecumenical and interfaith partnerships

This information is shared in an email newsletter from our presbytery, called the "Nexus," that comes out three times a month and is available to all members of congregations in the presbytery. Sign up for the Nexus newsletter to stay updated on events, resources, ministry opportunities, and more within YOUR presbytery!

To join our mailing list, please email Laurie at laurie@presbyteryofli.org with your name and email address.

The Presbytery of LI
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West Islip, NY 11795
 Tel: 631-499-7171
www.presbyteryofli.org

Presbytery of Long Island
Presbytery Resource Center
Presbyterian Church (USA)
Presbyterian Mission Agency
Synod of the Northeast.

FAITH FORMATION

A Special Invitation for Our Youngest Disciples (and Their Grown-Ups!)

If you've ever watched a child during worship, you know something beautiful is happening. There's wonder in their eyes, curiosity in their questions, and—let's be honest—sometimes a little wiggle in their seats. And all of that is more than okay... it's holy ground.

That's why we're excited to invite all families with young children to a new rhythm in our life together.

Following the children's message each Sunday, children are invited to a special Children's Ministry Time—a space designed just for them to explore faith in ways that are engaging, hands-on, and joyful. This isn't about stepping away from worship, but about stepping deeper into it in a way that meets children where they are.

On the second and fourth Sundays of the month, beginning with April 12th, our time together will stay connected to the same *Revised Common Lectionary passages guiding our worship*. That means your children will be engaging the very same stories and themes as the rest of the congregation—just in ways that speak their language. (Expect storytelling, creative activities, movement, and maybe even a little holy laughter.)

Seeing the world through the eyes of a child is the purest joy that anyone can experience.

This is also a *multigenerational opportunity*. Children of different ages will learn alongside one another, building relationships and discovering that faith is something we grow into together—not just something we sit still for.

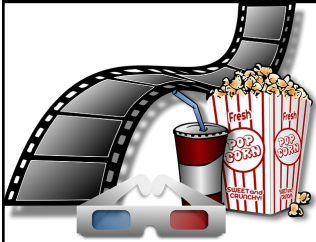
And parents, here's the best part: this is not about separating families, but supporting them. It's about creating space for children to engage meaningfully while you continue in worship, knowing they are being nurtured in the same story of God's love.

So, whether your child is full of questions, full of energy, or just full of life (which is to say... all children), we hope you'll encourage them to take part.

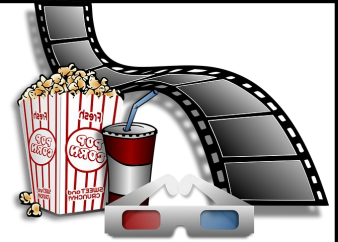
Because in this church, we don't just welcome children—we believe they have something to teach us all.

Come and see what God is doing in their midst.

FAITH FORMATION



Faith In Film Movie Night



May 2nd at 6:00 PM

What does the movie

THE LION KING

**have to do with faith in film?
Come and see how God can
speak, even through
Hollywood.**



**Movie style
snacks;**

fun movie;

**Good
conversation.**

Film: The Lion King

Where: PCSH, CEB Hall

When: May 16 at 6:00 PM

Who: COME ONE! COME ALL!

This movie is rated PG

Parental Guidance Suggested

<small>PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED</small>	CHECK THIS BOX FOR SPECIFIC CONTENT INFORMATION
PG	
<small>Some Material May Not Be Suitable for Children</small>	



WORSHIP NOTES

The Meaning of Easter *TIDE*.....

Every year, right after the lilies fade and the last chocolate egg mysteriously disappears, there's a quiet temptation to move on from Easter as if it were a single, sparkling day. One grand "Alleluia!" and then...back to normal.

But the church, in its deep wisdom, says: not so fast.

Easter isn't a day. It's a season.

In fact, we celebrate Easter for 50 days—what we call *Eastertide*—*stretching from Easter Sunday all the way to Pentecost. And that's not liturgical excess or an excuse to keep the white paraments out a little longer. It's a theological statement about reality itself.*

Because resurrection is not a moment. It's a new world.

Think about it: we spend 40 days in Lent preparing—reflecting, repenting, simplifying, sometimes even giving up chocolate (a true spiritual sacrifice). And then, when Easter morning finally arrives, the church responds by celebrating even longer than we prepared. Why? Because joy takes time to sink in. Grace takes repetition. New life needs space to unfold.

The resurrection of Jesus isn't just a happy ending to a sad story. It is the beginning of something entirely new—God's declaration that life is stronger than death, that love gets the last word, and that nothing, absolutely nothing, can separate us from that love.

And honestly, that kind of news is too big for just one Sunday.

So during Eastertide, we linger. We tell the resurrection stories again and again. We hear about the risen Christ showing up in unexpected places—on the road, in locked rooms, at breakfast on the beach. We practice recognizing him, because if we're honest, we often miss him in our own lives too.

Eastertide is the season where we learn to see differently.

It invites us to look at a broken world and still dare to believe in restoration. It teaches us to hold grief and hope in the same breath. It reminds us that even when things seem unchanged, something profound has shifted beneath the surface.

And maybe most importantly, Eastertide gives us permission to be people of joy—not shallow, fleeting happiness, but deep, stubborn, resurrection-shaped joy. The kind that sings "Alleluia" even when life is complicated.

So if you find yourself still carrying burdens, still waiting for signs of new life, still wondering if resurrection is real—good news: the season isn't over.

We've got 50 days to practice believing it. Alleluia.

WORSHIP NOTES



April

5th - Niaja Mowatt
12th - Joan & Frank
19th - Jessica Pond
26th - Frank Sansone

26th Smorgasbord

April

5th - Jessica Pond
12th - Sheri Myers
19th - Laura Fallon
26th - Sue Manning

May

3rd - Laura Fallon
10th - Niaja Mowatt
17th - Maureen Sansone
24th - Lynn Burke
31st - VOLUNTEER NEEDED

31st Smorgasbord

May

3rd - Barbara Martin
10th - Sisi Weaver
17th - Tracy Dein
24th - Barbara Martin
31st - Jessica Pond

June

7th - Niaja Mowatt
14th - Joan Sommermyer
21st - Jessica Pond
28th - Laura Fallon

28th Smorgasbord

June

7th - Tracy Dein
14th - Sue Manning
21st - Laura Fallon
28th - Sisi Weaver

Stewardship & Giving

The Last Shall Be First... in the Pledge Report?!

Let's talk about something we don't usually bring up at coffee hour—unless things have gotten *really interesting near the pastry table: legacy giving.*

Now before you clutch your bulletin and say, “Well that escalated quickly,” stay with me. Because this isn't about being morbid—it's about being wildly, joyfully *intentional.*

Jesus followers have always had a bit of a reputation for turning the world upside down. Loving enemies. Welcoming strangers. Forgiving *that guy from for cutting you off on the Northern.* And yes—*thinking about the end of life not as a closing chapter, but as a bold, grace-filled opportunity to say:*

“God, even this part of my story belongs to you.” Legacy giving is, at its heart, one final act of discipleship. It's the spiritual equivalent of saying, “I may not be around to argue about the color of the sanctuary carpet in 2075, but I *will make sure the church is still here to argue about it.*”

And that matters. Because every gift—whether it's placed in the offering basket on a Sunday morning or written quietly into a will—becomes part of a much bigger story. It becomes Sunday school lessons not yet taught. Choir anthems not yet sung. Mission projects not yet imagined. It becomes hope, stretching forward.

Think of it this way: legacy giving is like planting a tree whose shade you'll never sit under... except in the Kingdom of God, you somehow *do get to sit under it. And there's probably a Smorgasbord Sunday involved.*

Now, let's be clear—this isn't about giving everything away and living on crackers and determination (although crackers are welcome at Smorgasbord as well). It's about prayerfully asking:

“What impact do I want my life—and my faith—to have beyond my lifetime?” For some, that might mean including the church in a will. For others, it might mean designating a portion of assets, supporting a specific ministry, or simply beginning a conversation with family about what matters most.

And here's the beautiful part: legacy giving isn't about the size of the gift. **It's about the size of the love behind it.**

It's about saying: “This community shaped me. This faith carried me. This hope sustained me. And I want that to continue—for someone I'll never meet, in a moment I'll never see.”

That's not just generosity. That's resurrection thinking.

So yes—talk about it. Pray about it. Laugh about it, even. (If we can't laugh about life and death in the church, we might be taking ourselves a little too seriously.)

Because in the end, legacy giving isn't really about endings at all.

It's about trusting that God isn't finished yet.

And what a joy it is to be part of that story—right up to the very last page... and beyond.

Stewardship & Giving

GIVING

Per Capita

Why pay the Per Capita early in 2026?

Sweet Hollow is required to pay the **\$42.51** for *every member* on our rolls. Please consider paying your family's Per Capita dues. If members do not earmark their per capita portion, we must take money from our budget to fulfill our responsibility towards the Presbyterian Church (USA). This payment ensures that we can easily use resources, borrow from the Presbytery office, and receive advice and support from the General Assembly.



Thank you for helping us meet OUR church's obligation!

Please remember each member should pay a Per Capita Apportionment of \$42.51 this year. Therefore, 3 family members would pay \$127.53.

What is Per Capita?



Per capita in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PCUSA) is the annual amount of money each congregation is asked to contribute per member to support the shared work of the wider church (presbytery, synod, and General Assembly).

It helps fund things like governance, training, mission coordination, and resources that serve all congregations. Per capita is based on membership numbers, so larger congregations pay more in total, but the amount is the same "per person" across the denomination.

www.sweethollowpresby.org

Venmo: @PCSHsecretary95

Check/cash to PCSH at

95 Old Country Road, Melville, NY 11747

****Type/Write "per capita" on the memo/description line**

**Pay your
Per Capita
Here**



In these challenging times, many families in our community are continuing to face the very real burden of food insecurity. The need at our local Huntington Food Pantry remains steady—and in some cases, is growing. As a congregation that cares deeply about our neighbors, your ongoing monthly donations make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who rely on this vital resource.

At this time, the pantry has shared a specific need for diapers and diaper wipes. These essential items are often overlooked, yet they are a significant expense for families with young children and are not covered by most assistance programs.

We invite you to continue your faithful support and, if you are able, to consider including diapers and wipes in your next donation. Your generosity helps ensure that families in our community are not only fed, but also cared for with dignity and compassion.

Thank you for being a blessing to others through your continued kindness and giving.

DIAPERS & WIPES

DRIVE



Prayer Corner

From the Wilderness to the Garden

As we move through April, we find ourselves standing at the beautiful threshold between the solemnity of Lent and the radiant joy of Easter morning. Lent has invited us into the wilderness — a season of reflection, repentance, prayer, and renewed dependence upon God’s grace. Easter bursts forth as God’s resounding declaration that sin does not have the final word, suffering is not the end of the story, and death itself has been defeated.

In the Presbyterian tradition, we understand Lent not as a time to earn God’s love, but as a season to remember that we already belong to God. We are people of the covenant. Marked by grace in baptism, we journey through these forty days trusting that even in self-examination and confession, we are held securely by mercy.

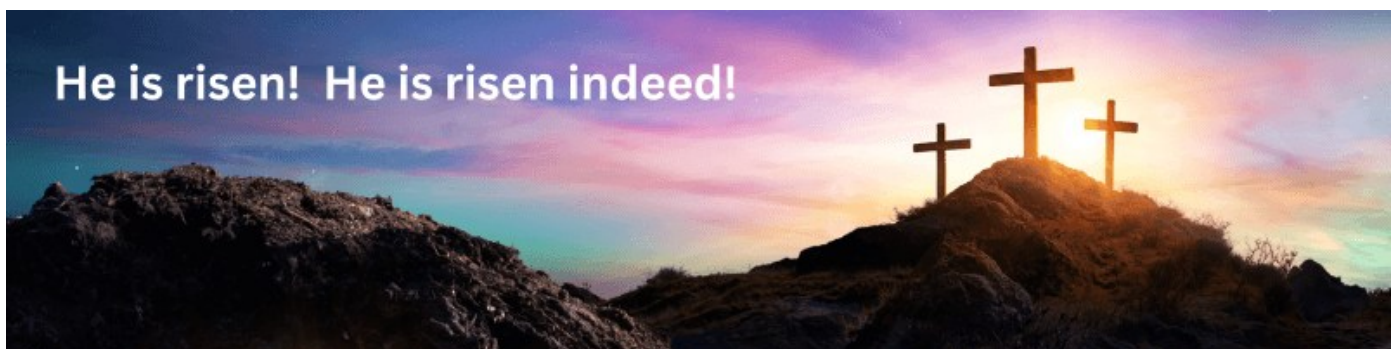
Lent calls us to honesty. We confess personal sin and also the brokenness of the world around us. We acknowledge injustice, hunger, division, and despair. We pray with the psalmist, “Create in me a clean heart, O God.” This is not despairing prayer. It is hopeful prayer. It is the prayer of a people who believe that God is still at work reforming hearts, renewing communities, and restoring creation.

And then comes Easter.

The stone is rolled away. The tomb is empty. The women run from the garden with trembling joy. Resurrection interrupts grief. Light pierces darkness. Life overcomes death.

From a Presbyterian perspective, Easter is not simply a single Sunday celebration. It is the foundation of our hope and the rhythm of our life together. We are a resurrection people. We trust that God brings new life out of what appears finished. We believe that no situation — in our families, our church, or our world — is beyond the redeeming power of God.

Easter reminds us that grace is stronger than failure. Forgiveness is stronger than guilt. Love is stronger than fear.



Prayer Corner

As we move from Lent into the joy of Easter, consider these invitations for prayer:

1. Pray with Gratitude

Give thanks for Christ's saving work — not only for the promise of eternal life, but for daily resurrection moments: reconciled relationships, renewed strength, unexpected hope.

2. Pray for Renewal

Ask God to breathe resurrection life into places that feel weary — your own heart, our congregation, and our wider community.

3. Pray for Courage

The first witnesses to the resurrection were called to go and tell. Pray for courage to live and speak as people shaped by hope rather than fear.

4. Pray for the World

Resurrection is not private comfort; it is public good news. Pray that the light of Christ would shine in places of violence, hunger, injustice, and loneliness.

Easter joy does not ignore the cross — it grows out of it. We do not rush past Good Friday; we pass through it. Because we know the whole story, we can face hardship with resilient hope. The risen Christ still bears scars. Resurrection does not erase suffering; it transforms it.

This April, may our homes echo with alleluias. May our prayers be bold. May our church embody resurrection life — welcoming the stranger, feeding the hungry, forgiving freely, and serving joyfully.

And when the alleluias fade from Easter Sunday into ordinary days, may we remember: the stone remains rolled away.

Let us pray:

*Risen Christ,
You meet us in gardens of grief and call us by name.
You turn our mourning into dancing and our fear into courage.
Plant resurrection hope deep within us.
Renew your church with joy that overflows into service.
Send us into the world as witnesses to your grace.
In life, in death, and in life beyond death,
we belong to you.
Amen.*

Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Special Days



April 2026

3... April Fallon
 3... Nate Pereira
 5... Mary Reiser
 8... Cortney Schmitt
 17... Douglas Moder
 20... Kaleb Pond
 21... Thallia Pond

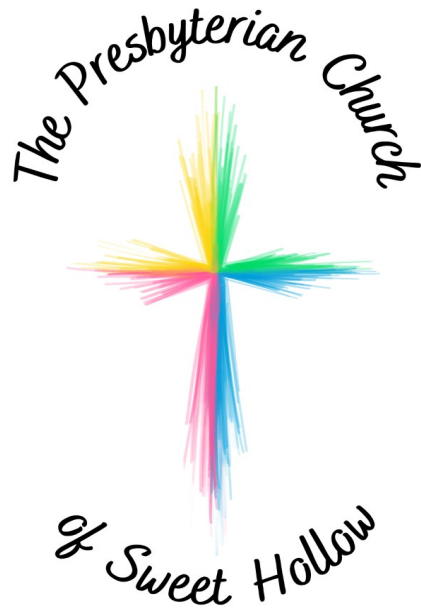
Happy Anniversary

28... Joe & Barbara Moder

- 1... April Fool's Day
- 2... DIY Day
- 3... Find a Rainbow Day
- 4... Jeep 4X4 Day
- 5... Deep Dish Pizza Day
- 6... Sorry Charlie Day
- 7... No Housework Day
- 8... Zoo Lovers Day
- 9... Unicorn Day
- 10... Siblings Day
- 11... Pet Day
- 12... Only Child Day
- 13... Thomas Jefferson Day
- 14... Dolphin Day
- 15... Purple Up! Day
- 16... Wear Your Pajamas to Work Day
- 17... Ellis Island Family History Day
- 18... Exercise Day
- 19... Hanging Out Day
- 20... Volunteer Recognition Day
- 21... Kindergarten Day
- 22... Earth Day
- 23... Administrative Professional Day
- 24... Take our Daughters & Sons to Work Day
- 25... Zucchini Bread Day
- 26... Audubon Day
- 27... Babe Ruth Day
- 28... Superhero Day
- 29... Zipper Day
- 30... Honesty Day



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: Melissa D'Angelo

Niaja Mowatt

Maureen Sansone

Joan Sommermyer

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 virtual Apr 20.

Any member of the church is welcome to attend.

Ask Pastor Wade for details.

Find our website and social media links!

www.sweethollowpresby.org

Facebook/YouTube/Instagram

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

<https://youtube.com/>

[@presbyterianchurchofsweeth1401](https://www.youtube.com/@presbyterianchurchofsweeth1401)

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

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

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

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

MAY Bell Ringer Submissions: Due by APR 25

Email to Jessica Pond: 8kidscallmemom@gmail.com